

# Cliff Nursery Silkstone

Inspection report for early years provision

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**Unique reference number** EY314268  
**Inspection date** 14/09/2009  
**Inspector** Janet Skippins

**Setting address** Martin Croft, Silkstone, Barnsley, South Yorkshire, S75 4JS

**Telephone number** 01226 792350

**Email**

**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*.

The provider must provide a copy of this report to all parents with children at the setting where reasonably practicable. The provider must provide a copy of the report to any other person who asks for one, but may charge a fee for this service (The Childcare (Inspection) Regulations 2008 regulations 9 and 10).

The setting also makes provision for children older than the early years age group which is registered on the voluntary and/or compulsory part(s) of the Childcare Register. This report does not include an evaluation of that provision, but a comment about compliance with the requirements of the Childcare Register is included in Annex B.

Please see our website for more information about each childcare provider. We publish inspection reports, conditions of registration and details of complaints we receive where we or the provider take action to meet the requirements of registration.

## **Description of the setting**

Cliff Nursery was registered in 2005. It is privately owned by the Alpha Plus Group, which is a group of colleges, schools and early years settings. It operates in a two storey building in Silkstone, Barnsley. Children are accommodated in six rooms and a hall on two floors with access to an enclosed outdoor area. The nursery is registered on the Early Years Register and both parts of the childcare register. A maximum of 70 may attend the nursery at any one time. There are currently 134 children aged from birth to under five years on role, some on a part time basis. The nursery supports children with learning difficulties and disabilities. It is open each weekday from 8.00am to 6.00pm throughout the year. There are 29 members of staff who work directly with the children. All except three of whom hold relevant childcare qualifications. Two of these are working towards a level three qualification. The nursery manager is a qualified teacher with Early Years Professional Status.

## **The overall effectiveness of the early years provision**

Overall the quality of the provision is outstanding.

The highly motivated and ambitious leadership has a very clear vision for the nursery and has successfully created an inclusive environment. Systems to evaluate practice are highly effective in supporting management and staff to improve standards and make further progress. The nursery has an extremely strong partnership with parents, other settings and agencies which ensures children receive individual support. This results in highly effective continuity of care enabling all children to make excellent progress.

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

To further improve the high quality early years provision the registered person should consider:

- consider ways to increase children's independence and ability to make choices, for example, by creating opportunities for them to serve themselves with food at mealtimes.

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

Adults consistently give the highest priority to safeguarding all children. Well trained staff confidently operate robust policies and procedures to ensure systems to safeguard children are highly effective. Clear vetting procedures ensure that all staff working with children are suitable to do so. Rigorous risk assessments take place to ensure there is a very safe environment both indoors and outdoors, minimising risks to children.

The nursery belongs to a national group of educationalists who provide extremely valuable support to ensure it is resourced to the highest possible standard and that staff are very well qualified. The management have high aspirations for quality through ongoing improvement and have built a very well qualified highly committed staff team. Morale is very high and belief in the setting's success runs through all levels of staff. The nursery has been publicly recognized for enhancing the work life balance of staff. Staff work flexibly, taking time off, providing there are sufficient staff working with the children. Levels of staff training have increased with the newly introduced personal professional development plan. Some staff use flexible working hours to study for foundation degrees. Improving work life balance has assisted staff retention which means greater continuity for the children. Staff are better trained which results in a very good learning environment where children can thrive. There is a very strong team spirit with staff supporting each other to provide excellent outcomes for children. Effective use of staff expertise with efficient use of resources and the environment ensures that children's well being, learning and development are paramount.

At the last inspection the nursery asked to ensure parents were aware of how to make a complaint. The complaints procedure is now displayed in a prominent position on the notice board for parents. It is also included in the welcome pack for parents. This has enhanced the nursery's partnership with parents. Also, the nursery was asked to develop the children's awareness of calculation. Two members of staff attended different courses on this subject and cascaded the training to all staff at meetings. Children now take part in more activities such as singing number rhymes with actions, and playing number games which has resulted in them increasing their problem solving, reasoning and numeracy skills.

