

Strawberry How Nursery School

Strawberry How Nursery School, Strawberry How Road, COCKERMOUTH, Cumbria, CA13 9XQ

Inspection date	05/06/2013
Previous inspection date	06/01/2010

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	1
	Previous inspection:	2
How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend		1
The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children		1
The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision		1

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This provision is outstanding

- The innovative use of the outdoor play areas highly motivates all children who investigate and explore the environment with confidence and enthusiasm. Staff use the resources extremely effectively to support children's learning and play and as a result, children concentrate for long periods and are fully engaged in their play.
- Exceptionally good relationships with parents significantly enhance children's learning and development, because staff promote the importance of the home learning environment. This results, in a combined approach to gathering records to identify the considerable progress children make.
- Children are exceptionally well-cared for by highly skilled key persons who form secure attachments with all children. Each key person has an excellent knowledge and understanding of the children they care for and expertly support them to complete the next steps of their learning. As a result, children make excellent progress in relation to their starting points in this inclusive nursery.
- Children are extremely well-motivated and readily engage in new learning experiences. Transitions to new rooms or learning situations are exceptionally well-managed to support children's emotional well-being and feelings of self-confidence. Therefore, they accept change and settle very easily.
- Leadership is inspirational. The staff's excellent team work and outstanding levels of commitment in their roles enrich all the children's experiences and contributes significantly to the excellently smooth running of the nursery.
- Partnerships with external agencies and other providers are highly effective and contribute greatly to ensuring that children's needs are quickly identified and well met.

Information about this inspection

Inspections of registered early years provision are:

- scheduled at least once in every inspection cycle – the current cycle ends on 31 July 2016
- scheduled more frequently where Ofsted identifies a need to do so, for example where provision was previously judged inadequate
- brought forward in the inspection cycle where Ofsted has received information that suggests the provision may not be meeting the legal requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage or where assessment of the provision identifies a need for early inspection
- prioritised where we have received information that the provision is not meeting the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage and which suggests children may not be safe
- scheduled at the completion of an investigation into failure to comply with the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Inspection activities

- The inspector observed children playing in the caterpillar and butterfly playrooms, the canopy and two outdoor play areas.
- The inspector held discussions with the manager, the staff and the children throughout the session.
- The inspector held a meeting with the nominated person and manager.
- The inspector completed a joint observation with the manager in the outdoor play area.
- The inspector took account of the views of several parents spoken to on the day of the inspection.
- The inspector looked at children's assessment records, the planning documentation, and the systems for the monitoring of children's progress.
- The inspector checked evidence of suitability and qualifications of staff working with children, the policies and procedures for the setting, and the documented self-evaluation systems that support the service.

Inspector

Carys Millican

Full Report**Information about the setting**

Strawberry How Nursery School was registered in 2009, is on the Early Years Register, and privately owned. It is situated in a purpose built single storey building on the Strawberry How Business Centre on the outskirts of Cockermouth, Cumbria. The nursery serves the local area and is accessible to all children. It operates from three designated age related playrooms, each with access to their own outdoor play area leading from a covered canopy. The nursery also has an aviary outside with finches.

The nursery employs 17 members of childcare staff. Of these, 10 hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3, including two staff with Qualified Teacher Status and the manager holds a Bachelor of Education Degree and is an experienced headteacher. There are three employed apprentices working towards their level 3 qualification.

The nursery opens Monday to Friday all year round from 7.45am until 6pm for 51 weeks of the year, excluding bank holidays and one week at Christmas. Children attend for a variety of sessions. There are currently 115 children attending who are in the early years age group. The nursery provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children. It supports a number of children who speak English as an additional language and children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. The nursery is a member of the National Day Nurseries Association, the Learning Alliance and Learning Through Landscapes. They also receive support from the local authority.

What the setting needs to do to improve further**To further improve the quality of the early years provision the provider should:**

- continue to promote children's independence and self-help skills at mealtimes.

Inspection judgements**How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend**

Staff are highly motivated and enthusiastic early years practitioners who have an excellent understanding of child development, the areas of learning and the characteristics of effective learning. They use their knowledge to significantly enhance children's learning and effectively plan and support children's progress through inspirational and motivational teaching. Staff are very enthusiastic about their work which impacts greatly on the positive attitude children have towards their play and learning. Consequently, children

concentrate for long periods of time, are confident to take part in activities, and remain fully engaged in their play. The staff's thorough assessment and planning ensures that activities provide the best challenge and further identify the next steps for children, which significantly contributes to the excellent progress they make in relation to their starting points.

