

Highfield Early Years Centre

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	EY278407
Inspection date	06/05/2011
Inspector	Clare Henderson
Setting address	Wright Street, Chorley, Lancashire, PR6 0SL
Telephone number	01257 262 441
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Type of setting	Childcare on non-domestic premises

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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under Sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006 on the quality and standards of the registered early years provision. 'Early years provision' refers to provision regulated by Ofsted for children from birth to 31 August following their fifth birthday (the early years age group). The registered person must ensure that this provision complies with the statutory framework for children's learning, development and welfare, known as the *Early Years Foundation Stage*.

The provider must provide a copy of this report to all parents with children at the setting where reasonably practicable. The provider must provide a copy of the report to any other person who asks for one, but may charge a fee for this service (The Childcare (Inspection) Regulations 2008 regulations 9 and 10).

Children only attend this setting before and/or after the school day and/or during the school holidays. The judgements in this report reflect the quality of early years provision offered to children during those periods.

The setting also makes provision for children older than the early years age group which is registered on the voluntary and/or compulsory part(s) of the Childcare Register. This report does not include an evaluation of that provision, but a comment about compliance with the requirements of the Childcare Register is included in Annex B.

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Description of the setting

Highfield Early Years Centre registered in 2004 to provide day care for children aged between birth and eight years. The building is set in its own grounds and is fully integrated with Highfield Children's Centre. It is situated within an established residential area close to Chorley town centre. The Early Years Centre is open from 7.30am and 6.00pm, Monday to Friday for 50 weeks of the year. A maximum of 134 children aged under eight years may attend the setting at any one time and not more than nine may be under two years at any one time. There are currently 106 children on roll in the early years age range. The setting is in receipt of funding for the provision of free early education to children aged three and four years. Children attend a variety of full and part-time sessions. The Centre supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and children who speak English as an additional language. The centre offers a range of services for children and families in the local community.

There are twenty staff employed to work with the children. Of these, seventeen hold a qualification at level 3 in early years and three hold a qualification at level 2 in early years. The provision is registered by Ofsted on the Early Years Register and on the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children's individual needs are met effectively by a caring team of staff who have established good partnerships with parents and carers. Within this secure environment, staff safeguard children's welfare and promote their safety and health effectively. Children's uniqueness is valued and reflected well within the setting to promote their sense of belonging. Systems for assessing and tracking children's progress and attainment are mostly good. Strong processes of self-evaluation result in well considered action plans for the future that focus effectively on sustaining good quality outcomes for children.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To further improve the early years provision the registered person should:

- streamline systems for assessing and tracking children's progress and attainment in order to ensure consistency of practice within the setting.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children's welfare is of paramount importance to staff who implement effective systems to assure their safety and well-being at all times. Rigorous employment

and vetting procedures and regular performance management systems ensure that all staff are suitable to work with children. Daily routines, fire practices, risk assessments and close supervision ensure standards of safety are monitored and maintained. In addition, staff have a good knowledge and understanding of their child protection responsibilities and the procedures to follow in the event of any concerns to safeguard children.

Staff work efficiently as a team to provide a well-prepared, warm and welcoming environment for children. They communicate effectively to ensure children's needs are met well in all areas and interact with interest and energy to create a vibrant and active environment. They support children in learning about the needs and feelings of others through sharing and taking turns and in re-enforcing expectations of behaviour. Children are also learning about diversity within their local community and the wider world. For instance, the home languages and cultures of the children are valued and celebrated within the setting.

Systems for monitoring and evaluating the quality of provision are good. These include a self-evaluation record, staff meetings, improvement plans, activity evaluations and links with the local authority. From this, they identify and promote improvements within the setting and ensure staff are skilled to meet any additional needs of children in their care. Systems for assessing and tracking children's progress and attainment are in place. However, these are not used well enough by all staff to ensure consistency of practice within the setting.

Parents are provided with good quality information about the setting. They have access to policies and procedures that support their children's care. Information boards are used well to notify parents about current activities and events. Parents are actively encouraged to share their observations of what their children do at home. Good links with external agencies and, particularly, with the on-site children's centre enable staff to help parents support their children's individual learning needs well.

The quality and standards of the early years provision and outcomes for children

Relationships between children and staff are a key strength. Consequently, children are fully engaged as they play happily indoors and outdoors with the wide range of exciting activities available. Children enjoy a good balance of play provision and learning resources, all of which are easily accessible to promote independent play and exploration. They benefit from a vibrant early years environment with defined areas of play, plenty of space to play unhindered and the option of outdoor play throughout the sessions. Children's learning is promoted well for each individual. Staff observe their interests and make use of this information to plan a broad range of continuous provision and adult organised activities with a specific learning intention. Parents' involvement in their child's development is actively sought through daily chats and regular consultation.

Children are happy and settle in well. All children explore freely and with curiosity as they move around the play areas with confidence. Children's communication,

language and literacy are developing well. They are learning to listen intently and are encouraged to think, make decisions, vocalise their feelings, share their knowledge and to recall events. Most staff skilfully question children in all activities to promote thought and language development and use visual images to support those with additional communication needs. Children develop reading and writing skills purposefully in a breadth of good activities inside and outdoors and are developing a good appreciation of books for both story and reference. They are developing a good understanding of numbers through counting in their play with staff and learning to recognise numerals. They are encouraged to problem solve through completing puzzles, working electronic and programmable equipment and dressing themselves.

Children learn about the natural environment and their part in the local community. They benefit from exploring nature and use natural resources to build and create within highly creative outdoor areas. Children benefit from well-resourced outdoor play areas to support their physical development and to allow more active children to play in their preferred environment. Topical events such as the Royal Wedding are used well to extend children's understanding of belonging to the wider community. Children use their imagination well. For example, they dress up and role play in a variety of home corner environments and play with many small world and constructional toys both inside and outdoors. They use their senses and creativity exploring different media and materials, such as digging and planting and looking for insects in the 'bug hotel' area.

Children feel safe and secure within the setting, which they demonstrate through their confident exploration and the trusting relationships established with staff. Their health is promoted effectively through the provision of a clean and hygienic environment in which staff follow and promote good hygiene practices in all areas. Children are developing a good attitude to healthy lifestyles. They benefit from healthy meals cooked on the premises by a cook who ensures meals provide a healthy balance for the children. They develop skills that contribute to their future economic well-being by developing good habits as active, inquisitive and independent learners.

Annex A: record of inspection judgements

The key inspection judgements and what they mean

Grade 1 is Outstanding: this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality

Grade 2 is Good: this aspect of the provision is strong

Grade 3 is Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound

Grade 4 is Inadequate: this aspect of the provision is not good enough

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

How well does the setting meet the needs of the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?	2
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	2

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	2
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding	2
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	2
The effectiveness of partnerships	2
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	2

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

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Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	2
The extent to which children feel safe	2
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	2
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	2

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Annex B: the Childcare Register

The provider confirms that the requirements of the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are: Met

The provider confirms that the requirements of the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are: Met