The setting has a highly positive relationship with all groups of parents and carers. Feedback from staff, parents and children is taken seriously, acted on and used to inform the self evaluation. Parents are invited to take part in major decisions and meetings are held to inform them of outcomes. Recently, parents have formed a Food Committee, they have talked with their children about their preferences for healthy eating and their findings have resulted in changes to nursery meals and snacks. Parents and carers are very well informed about all aspects of their own children's achievement, well being and development. They receive written and verbal information daily and are aware that they can look at their children's observation, assessment and planning records at any time, as well as seeing them at regular parents evenings. The nursery has an open door policy, which means that parents are welcomed at any time and especially when their children take part in the many dance, sport and French activities run by specialist teachers. Each child has a "special moments" book to which parents and other family members contribute photographs and written information. Parents welcome the opportunity to explain how "fantastic" the nursery is, and how pleased they are with the excellent progress their children have made. They say the staff are consistent, considerate and adaptable. They benefit from the regular parent training and information sessions on topics such as childcare tax credits, the Early Years Foundation Stage and the importance of outdoor play in all weathers. The setting provides tailored guidance and information about precise ways parents and carers can support their children's learning across the different areas. For example, notices inform parents of three and four year olds which letters of the alphabet,

numbers, shapes and colours children will be learning that week. Suggestions about how parents can emphasise these are included.

The nursery is highly committed to working in partnership with others and takes a lead role in establishing effective working relationships. There are well established channels of communication between all partners involved with individual children, which successfully promote their learning, development and welfare. The management of the nursery ensures that all staff, not simply the child's key person, are highly knowledgeable about children's additional needs. For example, if training is required to manage a certain medical condition it is provided for all staff. The nursery is participating in a National Strategies project called " Making a Big Difference" . It is involved in a group looking at transitions and sharing best practice. This has led to the creation of the role of transition coordinator. The transition coordinator works closely with children, staff and parents to ensure smooth transition, not only as children progress internally, but there are now close links with all the nurseries and schools which children move on to. Some children attend other playgroups and nurseries and the nursery manager has joined a moderation group which includes local settings. The group shares information to ensure coherence and continuity for the children. The nursery also works in close partnership with universities and colleges and welcomes students on placement who are studying for qualifications at all levels. The nursery manager provides a mentoring service for those who are aiming for Early Years Professional Status.

The nursery effectively and actively promotes equality and diversity. All children and families are valued and appreciated by staff who are proactive in tackling and challenging any prejudice and discrimination. Positive images, such as informative displays which show current festivals being celebrated around the world provide children and families with a sense of belonging and of being valued.

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

The exceptional organisation of the educational programmes reflects rich, varied and imaginative experiences that meet the needs of all children exceedingly well. Assessment through high quality observations is rigorous and information gained, is used very effectively to guide planning for individual children. Since the introduction of the Early Years Foundation Stage managers and staff have closely monitored, evaluated and changed the systems for observation, assessment and planning and have reached a point where they all feel the current system works extremely well, with a high emphasis on meeting the needs of individual children. Teaching is rooted in expert knowledge of the learning and development requirements and a full understanding of how young children learn and progress. All children, including babies, make significant gains in their learning. Their individual progress is consistently good and often excellent in relation to their capabilities and starting points.

Staff have loving and caring relationships with children who form strong attachments to adults and other children within the nursery. The nursery management made a successful grant application and arranged for an educational

psychologist from the local authority to work with staff in the nursery to enhance children's self esteem. This has resulted in children with higher levels of confidence interacting extremely well with staff and other children. Their behaviour is very good and they are beginning to show a good awareness of responsibility within the setting. For example, two year old children identify their coat pegs through recognition of their photograph, proudly telling the inspector "that's me, I'm putting my coat on". They find their coats independently and try to put them on without help. Staff respond quickly when help is needed and praise the children for trying to help themselves. Children display good manners, particularly at meal times, saying please and thank you. They enjoy eating lunch in the dining room with familiar staff sitting with them, eating the same food. Because their meal is plated up for them they are not able to make choices about the food or the quantity they would like to eat. This inhibits development of their decision making skills. However, older and more able children do will help themselves to drinks from jugs and demonstrate that they can pour with skill and accuracy.

