

# Secret Garden Children's Centre

Inspection report for early years provision

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**Inspector** Christine Walker

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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

The Secret Garden Children's Centre was registered in 2005. It is a designated Sure Start Children's Centre, managed by Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council. It operates in purpose-built premises within the grounds of Athersley North Primary School. The nursery has use of a large play base, which is divided into two main areas for children aged under and over 2 years. Children have direct access to secure, enclosed outdoor play areas which provide varied play opportunities. A maximum of 30 children may attend the nursery at any one time. There are currently 43 children on roll aged from 10 months to four years of age. The nursery is open each weekday from 8am to 6pm throughout the year except for bank holidays. Children are able to attend for a variety of sessions. The nursery is registered on the Early Years Register. Children come from a wide catchment area. The nursery supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and has procedures in place to support children who speak English as an additional language. The nursery receives funding to provide free early education to children aged two, three and four.

There are 18 staff employed to work directly with the children, all of whom have an appropriate early years qualification at level 3. Of these two members of staff hold appropriate early years degrees and are qualified to level 7, three are qualified to level 5 and are undertaking qualifications at level 6 and four are qualified to level 4 and three of these are undertaking qualifications at level 5. The nursery is supported by an Early Years Consultant employed by the Local Education Authority who is part of the Nursery Management Team and the Senior Leadership Team of the Children's Centre. The nursery is part of a quality assurance scheme.

## The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children settle well in this very friendly and welcoming setting. Children make good progress towards the early learning goals in most areas of learning. All children receive good levels of care because the enthusiastic and well qualified staff team work closely with individual children and their families. Inclusion is given excellent priority and successful partnerships between parents and other agencies ensure that children's needs are well met. Detailed policies and procedures are implemented effectively, however risk assessments are not regularly reviewed. The management team and practitioners work successfully together to secure continuous improvement as they reflect upon their practice and identify aspects for development.

## What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- enhance children's experiences by planning an outdoor environment that is rich in signs, symbols, notices, numbers and words that take into account their differing interests, understandings, home backgrounds and cultures
- review the range of opportunities freely accessible in the continuous provision for younger children to ensure mark making and creative resources are available.

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

Practitioners have a robust approach to keeping children safe and safeguarding children is given priority. The setting is fully committed to children's well-being and practitioners demonstrate an excellent understanding of safeguarding procedures. Children's health and safety is enhanced by the consistent implementation of policies, procedures and comprehensive risk assessments cover all aspects of the premises. However the legal requirement to review risk assessments at least once a year has not been complied with. At the time of inspection there were no hazards or risks to children. The nursery has effective recruitment and vetting procedures and all staff and students receive induction into the setting. Effective security measures are in place, with intercom access to the building. All visitors are required to produce identification and sign a visitor's book. All the required documentation is in place and organised effectively to ensure confidentiality. Fire drills are practised regularly and an effective record ensures that identified issues are dealt with. Children know what to do in the event of a fire and confidently explain that if the red bell goes off they need to go outside because it's the fire bell.

The setting provides an ethos where each child is valued and respected. The day is organised to meet children's needs and good attention is given to the individual routines and care needs of babies and younger children. As a result they develop a strong sense of security through close and caring contact with practitioners who know them well. Positive outcomes for children are attributed to the excellent use of space, access to resources, a balance between indoor and outdoor play and rigorous monitoring of children's attainment. Interesting posters, pictures and attractive wall displays contribute effectively towards making the environment vibrant and conducive to learning. In the main, good attention is given to enabling children to access information at their height, for example, number lines, pictorial aids and photographs. However, the range of signs, symbols, notices and words in the outdoor environment is less well developed. Practitioners know the children well and have a good knowledge of their individual needs and unique characteristics. Practitioners liaise closely with parents and other professionals to ensure each child gets the support they need at any early stage to achieve their full potential. Children learn to appreciate diversity and take into account different needs and backgrounds of others. They take part in a wide range of activities and experiences and use resources which reflect positive images of culture, gender and disability. For example, the range pictures of hair styles available at the hairdressers were fully inclusive and reflected the cultural heritage of the children.

