

Thornton Lodge Early Years Centre

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspector

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Setting address

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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

Thornton Lodge Early Years Centre was registered in May 2011 and is managed by the Pre-school Learning Alliance. It operates from a purpose built community and early years centre. Children have direct access from the large playrooms to the outdoor play area. The Early Years Centre serves the local community.

The setting is registered on the Early Years Register. A maximum of 48 children may attend at any one time, of these, 46 children may be in the two years to three years age range. The setting opens five days a week, 38 weeks per year. Children can attend for sessions between the hours of 9.15am to 4pm Monday to Friday. The setting supports children who speak English as an additional language and can support children with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

The manager holds an appropriate level 3 childcare qualification. The staff team consists of a further eight practitioners, all of whom with the exception of one staff member are qualified to level 2 or 3 in childcare and education and one member of staff holds a level 7 qualification.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children are very well cared for in an inclusive and imaginative environment. They make good progress in their learning and development as staff have a strong understanding of how to plan for their needs. Children have excellent opportunities to learn about healthy lifestyles. Parents are welcomed in the setting and generally effective communication ensures children settle in and thrive. Children and their families who speak English as an additional language are supported exceptionally well. Links with other professionals and local schools enable the setting to support children's individual needs. The staff work closely together and have begun evaluating and reflecting on their practice, as they strive to improve children's outcomes.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- find further ways to work in partnership with parents, involving them in their child's continuous learning and development
- continue to develop processes for evaluating the practice which take account of the views of children, parents and staff.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children's welfare is very well safeguarded. Thorough procedures for recruiting, vetting and checking staff ensures those working with children are suitable. Managers have received safeguarding training and all other members of staff understand their responsibilities to report any concerns they may have about children's well-being. Detailed policies and well-organised procedures are shared with all staff and discussed with parents. Clear records are kept for children with parent contact numbers kept up-to-date in case of emergencies. All staff have paediatric first aid training so children are looked after appropriately in the case of illness or accidents which are recorded efficiently. The premises are secure and children are safe because of effective entry systems and attentive supervision. Comprehensive and frequently reviewed risk assessments make sure potential hazards for children are kept to a minimum.

The early years centre is well-resourced and creatively arranged to provide a wide range of areas which are interesting and engaging for children. Staff are deployed very well. They work flexibly to ensure that children have effective adult support with their play both indoors and outdoors throughout the sessions. In the seven months the setting has been operating, staff have begun the process of reflecting and evaluating on their practice. Regular staff meetings and individual appraisal sessions with their line manager provide opportunities for staff to share their ideas for improvements. For example, they suggest developing a quiet area outdoors to benefit children who want to relax. However, parents' and children's views are not yet sought and used to inform the evaluation process. Managers have also identified developments to the provision in response to a growing number of younger children now attending. The centre provides exceptionally well support to children who are learning English as an additional language. A wealth of resources, displays and activities fully reflect the different cultures and languages of the children and their families. Staff who speak several languages are invaluable as they very effectively support children's language development. Where children use languages in which staff are not fluent, they make sure they have useful word lists and pictures so children are understood and can begin learning some English words.

Parents are made very welcome in the setting. They are provided with informative visits before their children start at the centre and support for filling in and translating forms is provided where necessary. Staff spend time with parents gathering information about their children and sharing the centre's policies and procedures with them. This means children's well-being and individual needs are understood which helps them settle in successfully. Communication is continued with parents who are encouraged to stay and talk to staff at the start of sessions. Children's learning and development files are available to parents, although, they do not generally contribute to these yet. Partnerships with other professionals are being developed with the community centre and through regular meetings to support funded two year old children. The centre displays a range of information about activities and support groups for parents.

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

Children in the setting make very good progress from their varied starting points. This is because well-qualified and knowledgeable staff provide highly suitable environments and learning opportunities. Perceptive observations of children and careful identification of possible next steps are used to inform planning of activities so that these fully support children's individual learning and development needs. Children engage in stimulating freely chosen play which develops their imaginations well. For example, they use a large piece of patterned fabric to make a place to dance and sing, putting on the music player and choosing instruments from different cultures. Pouring sand and water in and out of different size containers or pegging items on the washing line outside enables children to develop good coordination skills. Children acquire mathematical understanding and solve problems as they work out how to wrap boxes in Christmas paper to go under the tree. Counting opportunities are provided in several languages and as part of children's routines so they learn about numbers. For example, an adult helping put on gloves to go outside counts each finger with the children. Children learn about reading as they regularly share books with adults and each other and enjoy singing rhymes and repeating the actions. They have a wide range of pens, crayons and paints with which they draw and make marks as they play throughout the areas. This means they develop very good pre-writing skills. Children skilfully manipulate the mouse to complete games and puzzles on the computer. Consequently, children develop skills to support their future learning very well.

Children learn about living healthy lifestyles exceedingly well. They have access to the outdoors at all times and are supported to be active on the bikes and climbing frame. They recognise that they need to put on their coats and warm clothes when it is cold. Children are provided with pictorial menus and displays so they can choose which fruits and healthy snacks they would like. They are encouraged to take part in baking and cooking activities and role play, using the utensils and play oven in the play dough area. At snack time they develop an excellent understanding of hygiene practices as they wash their hands enthusiastically. After lunch children are helped to brush their teeth so they develop excellent understanding of dental hygiene.

Children behave very well in the centre and learn to keep themselves safe. They know to knock on the outside door for help to open it safely and so staff know they have come outside. They learn to use equipment, such as, tape dispensers and hole punches safely. Children develop valuable independence as they choose their own activities and willingly join in and help each other with tidying up. Children enjoy sorting out the name cards for snack time, working together to recognise children's names and checking who is here today. They confidently go to adults for advice when they need help. At snack time they pour their own milk or water and clear away cups and plates into the appropriate containers. Children take off their shoes and socks when using the prayer mats and join in the Eid party or create Christmas cards and play with the nativity scene. Therefore, they learn to value and respect each other's beliefs and customs exceptionally well.

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

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	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	1
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	2

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	1
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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