Partnerships with parents and carers are excellent and highly successful strategies engage them in their children's learning and at home. The combined approach of gathering and sharing information is highly successful. A full and broader picture of each child's development is seen in children's progress records and highlighted in the progress check at age two years. Parents are actively involved with the initial and subsequent assessments of their children and they are given numerous opportunities to add 'Wow' moments, review their child's file and contribute to the developmental tracking process. Parents feel that their views and opinions are respected and value the information contained in the nursery newsletter, including how to help with their children's learning at home. Staff take the opportunity to talk with parents at arrival and collection times and special parents' evenings are frequently held. The nursery website is highly regarded by parents as an excellent source of information and children enjoy participating in the 'take home' nursery toys activities.

The quality of teaching and quality of learning is exceptional and inspirational. The staff provide an excellent range of innovative, interesting and stimulating activities, resources and play opportunities, both indoors and outside. As a result, children develop an extremely positive disposition for learning and make excellent progress in their development. For example, in the baby room the staff effectively engage the youngest of children through structured heuristic play sessions full of sensory experiences. They play peek-a-boo games using textured materials and open-ended activities, such as water play in the small paddling pool and sand play in the undercover canopy area.

Children experience excellent opportunities for free play as well as an exceptional balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities. The staff effectively build on children's home based knowledge and experiences, and provide activities for progression, extension and challenge and extend the child's joy in play. For example, a child likes to become his favourite cartoon character and dresses-up as his superhero and takes his name for the day, supported by staff who talk to him in character. Staff are exceptional in their teaching practice. For example, the topic of Mini-beasts in the Butterfly room is adapted to include all children. Staff adapt their interactions and use individualised interventions to ensure all children are included and able to take part in activities at their own level. The children are well-supplied with associated resources so that all children can take part and follow their own ideas. These include, magnifying glasses, real life Mini-beasts in resin, associated bug books, paper and pencils on tables so children can draw what they see and find. The staff maintain the children's focus on their learning and actively use a range of strategies to skilfully support, challenge and extend children's learning by introducing new words, and new ideas. They question children, by asking them 'What do you think will happen?' and 'What do you think you will find?'. Staff think out loud, model more complex ways of speaking, pose new problems, deal with conflict by negotiation, explain ideas and demonstrate approaches with children. As a result, children are engaged, involved, concentrate and have a sustained interest in the activity, they persevere with the task of

hunting for 'live' Mini-beasts, look at spider webs, hunt for snail trails, check under the logs and the leaves of the strawberry plants and the vast assortment of fruit trees and vegetables growing in the outdoor play area.

Staff offer assistance and support as needed to help children to be successful in following their own ideas, including talking about simple strategies. For example, children construct their own slide using the large wooden bricks. They construct it so that it is not too high but wonder how they can make the slide down part. The member of staff asks the children what other shapes they have and they find the 'triangle' shaped bricks. They place them on top of each other and sort the slide so they can slide down it. One child finds a piece of wood and places it underneath and lies on the slide, finding out that this piece of wood helps to slide down quicker, and excitedly shows the people watching. As a consequence of the staff providing a learning environment absolutely full of stimulating open-ended materials, children can combine them in their own way to meet their own purposes.

The outdoor provision is truly fantastic and inspirational. Children's love of the outside is effectively nurtured and constantly promoted through free flow opportunities in dry and wet weather. They learn to care for living things, such as the fruit trees, bushes, plants and vegetables which children plant, cultivate, and harvest for snacks during the year. They help themselves to the water butt and tap to fill their watering cans and competently feed the plants. The children love watching the zebra finches in the garden Aviary. They can see inside the nesting areas at the eggs and watch them hatch through an in situ camera that beams pictures on request to the Butterfly room computer television display unit.

Children's physical development, hand-eye coordination and early writing skills are excellently supported. Left and right handed scissors are available so children can decide their preferred hand use. Children help themselves and they think of others, for example, by finding extra scissors for those who do not have a pair. Staff provide support on a one-to-one basis for children who need a little extra help. They do not intervene unless required but let the children persevere themselves to achieve their goal. For example, a child competently draws round a plate and taking a pair of scissors perseveres until it has been cut around. 'This is a circle' the child says. Using the pencil the child then draws two figures; 'This is me' and 'that is you'. The child's key person further extends this activity by writing the child's name and the child sounds out all the letters and then tries to copy it. The high quality teaching and the wealth of opportunities children experience, results in them being exceptionally well-prepared for their next stage of learning.

