

Swarland Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspector

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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

Swarland Pre-School first opened in 1984 and has operated under this registration since 2009. The pre-school is run by a limited company. It operates from a portacabin classroom in the grounds of Swarland First School, in the Swarland area of Morpeth. The pre-school is open Monday and Tuesday from 9am until 11.30am and 12.30pm until 3.30pm, and Wednesday, Thursday and Friday from 9.30am until 11.30am during term-time only. They are registered on the Early Years Register to care for a maximum of 19 children at any one time. There are currently 23 children from two to five years on roll. The pre-school employs five staff. Four of the staff hold an appropriate early years qualification.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

The staff's thorough knowledge of each child's individual needs ensures that all aspects of children's welfare and learning are promoted with success. They enjoy a broad range of activities and experiences which effectively meets their needs and helps them to make good progress in their learning and development. Children are cared for in a very safe and secure environment and all records are in place to meet requirements. The exceptional partnership with parents ensures that staff communicate well, to put the children's needs first. Effective methods ensure that achievable goals are set for the pre-school to continually improve.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- include in the written complaints procedure, the timescales involved in the investigation of any complaint.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Effective record keeping systems, policies and procedures are in place and are well organised and regularly reviewed. However, the written complaints procedure does not include the timescales that would be involved in investigating a written complaint. Staff have a good understanding of the policies and procedures, which are implemented well. In particular, they have a clear understanding of the action to be taken to safeguard children from harm. Effective recruitment procedures ensure that staff have appropriate qualifications with further opportunities to progress to a higher qualification. Staff's ongoing suitability is monitored through annual appraisals, where training needs can be identified and through the manager's observations while they work. Training courses, such as Progress Matters and child protection, have been attended. Possible hazards for children have been identified through a clearly written record of risks, which is supported

by a daily checklist and revisions where further hazards are identified.

The provision is well organised. Child-sized furniture is set out in the playroom along with low level shelving. Children can easily make their own choice, which develops their independence. Staff constantly check resources to ensure that they remain suitable for children's use. Very effective methods are in place for the setting to evaluate how they are doing and to implement any changes that are needed. For example, an action plan has been developed, which is reviewed annually. This identifies areas for improvement, such as to set up a website for parents, to develop a new outdoor play area and to carry out safeguarding awareness training with staff. This impacts positively on the care and learning for children.

Excellent relationships with parents are in place. Staff keep them very well informed about their child's progress in a wide variety of ways. Children are observed in the first six weeks of their attendance and a first assessment completed. A meeting is held with parents and developmental goals are discussed. Any concerns about a child's development can also be discussed and steps can be agreed if outside agencies need to be involved, such as a speech therapist. A daily diary is completed and parents are able to communicate with staff through this, along with verbal discussions. Home-link bags are available along with letters that are sent home to involve parents in continuing their child's learning at home. Parents stated how happy they are with care and learning that their children receive and feel that they are very aware of what their children are involved in when attending.

Close links have been developed with the primary school on site. Joint ventures are held which involve children and parents. They are invited in for development days; for example, the school hall was used for a introductory session on story sacks. Children that stay for lunch access this alongside the school children in the hall, which helps them to become familiar with the environment and staff. This results in a smooth transition when they eventually start school. Some children also attend other provisions, such as a childminder. Staff ensure that they hold regular discussions about the child's development to offer continuity of care.

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

Children make good progress in their learning and development due to the effective organisation of the provision and knowledge of staff. At the end of each day staff review what has happened and note children's particular interests. They meet weekly to plan for the following week, based on these assessments. For example, children enjoyed building the train track and playing with the engines. Staff developed this into a snakes and ladders game using the engines as counters. Following the initial six week assessment, continual observations are carried out and noted. These are entered into the child's development file where their progress against the learning outcomes is recorded. Photographic evidence supports the observations. Parents are able to access the file at any time to look at with their child or to take home. The manager shows that she has a heightened

awareness of what takes place with each age group and each child. She is able to discuss their development through firsthand knowledge. This overview ensures that a full and balanced curriculum is managed very effectively.

Children settle really well into the provision. They show increasing independence as they get used to the routines and make their own choices about what activities they take part in. Letter recognition is part of everyday activities. For example, at circle time, they start to recognise the first letter of the name on a card and attempt to say the sound. They explore the different sounds that instruments make and attempt to beat out a rhythm as they sing familiar rhymes. Knowledge of the wider world is developed through exciting activities. Children have been for a visit to a neighbouring village where they visited various shops and had a drink at a café. Discussions are held about family life as they enter into a debate about how many dogs they have at home. 'Chester Bear' is very popular, as they take turns in taking him home. Parents take photographs of what they have done at home and write an account of the bear's time there. As children gain in confidence they attempt to write in the diary themselves. Outdoors is a regular feature in the routine. Children become aware of the boundaries that are set for them in the school yard, ensuring their safety. They enjoy the freedom of running round the space and learning how to control a hoop as they roll it along.

Well established routines ensure that children adopt healthy lifestyles. They wash their hands before snacks and meals. A visit from the educational vehicle showed them how to wash their hands effectively and talked about healthy eating. Snacks of fresh fruit, raisins and a savoury or sweet biscuit are enjoyed by all as they learn to be sociable sitting in groups at the table. Staff are good role models as they encourage children's good behaviour. Reminders are given to say please and thank you, which helps children learn to respect each other. Verbal praise is given by staff for good behaviour. The manager has a good understanding of her role and responsibilities when caring for children with any special educational needs and/or disabilities. All children feel included and are encouraged to develop skills, such as sign language, which can benefit them all. Children are cared for in a very safe self-contained environment. All visitors' have to identify themselves and sign the visitors' record. Timely reminders from staff help children to learn how to keep themselves safe. For example, staff explained to them about the leaves being slippery in the school yard and not run down the ramp as they might slip.

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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