

Inspection of Green Lane Nursery and Childcare Centre

Green Lane, Barnard Castle DL12 8LG

Inspection date:

5 June 2025

Overall effectiveness

Inadequate

The quality of education

Inadequate

Behaviour and attitudes

Inadequate

Personal development

Inadequate

Leadership and management

Inadequate

Overall effectiveness at previous
inspection

Outstanding

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is inadequate

The quality of education is inconsistent and, at times, inappropriate for the age and stage of the children. In the baby room, children are exposed to unsafe materials, including food-based sensory items and small, hazardous objects, without adequate supervision. This poses a risk of choking and reflects a lack of understanding around how to plan safe, age-appropriate activities. As a result, children's health and safety are compromised. Leaders do not ensure safeguarding procedures are followed. They have failed to notify Ofsted of relevant information. This breaches statutory requirements and prevents Ofsted from assessing the continued suitability of individuals, posing a risk to children's safety. The provider has taken action to put this right.

Despite these weaknesses, children are happy and form positive relationships with staff. They take part in familiar routines, such as tidying up and pouring drinks, which helps promote their independence and self-care skills. Staff provide engaging physical activities, including dough play and movement sessions. These help strengthen both gross and fine motor skills, supporting early writing development.

Children enjoy community experiences, such as visiting a local farm and taking part in acts of kindness, such as delivering flowers to school staff or donating food to a local charity hub. Children enthusiastically tell visitors about their recent visit to the farm to see lambs. These opportunities promote empathy and broaden children's understanding of the world. Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are well supported.

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

- Leaders do not follow safeguarding procedures effectively. They have failed to notify Ofsted of a significant safeguarding incident and changes to directors. This breaches statutory requirements. Although this has since been addressed, it compromises the ability for Ofsted to assess suitability.
- Staff deployment does not always meet children's needs or ensure their safety. For example, on the day of inspection, there was a lack of staff working directly with the babies during a sensory based cereal activity. This resulted in several babies crawling away from the activity and independently eating the cereal, while others dipped their cereal in paint before eating it. The poor organisation of staff led to a chaotic environment, undermining the safety and quality of children's experiences.
- Risk assessments are undertaken daily in both the indoor and outdoor areas. However, these do not always inform staff practice. For example, risk assessments highlight the danger of children eating whole grapes and other such foods, yet staff do not recognise the danger of allowing babies aged under

12 months to play with small pebbles. This poses a risk to children's safety.

- Staff receive informal supervision sessions. However, this is not sufficiently effective. Leaders do not swiftly or accurately identify gaps in staff's knowledge or weaknesses in their practice. Consequently, this has a significant impact on the quality of the provision.
- Staff have accessed training and demonstrate an understanding of the value of open-ended exploration. Toddlers show delight as they investigate appropriate sensory materials and natural objects, which supports curiosity and engagement. However, other activities are not always safely planned or supervised. For example, an inspector had to intervene during a sensory activity to prevent young babies from putting stones in their mouths. This compromises children's safety and shows a lack of understanding of effective planning.
- Despite weaknesses, the curriculum includes a broad range of experiences. Children go outdoors every day and benefit from fresh air in the outdoor learning environment. Staff talk to the children about healthy eating and plan activities to support children's learning. For example, older children help prepare vegetables and make soup for afternoon tea. These opportunities further children's understanding of the importance of healthy lifestyles.
- Core books are carefully selected and used across all age groups to promote early literacy. Sensory books are used with babies, while older children engage with traditional stories such as 'Little Red Riding Hood'. Staff extend this through experiences like using a sewing machine to make costumes. This means that children develop a love of stories, extend their vocabulary, and make meaningful connections through real-life experiences.
- Leaders in the nursery value mental health and staff well-being. Staff report that they feel incredibly well supported. Leaders have relevant mental health qualifications and create a supportive team culture. Staff say they feel cared for and valued. This contributes to positive staff morale.
- Parents value the regular communication with staff shared through digital platforms and feel well informed about their children's progress. Parents report feeling confident in working with staff to support key milestones, such as potty training. This fosters strong partnerships with families and promotes continuity of care and learning between home and the nursery.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are not effective.

There is not an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts children's interests first.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

To meet the requirements of the early years foundation stage and Childcare Register the provider must:

	Due date
ensure the deployment of staff meets the needs of all children and provides adequate supervision to maintain their safety and promote their learning	21/07/2025
implement and monitor robust risk assessments, ensuring that all potential hazards are identified, minimised and managed effectively, to ensure children's safety in the nursery	21/07/2025
provide effective supervision and training for all staff, including managers, so that weaknesses in practice are identified and addressed to develop the overall quality of the provision.	21/07/2025

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY252401
Local authority	Durham
Inspection number	10392926
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 11
Total number of places	95
Number of children on roll	93
Name of registered person	Green Lane Nursery and Child Care Centre
Registered person unique reference number	RP521191
Telephone number	01833 638581
Date of previous inspection	21 October 2019

Information about this early years setting

Green Lane Nursery and Childcare Centre opened in 2003 and is run as a company with charity status. The nursery operates from four rooms in the grounds of Green Lane Primary School in Barnard Castle. The nursery opens five days a week from 7.30am until 6pm, all year round except for bank holidays and at Christmas. The out-of-school club opens from 7.30am until 9am and from 3.30pm until 6pm during term time, and from 7.30am until 6pm during school holidays. The nursery offers the government-funded places for childcare. There are currently 24 staff working directly with the children, 21 of whom hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Claire Budge

Inspection activities

- 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 with the inspector during the inspection.
- The inspector talked to staff at appropriate times during the inspection and took account of their views.
- Staff spoke to the inspector about how they support children with SEND.
- 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 sensory activity.
- The inspector spoke to several parents during the inspection and took account of their views.
- 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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