The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children

Children thoroughly enjoy themselves at this truly inspiring nursery setting. They participate in an exceptional range of fun-filled, challenging activities that stimulate their natural curiosity and build on their interests. Staff successfully support children's learning from the youngest of the children to the children ready for school. Children are extremely happy and contented and settle very easily into the nursery routines. Their enthusiastic voices and laughter can be heard throughout the nursery. This shows that children feel

emotionally safe and secure. The highly effective key person system significantly contributes to achieving these close emotional attachments. Consequently, children from an early age become extremely confident and self-assured learners. The effective transition procedures between nursery rooms are sensitively implemented so that children are prepared for change and move with ease. Staff support the move and respect the uniqueness of each child and plans to individually support them. Parents are also actively involved in this transition process, especially in helping staff prepare the children for changes in the nursery and then on to school.

Children are exceptionally well-behaved because they are totally engaged in activities and, therefore, they concentrate hard and remain interested in what they do. The staff inspire the children to behave well as they take all opportunities to acknowledge their progress and achievements and they represent exemplary role models for behaviour. They speak to children in a calm, respectful and caring manner and teach children to respect the environment and to think of others as they play. Children's independence is promoted as they play and learn. Staff allow children to help themselves to resources without restricting the amount they use and they also give them the responsibility of tidying up when they hear the 'tidy up' music. The children stop what they are doing and proceed to tidy up, so they learn to take care of their toys and environment. Activities are planned to nurture children's appreciation of their own and others' feelings. Consequently, as children play and during circle time activities they show respect and wait their turn in speaking. Staff introduce new ideas and games which encourage participation and cooperation between the children. The 'mystery maker' stirs great excitement in the children who listen to the mysterious clues and guess what toys the mystery maker has taken from the nursery. The children listen intently to the staff member who reads out the clue and the children have to guess what it is, and where to go to find the next clue. They search the garden till eventually they find the last clue with great excitement.

Children's understanding of the difference and diversity of the world around them is innovatively explored. Staff provide opportunities for children to play with resources reflecting the multi-cultural society that we live in today. They display dual language labels, and visual images which reflect positive images of culture, ethnicity, gender and disability. The staff encourage extremely positive attitudes with the children because every child at the nursery is highly valued as an individual. Children take part in activities based on cultural and religious celebrations and parents become activity involved in the planning of these events. For example, recently, parents helped the children take part in an Asian wedding. The children dressed-up in traditional Asian costumes, wore authentic jewels and had painted henna hands, and they made and ate a selection of Asian food. The nursery menu includes food tastes from other countries and during cooking and baking sessions the children, in both rooms, are encouraged to make and taste food from around the world. Some dual language signs are displayed throughout the nursery. These have been obtained by staff from families who speak English as an additional language to help them support children's home language in the nursery while also promoting their understanding of English.

Children enjoy an extensive range of physical play opportunities and exercise in the outdoor play area. They take part in music and movement sessions, children's yoga and soft play, and they peddle wheeled toys round the outdoor play area, crawl round

underground tunnels and use climbing frames and slides. The provision of the outdoor canopy enables the children to experience outdoor activities throughout the year. Children benefit from a nutritionally balanced diet. The food is freshly prepared each day and transported to the nursery from a local rural school. The menu provides a variety of delicious tastes and textures that incorporates plenty of fresh fruit and vegetables. Menus are displayed and all dietary needs are catered for. Children's interest in healthy eating is further extended through their involvement in growing fruit and vegetables outside and cooking activities. Children's independence and self-help skills are encouraged during routines throughout the nursery, but there is scope to further extend this at mealtimes by enabling children to serve their own food and pour their own drinks. Children learn how to look after themselves and keep themselves safe through the clear explanations, which staff give regarding safety issues. They follow the instructions from staff when they are boarding the bus to go on their outings and when they are practising the nursery's evacuation procedure.

As the children approach school age and are preparing for reception class, the manager makes contact with the appropriate schools. The children visit their new school with their key person. The children spend a morning getting to know their teachers and their new classroom. Information about each child is passed on to the new schools to help them compile their new classes. In preparation for this visit the staff read stories about starting school and answer any questions or worries the children may have using their transition puppet 'Benjamin Button'.

