

The Counting House

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number EY334551
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Inspector Christine Snowdon

Setting address Counting House Nursery, 120 Smithies Moor Lane, Batley,
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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*.

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Description of the setting

The Counting House Nursery was re-registered under the present ownership in 2006. It is one of three provisions privately owned by the provider and operates from a converted former church in the Birstall area of Batley. The large open plan playroom is divided into separate areas for the differing ages of children and there are appropriate kitchen and toilet facilities provided. There is a fully enclosed area for outdoor play. The nursery is open each weekday from 7.30am to 5.45pm all year round.

The nursery is registered on the Early Years Register to provide care for a maximum of 31 children at any one time. There are currently 69 children aged from birth to under five years on roll and they attend a variety of sessions, either full or part-time care. Children with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language are accommodated. The owner managers work on site and there are ten staff employed, all of whom have an early years qualification, most to NVQ level three. Several of the staff are working towards increasing their childcare qualification. A cook and cleaner are also employed. The setting receives support from a teacher from the local authority and are registered with them to provide funded nursery education for those children of eligible age.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

The nursery provides a warm and welcoming environment to everyone. The highly effective key worker system ensures that children's individuality and uniqueness is recognised and supported. There is a good range of activities provided and most areas are well resourced to help children make good progress in their learning and development. There are strong partnerships with parents and positive steps are taken to encourage them to be involved in all aspects of their children's care and learning. Management are committed to developing their service and have effective methods in place, which evaluates their own practice and identifies further improvements to enhance a setting that already meets the needs of all children very well.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- provide more opportunities for children to see, recognise and use numbers in everyday activities
- develop further the outdoor area to reflect and support all aspects of learning, particularly in the role play area
- improve the current arrangements with regards to hygiene at rest and sleep times.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The nursery has a detailed safeguarding policy in place, along with a range of supporting documentation, including contact details for external agencies should they have any child protection concerns. The managers and staff have all attended safeguarding training and there is an appointed person in place. There are highly effective systems in place to ensure all adults working with the children are suitably screened and checked. These include, robust recruitment, vetting, induction and appraisal procedures. The open plan nature of the nursery enables clear supervision of all staff and their working practice. The children are kept safe and secure through the effective security systems in place. All admittance into the nursery is by staff only, who are able to observe who is requesting entry through the window. In addition, the outdoor play area is totally enclosed with high fencing all around. Children are further safeguarded by the effective deployment of staff which ensures children are well-supported and supervised at all times. The nursery has written risk assessments in place, covering all aspects of the environment and highlights possible hazards and shows how these are minimised effectively.

The nursery benefits from the well-qualified staff who work effectively as a team and are supported by the owner/managers who work alongside them within the nursery. Staff are very enthusiastic in their approach and demonstrate their commitment to improving outcomes for children through pursuing training opportunities to further their qualifications and broaden their own knowledge and skills. The management team recognise and value their staff and ensure their views are sought and used to monitor the nurseries effectiveness. For example, staff have contributed to the settings self-evaluation format in order to ensure continual improvements in the outcomes for children. In addition the managements successful funding bid to the local authority, has resulted in effective alterations and refurbishment of the premises. This means that children are able to access the toilets themselves and develop independence in their self-care skills. Recommendations raised at the last inspection have all been met successfully. For example, there is now a detailed complaints policy in place which is displayed on the parent notice board along with Ofsted contact details and other useful information.

Highly effective working relationships with parents and carers are in place and this is a key strength of the setting. Parents receive excellent detailed information which keeps them fully informed of their child's care and progress. For example, the monthly sheets they receive keeps them up to-date with the forthcoming activities and the ways in which they can support their children's learning. The twice yearly parents evenings are highly successful and all children's achievement records are discussed and sent home for those who cannot attend. The nurseries parent forum encourages and welcomes their views and suggestions and social events are organised so that all parents feel valued and welcome. The parents spoken to at inspection were overwhelmingly complimentary about the staff and the good quality care provided for their children.

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

Staff have a good knowledge and understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage. They create a very enabling, child-centred and colourful environment and plan a range of interesting activities. Staff understand that every child is unique and ensure those who have special educational needs or disabilities are well-supported. The highly effective key worker system is instrumental in ensuring children's individual care and learning needs are respected and provided for. They strive to build a firm and trusting relationship with the parent and child at the initial settling-in visits. Intimate care needs, such as nappy changing is done by their key worker whenever possible. They provide comfort and cuddles to babies and young children when they become tired or upset, complete the daily routine sheet and give verbal feedback to the parents and carers on collection. All these tasks helps to build a special three-way relationship between staff, parent and child. As a result, children have a warm and close relationship with their key worker. This is clearly evident when babies smile warmly at their key worker and hold up their arms to enjoy a cuddle on her return from lunch break.

Staff are very enthusiastic about the activities they offer, which encourages and inspires the children to take part. Children of all ages thoroughly enjoy the creative opportunities. For example, they eagerly run their hands through the shaving foam and use their fingers to make lines and swirls in it. Additional items, such as dried pulses provide more experiences. Staff encourage the children to talk about the smell, feel and texture of this fun activity. Children are independent and active learners and staff know what their individual likes and interests are. Bob the Builder is a firm favourite with the children and they use the various tools, wooden bricks and dressing up clothes to portray this role. They work cooperatively together sharing the tools and taking turns as they work out how to build their wall. The labelling and mark making provided in the role play area enables children to make connections and develop their understanding of writing for a purpose. Children count confidently and develop their mathematical understanding in various ways. At circle time staff ask what number the date is it today and explain the previous day was eight. Children respond correctly saying nine. However, staff do not reinforce their understanding by using the number line, or the interactive calendar in order to assist children in recognising these numbers. Children of all ages benefit from the regular free-flow access to the outdoor area where they have lots of fun and healthy physical exercise. They climb, balance and negotiate challenges in a safe and controlled area. There is generally a good range of activities provided outdoors, although the large play house has limited resources to extend and sustain their role play. Children of all ages love to use the water and paint brushes or chinks to draw and make marks on the fixed wallboard outdoors. During the summer months children learn about nature and growing through digging the soil, planting seeds and watching them grow.

There are good standards of hygiene throughout the nursery and staff ensure effective procedures are followed. For example, wearing aprons and gloves for nappy changing. Children learn about health and hygiene and wash their hands at appropriate times. Babies and toddlers hands are cleaned by staff prior to their

meals and snacks. Sleep and rest times are in accordance with children's individual needs and parent's wishes. Most of the babies and toddlers prefer to curl up on the pillows on the rest mat. The large cover is washed and changed daily, although the pillows are used by more than one child during the course of the day. Children enjoy the healthy and nutritious meals that are freshly prepared and cooked on the premises. All individual dietary needs are effectively monitored and provided for.

The children's attainment folders are a wonderfully detailed account of the good progress they are making in their learning and development. Regular observations are made and these are assessed against the expectations of the early learning goals. Next steps in learning are clearly identified and planned for, so that they continue to make progress in all aspects of development.

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

How effectively is the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	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	1

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
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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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