

Inspection of Whickham Cottage Nursery

Nursery House, Sands Road, Swalwell, NEWCASTLE UPON TYNE NE16 3DN

Inspection date: 13 September 2023

Overall effectiveness	Good
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The quality of education	Good
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Behaviour and attitudes	Good
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Personal development	Good
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Leadership and management	Good
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Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good
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What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is good

From the youngest age, children settle quickly in this welcoming nursery. They form warm bonds with staff and arrive eager to explore the day's activities. Staff have high expectations for every child and use their knowledge of children to plan learning opportunities. Children make good progress from their starting points. They are eager to join in with activities and show curiosity in novel objects. Children are keen to learn about the natural world and explore different tools as they investigate with hammers how to break ice blocks. Children are helpful and learn how to take care of the resources and toys on offer. For instance, they talk about how to use hammers safely and pick up toys from the floor. Children say 'please' and 'thank you' and are supported by staff who are good role models.

Children play cooperatively and develop their social skills. They play a lotto game with friends and take turns to match pictures and numbers. All children develop their large and small muscles. Babies practise with threading dry pasta and giggle with delight. Children squeeze and squash dough. They help themselves to paper and pens as they develop their small hand muscles, experimenting with using different tools and making marks. This helps to support their future writing skills.

What does the early years setting do well and what does it need to do better?

- The nursery is led by an energetic and passionate management team. Managers place a high value on staff well-being, and staff report feeling valued and encouraged. Although managers support staff to plan a curriculum based around children's interests. At times, they are not always aware of the specific learning intentions for individual children.
- Staff skilfully incorporate opportunities for children to count, calculate and explore shapes and measurements throughout routines and activities. Consequently, children develop a secure understanding of mathematics. They are confident to tackle problems and use mathematical language as they play, confidently counting and understanding concepts of 'half' and 'quarter'.
- Overall, staff support children's communication and language skills well. Staff model language and talk about activities, to extend children's understanding of language. However, at times, staff do not always encourage children to talk and express themselves so that their language and communication skills are fully enhanced throughout the day.
- Younger babies are shown by staff how to tidy up. Staff hold their hands and take them to put away toys when they have finished playing, so that they learn how to look after resources from an early age. Staff explain to older children what it is that they have done well, such as listening carefully or sharing with their peers. Staff positively recognise and reward children's good behaviour, which helps all children to understand what is expected of them, and the impact

of their action on others.

- Partnership with parents is a strength of the nursery. Staff work closely with parents to gather a wealth of information when children first start. This enables them to plan for children's next stage of development. They share information with parents on a daily basis at the start and end of the day, as well as through the online app.
- Staff sing songs and rhymes and read books frequently with children. They share stories with children enthusiastically as they sit and snuggle together on the floor. Staff help children to remember book knowledge, for instance, by re-reading familiar stories over and over. Children delight as they shout out repeated refrains from stories that they have learned. They develop a love of books, rhyme, songs and language.
- Staff provide a healthy diet for children. The on-site cook prepares fresh nutritious meals that children thoroughly enjoy the smell of and eating them. Staff talk with children about the fresh foods they are eating. Children learn about making healthy lifestyle choices. Babies learn how to grip and lift spoons through well-considered playful learning activities. This helps babies to learn how to feed themselves at mealtimes.
- Parents are extremely positive about the nursery. They comment on the family approach and that every member of staff 'puts children at the heart of their work and goes the extra mile' for the children. Parents are particularly impressed by children's progress and development.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The provider and manager follow robust procedures for assessing the suitability of staff to work with children. Managers ensure that staff complete safeguarding training to keep their knowledge up to date. This stands out as an area of strong practice. Consequently, staff are highly confident to talk about safeguarding issues, including how to identify signs of exposure to extreme views or behaviour. There are clear procedures for reporting any concerns about a child's welfare. Managers deploy staff effectively to help supervise children, indoors and outdoors. They follow clear procedures for emergency situations to help keep children safe.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

To further improve the quality of the early years provision, the provider should:

- help staff to further develop their understanding of the curriculum so that they are aware of the specific learning intentions for individual children
- develop the use of techniques that encourage children to talk and express themselves so that their language and communication skills are fully enhanced throughout the day.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY476574
Local authority	Gateshead
Inspection number	10301274
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register
Day care type	Full day care
Age range of children at time of inspection	0 to 4
Total number of places	108
Number of children on roll	115
Name of registered person	Nursery House Ltd
Registered person unique reference number	RP533593
Telephone number	01914960016
Date of previous inspection	3 January 2018

Information about this early years setting

Whickham Cottage Nursery registered in 2014. The nursery employs 26 members of childcare staff. Of these, 19 hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3, including one with early years professional status. The nursery opens from Monday to Friday, all year round, from 7.30am until 6pm. The nursery provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Eileen Grimes

Inspection activities

- This was the first routine inspection the provider received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the provider and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the provider.
- The manager and inspector completed a learning walk together of all areas of the nursery and discussed the early years curriculum.
- The inspector observed the quality of education being provided, indoors and outdoors, and assessed the impact that this was having on children's learning.
- The inspector carried out joint observations of an activity with the manager.
- Parents shared their views of the setting with the inspector.
- The inspector looked at relevant documentation and reviewed evidence of the suitability of staff working in the nursery

We carried out this inspection under sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006 on the quality and standards of provision that is registered on the Early Years Register. The registered person must ensure that this provision complies with the statutory framework for children's learning, development and care, known as the early years foundation stage.

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