

Skelton Nursery Group

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	EY246374
Inspection date	13/10/2011
Inspector	Nicola Jones

Setting address	Skelton School, Penrith, Cumbria, CA11 9SE
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Type of setting	Childcare - Non-Domestic
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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*.

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Description of the setting

Skelton Nursery Group is run by a management committee. It opened in 1997 and operates from a purpose-built nursery unit in the grounds of Skelton School. A maximum of 20 children may attend the nursery at any one time. The nursery is open each weekday from 8.50am to 11.50am during term time only. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 8 children aged from two to under five years on roll, some of whom receive funding for early education. Children attend from a wide catchment area. The nursery currently supports a number of children with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

The nursery employs two members of staff, all of whom hold appropriate early years qualifications. The nursery is a member of the Pre-School Learning Alliance.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is outstanding.

An excellent knowledge and understanding of each child's needs ensures that staff are very successful in promoting children's welfare and learning. Highly effective partnerships with parents, the school and other agencies are a key strength and are significant in making sure that the needs of all children are met. Children are safe and secure and enjoy learning about their local area and the world around them. They make excellent progress as a result of effective planning, observation and assessment procedures. Leadership and management is outstanding, and there is a very strong drive towards further improvement and the process of evaluating the quality of the provision, which has a highly positive impact on the outcomes for children.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To further improve the high quality early years provision the registered person should consider:

- regularly review self-evaluation procedures which encourage continuous quality improvement and embed effective practice.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children's welfare and well-being are exceptionally well promoted as the nursery has robust procedures in place for safeguarding children. There is a designated person and all staff have a first-class knowledge of child protection issues. Staff make effective use of up-to-date risk assessments to support them in ensuring the areas used by children are safe, and as a result children display an excellent

awareness of safety. The room and outdoor area are secure at all times. There are a comprehensive range of policies and procedures in place to support the work of the group. These are reviewed at staff and committee meetings so they are all aware of the nursery's practices as they develop.

Children are cared for by qualified and experienced staff who are well deployed so that they receive consistently high adult support at all times. Staff have excellent understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage and use this well to support children in their learning. The environment, both indoors and out, is organised flexibly and creatively. Children can choose to access areas and resources, offering different activities to extend their play and develop their independence. The leader is taking well-considered steps to ensure resources and the environment are fully sustainable by using recyclable materials. Children extend their learning by visiting the local recycling centre.

Staff are focused on helping all children to make exceptional progress in their learning and development. This is because the leader has high expectations and sets high standards which are embedded across all areas of practice. Actions taken by the nursery are implemented with precision and managed thoroughly, for example, literacy and numeracy trolleys have been introduced outdoors with resources and activities that are rich, varied and imaginative. There are detailed plans for the future which are aimed about bringing further improvement to the nursery and outcomes for children, however, more frequent review of the self-evaluation process would enhance this further. Staff moral is high and training needs are identified through staff appraisal, and regular meetings.

The nursery is highly committed to working in partnership with others and takes a lead role in establishing effective working relationships. There are well-established channels of communication with services in the local community, for example, children enjoy regular visits from the fire and police services and from the nurse. Links with the school are a particular strength and children engage in a wealth of school activities throughout the year, for example, they are regularly invited into school to take part in community lunches with their parents and carers. This helps children to feel part of the school and eases transition. Partnerships with parents are exceptional; they take an active part in their child's learning and are involved in decision making on key matters. The majority of families have a representative on the management committee and all parents are encouraged to take an active role with the day-to-day running of the nursery, for example, a cleaning rota is in place.

Equality and diversity are embedded across all aspects of provision as staff know and understand each child and where their needs lie. The nursery is highly inclusive so every child can access all parts of the provision. Arrangements for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities are extremely well established, for example, speech therapists work closely with staff and contribute towards children's learning and development. Stereotypical views are challenged by staff through discussion with children when situations arise.

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

Children are extremely happy, confident and enthusiastic to learn in the welcoming, bright environment. They have fun as they eagerly choose activities and learn to make their own decisions. The development and promotion of active learning are key strengths throughout the nursery and children are making excellent progress in relation to their starting points. This is because observation and assessment procedures are robust and staff use this information to plan highly innovative adult and child-led activities, both in the indoor and outdoor environment, based upon children's individual needs and interests. Children have individual home to school books which include observations and photographs, and learning is matched to the Early Years Foundation Stage. Parents and other agencies regularly contribute to this process, which provides a full picture of children's development and well-being, and parents enjoy sharing these books at home with their child. Highly comprehensive profiles are developed for each child, and these clearly show how children are progressing towards the early learning goals.

Children develop communication skills as they engage in a dynamic range of inviting opportunities offered on a daily basis, for example, in the role play area they discuss what equipment is needed for bathing a baby. Problem solving, reasoning and numeracy are given a high priority, and children learn to count backwards from ten before their rocket can blast off and confidently count the number of chickens in the small world farm. Staff support children sensitively and provide explanations to make children think as they work alongside them and extend learning. As a result, children's progress in communication and numeracy and their development in information and communication technology are exceptionally good and they are effectively developing the skills they need in order to secure future learning.

Children's behaviour is exemplary and they show an excellent awareness of responsibility within the nursery. This is because staff provide excellent role models and children are praised for their manners. They work exceptionally well independently and with their peers, showing excellent negotiation and co-operation skills. Children are encouraged to consider and recognise potential risks and dangers as they begin to accept responsibility for their own safety. They confidently use traffic lights in the outdoor area, using red and green symbols to 'stop' and 'go' as they ride their bikes and scooters. Children are extremely confident and competent in communicating their thoughts and show a mature response to taking responsibility about their own and others' safety, for example, they are aware of the dangers of throwing pebbles and know where they can safely use scissors in the room.

A healthy lifestyle is strongly promoted. There is a flow of activities between the indoor and outdoor environments, and this ensures that children benefit from regular exercise and fresh air throughout the year. They have ownership of their health and well-being and demonstrate they are well informed about healthy living, for example, they point out a wide range of vegetables on top of a pizza and

describe confidently why these are good for you. Individual dietary needs are met and children have free access to fresh food and drinking water throughout the session. They are encouraged to wash their hands before eating and after playing outdoors, and as a result children are gaining exceptional understanding of the importance of following good personal hygiene routines.

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?	1
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	1

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	1
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	1
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	1
The effectiveness of safeguarding	1
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	1
The effectiveness of partnerships	1
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	1

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
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Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	1
The extent to which children feel safe	1
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	1
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	1

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