

The Nest at Newbiggin

Unique reference number (URN): 2805421

Address: Grace Darling C Of E Academy, Central Parkway, Newbiggin-by-the-sea, NE64 6RT

Type: Childcare on non-domestic premises

Registered with Ofsted: 04/09/2024

Registers: EYR

Registered person: Northumberland Church of England Academy Trust

Inspection report: 13 July 2026

Exceptional	
Strong standard	●
Expected standard	● ● ● ● ●
Needs attention	
Urgent improvement	

✓ Safeguarding standards met

The safeguarding standards are met. This means that leaders and/or those responsible for governance and oversight fulfil their specific responsibilities and have established an open culture in which safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and concerns are actively identified, acted upon and managed. As a result, children are made safer and feel safe.

How we evaluate safeguarding

When we inspect settings for safeguarding, they can have the following outcomes:

- **Met:** The setting has an open and positive culture of safeguarding.
- **Not met:** The setting has not created an open and positive culture of safeguarding. Not all legal requirements are met.

Strong standard ●

Behaviour, attitudes and establishing routines

Strong standard ●

Staff create unhurried, relaxed routines on arrival that allow children to settle at their own pace. This helps children to start their day feeling completely secure and at ease when their parents leave. Staff further support this by ensuring that children experience familiar routines and know what to expect. Even young children know that it is time to go outdoors after a particular song. Staff use visual cues for children who need more support to make sure they understand what is happening next and feel confident during transitions.

Leaders work with staff to consider the best ways to support children's behaviour and attitudes at this young age. Staff consistently model kindness, courtesy and respect. Babies and toddlers begin to show care and affection to others. Toddlers learn ways to look after their environment and enjoy early responsibility, for example, when they proudly put their belongings away. Staff give children clear, age appropriate guidance around safe behaviours and consistently praise their positive actions. Children beam with pride and aspire to please staff, developing an early understanding of making good choices. Relationships between staff and children are distinctly warm and supportive. Staff are highly attentive and encourage positive interactions between children. Babies begin to understand the impact of their actions on others and toddlers develop care and concern within the friendships they begin to form.

Leaders act promptly to identify and reduce any barriers to attendance. They offer any additional support families need to establish consistent routines that help children to attend well and on time and develop positive habits for the future.

Expected standard ●

Achievement

Expected standard ●

Children are happy, keen and curious learners who show consistently positive attitudes to learning. They are confident to try new activities and show resilience in their play. For example, babies repeatedly pull themselves to standing, seeking out a hand to hold to help them take their first steps. Toddlers develop their listening and attention skills, showing a keen interest in books that staff share with them. Babies excitedly babble and clap along to the familiar songs they hear. Toddlers develop their speaking skills swiftly, learning to put words together and articulating their needs and preferences. They begin to use and understand numbers and show an interest in the world around them.

All children make steady progress throughout the curriculum. Those who face barriers to their learning typically achieve well from their starting points. Some children, however, such as those who prefer to learn outdoors, would benefit from wider experiences and more precise teaching to help them to build more successfully on their learning across the

curriculum. That said, all children develop a secure base of skills and knowledge that prepares them well for future learning.

Children's welfare and wellbeing

Expected standard 

Leaders establish clear policies and procedures that support children's welfare and wellbeing. These include thorough risk assessments that are implemented consistently, safe arrangements to supervise children while they sleep and eat, and managing allergies with care. Children experience a safe, welcoming space where they typically enjoy play, learning and social interaction.

Staff meet children's personal needs with care and attention. Hygiene routines and intimate care are carried out warmly, helping children to feel secure. Children begin to develop an awareness of healthy choices through everyday routines, including rest, exercise and understanding safe behaviours. Daily access to outdoor learning provides plenty of opportunities for children to exercise and benefit from fresh air. Mealtimes are calm and relaxed social occasions where staff introduce polite manners to children, and encourage their interaction and independence. Leaders and staff understand the importance of nutrition, but this is not consistently reflected in practice. They do not share sufficient information with parents, such as guidance and expectations around meals and snacks, to help children to develop healthier eating habits. This limits how well staff can teach children about healthy choices as part of daily routines.