Children are extremely happy and well settled in the nursery. They thoroughly enjoy looking at books and listening to stories both independently and in groups. All four year olds and some three year old children are able to write their names and other words using correctly formed letters. For example, they have made signs which are displayed on the wall reminding children to wash their hands. They show their understanding of the French language during French lessons when they eagerly sing "one, two, three, four, five, once I caught a fish alive" using the French language for the numbers. Younger children concentrate for long periods when playing independently with play dough, putting coloured sticks into the shapes they have made and spontaneously saying what colour the sticks are. They use tools and equipment such as cutters and rolling pins safely when moulding the dough. Children develop counting skills as part of their everyday activities. For example, when outdoors using compost and plant pots they count the pots. They practice problem solving when acting out number rhymes such as "three current buns", when they are asked how many are left if one is taken away. Children develop IT skills by using simple computer programmes and digital cameras.

All children show a strong sense of security and feel safe within the setting. They show an excellent understanding of what standards of behaviour are expected and apply these in order to keep themselves and others safe. For example, preschool children use three rooms on the first floor which they moved in and out of independently with confidence. They know they have to be very careful when coming down the stairs to the dining room or outdoor play area. Similarly, when outdoors these children can access a grassed area by using steps from the main play area, they use these steps with care. They understand that once they are on the grassed area they can run, but not in the direction of the steps. They are also aware that they are not allowed to use this area unless an adult is with them. Babies separate from their parents with ease and join in the activities. Children show an exceptional understanding of the importance of good personal hygiene. Before eating they wash their hands with soap and water and then use antibacterial gel confidently explaining they are doing this so that they don't get germs.

The nursery operates and healthy eating policy and all menus are regularly

reviewed and checked by a dietician. Food is locally sourced and used to create freshly prepared, nutritious meals. Each month the nursery has a food theme day to encourage children to try food from around the world. This coincides with well planned activities to celebrate diverse festivals. Children enjoy caring for their own fruit and vegetables in the garden. They harvest these and use them to make dishes such as soup and pasta sauce. This has developed their understanding of healthy lifestyles and they are keen to point out which foods are healthy and which are unhealthy. One and two year old children have free access to their outdoor area throughout the day. Older children, who are accommodated on the first floor, are escorted to their outdoor area where they spend as much time as possible. Children engage in an extremely wide range of play experiences outdoors. A comprehensive range of equipment enables children to develop their physical skills very well. They build structures with crates, mix sand with water, create paintings, mould dough, play musical instruments, use ride on toys and collect conkers. They use wooden structures such as trains to organise trips to the seaside, then imagine they are buying ice creams. Staff instinctively know when to interact with them to support and extend their play and when to allow them to be fully immersed in independent play. Children are not rushed when it is time to come inside for meals but given a warning that they will have to finish their chosen activity in five minutes time.

Children develop an excellent understanding of diversity as they celebrate festivals and special events, use dressing up clothes and listen to music and stories from other cultures. This ensures that children learn to value aspects of their own lives and the diverse society in which they live.



## 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>	1
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	1

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

<b>How effectively is the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?</b>	1
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	1
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	1
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	1
The effectiveness of safeguarding	1
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	1
The effectiveness of partnerships	1
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	1

### 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>	1
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	1
The extent to which children feel safe	1
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	1

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## **Annex B: the Childcare Register**

The provider confirms that the requirements of the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are: Met

The provider confirms that the requirements of the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are: Met