The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision

The management and staff have consistently high expectations for the continued high quality of care that is offered to the children and their families. Leadership is inspirational. The management have outstanding ambitions and pursue excellence in all aspects of the nursery. Their consistent motivation and enthusiasm inspires the staff team, who are committed to provide outstanding and inclusive nursery provision for all children. The thorough self-evaluation methods implemented ensure that all children thrive and the nursery has the capacity for continuous development. For example, there are exciting plans to develop the outdoor area further for the children linked to solar power and extending the bird Aviary. The evaluation processes involve the views of the staff, the parents and the children. All the views are listened to and taken on board. The recommendations from the previous inspection have been fully met through the implementation of the revised Early Years Foundation Stage. The management provide high-quality professional supervision programmes that lead into the annual appraisals and inform staff development and training programmes. The monitoring of practice throughout the nursery is exemplary with observation and the introduction of peer assessment and videoing of staff's practice further adding to improvements. This excellent self-reflection of practice improves all aspects of the nursery and demonstrates a strong drive to maintain the high levels of achievement.

All children are protected and safeguarded. The utmost priority is given to children's safety at all times. All staff complete regular safeguarding training, including the manager who is

the designated person for the nursery. The manager and staff have an excellent understanding of their role and responsibilities should they be concerned about a child in their care. Robust recruitment and vetting procedures are implemented which ensures that all staff are suitable to work with children. All new staff undergo a thorough induction programme and complete a probationary period. All the required documentation is in place and meticulously maintained. An extensive range of policies and procedures successfully underpin daily practice and regular reviews are carried out. Staff create an active environment which is welcoming, safe and stimulating where children engage in dynamic learning. Effective risk assessments are completed and staff monitor arrivals and departures. All children feel very secure and clearly enjoy their play and learning. Consequently, when children move onto their next stage of learning they have high self-esteem and are inquisitive and independent learners.

Thorough and comprehensive processes are in place to monitor the quality of provision and the educational programmes. These processes include the manager's robust system to track children's progress. As a result, children who are at risk of falling below their expected levels of development, are quickly identified. The staff work extremely closely with the local authority, multi-agency workers and other professionals, to support the children in the nursery with special educational needs and/or disabilities. The staff work closely with all agencies to identify all children's needs so that children receive the help they require to continue to make excellent progress in their learning and development.

Partnerships with parents are excellent. They feel consulted and involved in the organisation of the nursery. Parents are highly complimentary of the nursery and refer to the 'exceptional care their children receive' and the friendliness of the staff. They comment that staff support children's learning and development exceptionally well. Relationships with other professionals involved with children are firmly established and contribute in supporting children's learning and welfare.

What inspection judgements mean

Registered early years provision

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	Outstanding provision is highly effective in meeting the needs of all children exceptionally well. This ensures that children are very well prepared for the next stage of their learning.
Grade 2	Good	Good provision is effective in delivering provision that meets the needs of all children well. This ensures children are ready for the next stage of their learning.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	Satisfactory provision is performing less well than expectations in one or more of the key areas. It requires improvement in order to be good.
Grade 4	Inadequate	Provision that is inadequate requires significant improvement and/or enforcement action. The provision is failing to give children an acceptable standard of early years education and/or is not meeting the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. It will be inspected again within 12 months of the date of this inspection.
Met		The provision has no children on roll. The inspection judgement is that the provider continues to meet the requirements for registration.
Not met		The provision has no children on roll. The inspection judgement is that the provider does not meet the requirements for registration.

Inspection

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted 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.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY391884
Local authority	Cumbria
Inspection number	873982
Type of provision	
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 5
Total number of places	55
Number of children on roll	115
Name of provider	Strawberry How Nursery School Ltd.
Date of previous inspection	06/01/2010
Telephone number	01900 823 322

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Type of provision

For the purposes of this inspection the following definitions apply:

Full-time provision is that which operates for more than three hours. These are usually known as nurseries, nursery schools and pre-schools and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. They are registered on the Early Years Register and pay the higher fee for registration.

Sessional provision operates for more than two hours but does not exceed three hours in any one day. These are usually known as pre-schools, kindergartens or nursery schools

and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. They are registered on the Early Years Register and pay the lower fee for registration.

Childminders care for one or more children where individual children attend for a period of more than two hours in any one day. They operate from domestic premises, which are usually the childminder's own home. They are registered on the Early Years Register and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Out of school provision may be sessional or full-time provision and is delivered before or after school and/or in the summer holidays. They are registered on the Early Years Register and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. Where children receive their Early Years Foundation Stage in school these providers do not have to deliver the learning and development requirements in full but should complement the experiences children receive in school.

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