The setting has positive relationships with parents and carers. Parents are provided

with a range of information about the nursery including information about safeguarding children. The well-resourced parents' area contains a wealth of information leaflets and a children's and parents' library. Parents are kept well informed about their child's progress, achievements and daily experiences. There are opportunities to talk to staff at arrival and collection times. The setting is effectively led and managed by the nursery management team who are good role models and encourage a culture of reflective practice throughout the nursery. Practitioners work very well as a team; they are very well qualified, motivated and committed to providing good support for children in their care. The process for managing professional development is well established and training needs are addressed. The setting constantly evaluates its practice and demonstrates a strong commitment to continuous improvement. This is done through the self-evaluation process.

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

Children are happy to attend this welcoming and friendly setting. The good organisation of the educational programme for all children reflects varied and imaginative experiences that meet the needs of children well. For example, children write a shopping list in the home corner, find a purse and money together with a bag and go outside to the shop set up in the play shed. Children select items from the shop, count them and pay for the number of items they have purchased. This activity was skilfully supported by practitioners who enhanced the children's learning through good use of vocabulary and open ended questions.

Babies and younger children in the nursery have good opportunities to explore a wide range of resources in their own way. They love to play outside in the sand, work out how to use electronic resources as they dance to the music. However they have limited opportunities for mark-making and creative activities. Practitioners work well together to promote children's learning in a calm unhurried atmosphere. As a result, children make good progress in all aspects of their learning and development in relation to their starting points and capabilities. When planning activities practitioners take cues from children and also use their observations to guide planning based on children's interests and play preferences. Planning, observation and assessment are good. Detailed on-going observations and assessments are undertaken by staff and provide a clear insight into the children's progress and achievements. Children have a learning journey file which is used to record their progress. These are available in the nursery for parents to read. Children are happy, motivated, interested in the broad range of activities and take responsibility for choosing what they want to do. There is a good balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities.

Good emphasis is placed on children's personal, emotional and social development. Children are self-assured and develop close bonds with practitioners who know them well. These consistent, positive interactions help children to feel secure. A strong emphasis is placed on developing children's communication, language and literacy skills. Practitioners use a range of structured activities and monitoring systems to ensure children make good progress in this aspect of their learning.

Makaton signs and pictorial prompts are displayed and used throughout the nursery and these effectively enhance children's communication skills. Children enjoy time in the sensory room which provides a calm quiet environment with no distractions where children can explore and develop their senses and skills.

Older children have opportunities to practise their mark-making using a wide range of media. For example, painting, sticking and drawing activities were widely utilised. Children's understanding of numbers and problem-solving skills are enhanced through a range of activities. Children take part in counting songs, matching and threading activities and like to construct by building a train track for the trains. Good emphasis is placed on play and learning in the outdoor areas and the nursery operates a free-flow system and older children can choose where to play. For example, children are able to use climbing and balancing equipment, enjoy riding bikes and make an imaginary fire engine or car with the range of sturdy plastic crates, tyres, planks and other equipment. Younger children are provided with opportunities to help for example, a dust pan and brush was provided to enable a child to help sweep up the sand.

Children's understanding of healthy lifestyles is enhanced, they know that eating fresh fruit and vegetables will make you big and strong. They are confident regarding their personal hygiene and understand the importance of washing their hands before snack and mealtimes. All children enjoy a very sociable lunchtime meal and younger children are encouraged to feed themselves. Children's dietary needs are well met, they enjoy healthy and nutritious snacks and freshly cooked meals. Practitioners are skilled and thoughtful in their management of children and their behaviour. Consequently, children demonstrate positive behaviour; they help tidy away toys, have good manners, are kind to each other and learn to share. Children have a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe and know that they must be careful when using scissors. Children are developing good skills for future learning.

## 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

<b>How well does the setting meet the needs of the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?</b>	2
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	2

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

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	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	2

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

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### Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

<b>Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	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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