

Inspection of Fern Hollow Day Nursery

4 Birches Nook Road, Stocksfield, Northumberland NE43 7JL

Inspection date: 25 January 2024

Overall effectiveness	Good
------------------------------	-------------

The quality of education	Good
--------------------------	-------------

Behaviour and attitudes	Good
-------------------------	-------------

Personal development	Good
----------------------	-------------

Leadership and management	Good
---------------------------	-------------

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good
--	------

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is good

Children and their families receive a warm welcome from staff at Fern Hollow Nursery. From the moment they arrive, children show they feel settled and secure as staff are there to greet them. Children confidently leave their parents and carers and confidently begin exploring the resources available, alongside their friends. Staff implement an ambitious curriculum that, overall, supports children's learning needs well. Exciting, fun activities are planned which motivate children and encourage them to join in. Older children demonstrate this when they make kites to fly in the outdoor area. They show patience when the wind isn't quite as strong as previous days and are happy to wait until later when it may pick up again. Younger children enthusiastically play with sand indoors. They enjoy filling small cups and happily bring them to the inspector to hold.

Children demonstrate positive attitudes to their learning. This is illustrated when younger children concentrate as they look for their photograph as part of self-registration. They look intently at the various pictures of other children before finding their own image. They are happy for staff to offer help if this is required. Staff use a variety of effective strategies throughout the day to support children's behaviour. For example, older children use a 'traffic-light' system and understand that 'red' means they must stop what they are doing. Children behave very well and a calm atmosphere runs throughout the nursery.

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

- Partnerships with parents are superb. Parents spoken to on inspection, and those who provided comments for the inspector to consider, speak highly of the staff team and the help their children receive. High levels of support, including for potty training and when a new baby sibling comes along, are gratefully received. Parents share how they 'do not worry about their child' when they are in nursery. This demonstrates reassurance for them that their child is safe and well cared for.
- The manager is full of passion for continually developing the best standard of care and learning for children and their families. She evaluates the nursery, identifying areas she can improve to benefit children. Recent developments include setting up a toddler group locally, to strengthen parent confidence in accessing help for their children from local services.
- Children are happy, confident learners who thoroughly enjoy interacting with their friends and the staff team. Relationships are strong throughout the nursery and a 'happy buzz' permeates throughout the room. Children seek reassurance from their key person, who is always available to offer reassurance and a hug if it is required.
- The manager leads her staff team well. Collectively, they plan and implement

educational programmes that support children's learning well overall. Staff know their key children and know where they are in their development. However, some activities are not always sufficiently focused on the skills children are learning. Staff occasionally focus more on the end product or pictures children are creating rather than the skills they are developing throughout the process.

- Staff support children well to develop their communication skills. This is evident when staff describe children's actions as they travel in ride-on cars, using words such as 'reversing'. Staff ask older children effective questions as they play and explore play dough. Children use language which is appropriate for their stage of development.
- Younger children freely explore toys and resources available in their room. However, staff do not fully consider the key developmental stages children go through to become successful learners. For instance, activities set up in the sand tray indoors do not allow children enough room to make large, whole-arm movements. Outdoors, planning is focused mostly on large physical-play activities, without considering the many other key skills children are developing.
- Children enjoy fresh, home-cooked meals everyday. Staff spend quality time with children as they eat and help them to serve themselves and monitor their portion size. Children enjoy daily opportunities to learn outdoors, supporting their physical health further.
- The manager and staff are proactive and respond quickly if they have any developmental concerns about a child in their care. They work in collaboration with external agencies to share information to ensure children get the help and support they need, at the earliest stage.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

There is an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts children's interests first.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- focus planning more on the skills children need to develop next to fully extend and support their learning
- strengthen understanding of the developmental stages younger children go through to plan a more effective curriculum, including in the outdoor area.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY308455
Local authority	Northumberland
Inspection number	10311782
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register, Voluntary Childcare Register
Day care type	Full day care
Age range of children at time of inspection	0 to 4
Total number of places	40
Number of children on roll	53
Name of registered person	Fern Hollow Limited
Registered person unique reference number	RP907558
Telephone number	01661 842717
Date of previous inspection	10 April 2018

Information about this early years setting

Fern Hollow Day Nursery registered in 2005 and is located in Stocksfield. The nursery employs 13 members of childcare staff. 10 staff hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3, and the manager holds a relevant level 6 qualification. The nursery operates all year round, from 7.30am to 6pm, Monday to Friday, except for bank holidays. The nursery provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Nicola Jones

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 inspector viewed the provision and discussed the safety and suitability of the premises.
- The manager and inspector completed a learning walk together of all areas of the nursery and discussed the early years curriculum.
- Children spoke to/communicated with the inspector during the inspection.
- The inspector talked to staff at appropriate times during the inspection and took account of their views.
- 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 manager and the inspector carried out a joint observation of a group activity outdoors with the older children.
- Parents shared their views of the nursery with the inspector, using both verbal and written communication.
- 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.

If you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk

This publication is available at <https://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2024