The key-person system is very well established. All children, including those who face barriers to their learning or wellbeing, develop secure attachments with familiar staff that help them to feel valued and to belong. Staff understand children's cues and respond swiftly, helping children to develop emotional security. Relationships are warm and supportive and, from an early age, babies show signs of secure attachments and trust in staff. This contributes to an environment where children feel safe, happy and ready to learn.

Curriculum and teaching

Expected standard 

Leaders provide a curriculum that typically covers all areas of learning. Teaching is rooted in what staff know about each child, including any barriers they may have to their learning. There is a clear focus on developing language. Staff speak clearly, giving children plenty of opportunities to hear, understand and attempt new words. The curriculum for personal, social and emotional development is particularly effective. Staff ensure that routines, relationships and play opportunities support children to become emotionally secure, confident and eager to learn. Each morning, they set up a welcome activity that they know will appeal to the children, creating a motivating start to their learning that day.

Staff provide equipment to encourage babies to stand and take their first steps. They include songs to encourage toddlers to develop specific skills, such as jumping. Time spent in the garden further supports physical development, for example, when staff support children to use slides and ride-on toys safely. While teaching in outdoor environment supports children's physical development well, it does not yet fully support other areas of learning. That said, staff engage some children in water play, helping them to develop an early mathematical understanding, counting splashes and teaching children about 'more' and 'less'.

Occasionally, staff do not support children to fully develop their interests and build even further on their learning. For example, when children enjoy painting, staff do not always provide the time and resources children need to build on learning. In the garden, staff's attention is sometimes focused on following and supervising more active children as they move quickly around the large space. This limits the capacity for high quality teaching outdoors.

Inclusion

Expected standard 

Staff swiftly identify children's unique needs and seek out any support children and families might need without delay. They support children with barriers to their learning through close communication with parents, other professionals and responsive adjustments to daily routines. Staff develop targets that identify clear learning aims for each individual child, based on what they already know and can do. Where appropriate, these aims are broken down in to small steps to help every child to experience success. While staff understand how to support children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, they would like to further develop their expertise. Staff recognise and celebrate developmental milestones with parents and share their aims what they want children to learn next. They share information with new settings when children move on so that their needs continue to be understood and met. This provides continuity and helps children to build their knowledge and skills securely.

Leaders and staff take care to learn about each child's unique experiences and circumstances, such as those facing disadvantage or being known, or previously known, to children's social care. They use this knowledge to support children's learning and wellbeing. Staff identify children's learning styles and preferences and, generally, break down any barriers to their learning. For example, they sensitively adjust routines to support less confident children to join in at a comfortable level. Children who prefer to learn outdoors would benefit from more organised experiences during time spent in the garden. Where children are eligible for additional funding, leaders typically use this well. For example, they provide 'Beddy Bear' bags, filled with books and resources that support parents to help children to develop a love of reading at home.

Leadership and governance

Expected standard 

There is a clear culture of reflection in the nursery, based on leaders' high expectations and their commitment to providing high quality care and learning for all children. Staff are confident in evaluating their own practice and benefit from professional guidance and support. This helps them to enhance their teaching and identify areas where they would like to extend their skills. Leaders respond swiftly and source further training, for example in supporting children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. Those in governance have a secure oversight and take an active interest in the nursery provision. They share leader's aspirations and take time to ensure that staff feel valued. Staff appreciate that leaders ensure that their workload is manageable and speak highly of the support they receive. Morale is high, which contributes to the positive and supportive atmosphere in nursery.

Leaders deploy staff effectively to ensure that children are safe and supervised well at all times. However, they have not identified and addressed how the level of supervision required in the large garden limits staff's capacity to provide consistently high quality teaching during outdoor play. Monitoring arrangements typically highlight areas for development well. Leaders address these quickly, but some minor areas for development remain.

Leaders value parents' views and contributions and help them to celebrate the important role that they play in their child's learning. Parents visit nursery often, such as for 'stay and play' sessions, where they and staff discuss children's progress and plan together for what they will learn next. Leaders signpost families for any support they might need and work closely with any other professionals who become involved. There are meaningful links between leaders in this nursery and in the provision that children move onto, who share information to tailor children's care and learning. This helps to create a cohesive approach to supporting children's learning and wellbeing, increasing their potential to thrive.

What it's like to be a child at this setting

Babies and toddlers play happily in this nursery. Meticulously planned routines give these very young children a secure and nurturing start before they move on to different provision at age 2. They benefit greatly from warm relationships with caring and attentive staff, who stay close to them, share their play and model early communication and positive behaviours. Babies imitate actions, copy language and show enjoyment as they explore together. Toddlers show a firm sense of belonging, for example when they store their shoes and packed lunches in their special place on arrival. Children settle confidently at the start of the day, even when very new to the nursery. They quickly become confident and at ease, for example, when parents are welcome to stay in the mornings until children are emotionally secure, ready to separate from them and go off to play.

Children enjoy appealing experiences that promote early counting, mark making and physical development. They practise scooping, pouring, counting and making marks with increasing control while exploring coloured rice in a tray. The nursery is filled with songs, rhymes and dancing, which children eagerly join in with, showing clear enjoyment in their play and learning. New babies settle quickly, showing early bonding behaviours such as watching their key person as they move around the room. Toddlers make choices and access resources independently. They participate confidently in activities, such as painting, supported well by clear encouragement to choose what they would like to do.

Children receive attentive, thoughtful care that promotes their safety and wellbeing. Parents share how much children love to attend and describe the amazing progress that children make. Parents and children alike feel included and part of the nursery community. Children with barriers to their learning benefit from thoughtful adjustments to routines, and staff's frequent communication with parents enables children to experience routines that are familiar from home. Children are settled, happy and achieve well, and are ready for the next stage of their learning.

Next steps

- Leaders should refine the organisation of the outdoor environment to enable staff to consistently deliver high-quality teaching across all areas of learning, particularly for children who prefer to learn outdoors.
 - Leaders should strengthen the promotion of healthy eating, so that children consistently receive nutritious meals in nursery and learn to make choices that support their long-term wellbeing.
 - Leaders should support staff to identify when to adapt their teaching, to give children the time and support they need to fully explore their ideas, follow their interests and deepen their learning.
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About this inspection

The inspector spoke with leaders, staff, children, parents and carers during the inspection.

We carried out this inspection 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.

Inspector:

Clare Wilkins

About this setting

Unique reference number (URN): 2805421

Address:

Grace Darling C Of E Academy
Central Parkway

Newbiggin-by-the-sea
NE64 6RT

Type: Childcare on non-domestic premises

Registration date: 04/09/2024

Registered person: Northumberland Church of England Academy Trust

Register(s): EYR

Operating hours: Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday : 07:45 - 04:45

Local authority: Northumberland

Facts and figures used on inspection

This data was available to the inspector at the time of the inspection.

 This data is from 13 July 2026

Children numbers

Age range of children at the time of inspection

1 to 3

Total number of places

16

Our grades explained

Exceptional 

Practice is exceptional: of the highest standard nationally. Other settings can learn from it.

Strong standard 

The setting reaches a strong standard. Leaders are working above the standard expected of them.

Expected standard 

The setting is fulfilling the expected standard of education and/or care. This means they are following the standard set out in statutory and non-statutory legislation and the professional standards expected of them.

Needs attention ●

The expected standards are not met but leaders are likely able to make the necessary improvements.

Urgent improvement ●

The setting needs to make urgent improvements to provide the expected standard of education and/or care.

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