

Collaborating to support early years teaching and learning: Broomhall Nursery School and Children's Centre

URN: EY226999

Region: North East, Yorkshire and Humber

Remit: Early years

Provider background

The provision for under threes at [Broomhall Nursery School and Children's Centre](#) is a social enterprise run by parents and staff. It operates from the first floor of Broomhall Nursery School in Sheffield. It was [judged outstanding](#) in 2013.

Brief description

This good practice example shows how learning from others can successfully enhance the quality of early years provision. It shows how highly effective teamwork and strong collaboration with a range of early years professionals results in high quality teaching and learning.

This is part of a set of eight good practice examples showcasing good practice in early years to support the report: '[Teaching and play in the early years – a balancing act?](#)'.

The good practice in detail

Broomhall has a long-serving, highly skilled team. Staff are extremely dedicated to providing the best learning experiences for children so that they achieve their full potential and are ready for the next stage in their learning.

High priority is given to the quality of teaching and how well children are supported by adults to learn. To constantly develop teaching, leaders and staff:

- ensure that they are up to date with the latest research and good practice
- review what they do to see whether it would benefit from change
- collaborate to share knowledge.

Teamwork

Highly effective teamwork is a significant strength of Broomhall. Leaders make sure staff have the opportunity to communicate effectively with each other to share information about children and their families and to disseminate good practice. Professional knowledge and expertise is shared among the team at every opportunity.

Key to their ethos is ensuring that all members of the team are well informed about every child.

Leaders make sure staff take time to talk about the children on a daily basis. Observations, achievements and any concerns are shared consistently so the team members know about every child's current interests, stages of development and identified next steps. This ensures that a teaching and learning opportunity is never missed.

In addition, the team monitors children's progress meticulously to identify any gaps in their achievements. Together, staff reflect on the possible causes of these gaps, including looking critically at the activities and learning opportunities they provide. They plan accordingly. Working together, they use the wide range of expertise from across the team to ensure that the curriculum is challenging and that expectations of themselves and the children are suitably high.

Learning from others

There is a wide range of skills and professional expertise among the team.

Consequently, leaders and staff take the time to regularly observe one another's practice so they are constantly learning from each other. They discuss any areas for development in order to maintain a consistently high quality of teaching.



Leaders provide their own bespoke in-house training to staff to share their professional knowledge and expertise. At their inspection in November 2013 the inspector noted:

‘Training is of excellent quality and ensures that staff knowledge is increased. For example, they recently delivered toddler training, providing staff with a very useful insight into infant centres in other countries’.

Working with external contacts

Leaders and staff have taken the time to develop strong and effective working relationships with a wide range of early years professionals outside of the nursery. This enhances the quality of their provision and practice and has enabled them to learn from some of the best.

Some of the ways that leaders and staff work with other providers and professionals include:

- sharing information and good practice – this helps them be aware about the professional development opportunities available to them and keeps their professional knowledge current
- visiting other settings so they can see a range of different practice for themselves and consider whether their own current practice would benefit from change
- welcoming practitioners into their own setting to support fellow colleagues and receiving informal feedback on their own work from a fresh pair of eyes
- working collaboratively with the outstanding on-site provider, Broomhall Nursery School. Staff from both settings regularly come together to share good practice and access a greater range of training. This has included in-house training around outstanding teaching from an early years advanced skills teacher and Early Years Foundation Stage leader of an outstanding early years unit and training in the Reggio Emilia approach
- making strong links with some leading early years experts, as a result of which, Broomhall takes part in early years research, testing new ways of working and sharing their findings by contributing to publications. This has enhanced the quality of teaching and learning significantly and staff are rightly proud of this work. At their inspection, the inspector noted, ‘the nursery has been involved in a number of research projects that have resulted in publications about creative thinking and thinking critically. This helps to ensure that staff remain highly knowledgeable and abreast of new initiatives, which benefits the children hugely’
- making good use of the professional support available to them through the local authority and specialist services. This has helped them learn about, and implement, strategies to support disabled children and those with special educational needs, such as the speech and language service. They have led on carrying out local and national projects and strategies designed

to support children's communication, language and literacy development. At their inspection, the inspector noted, 'staff work incredibly hard to ensure that children's additional needs are extremely well met. This is because the staff have worked closely with other professionals to create meticulously detailed care plans to ensure that children's needs are superbly met.'

Checklist to develop collaborative working to support teaching and learning

- Highly effective teamwork and information sharing is established.
- Professional knowledge and expertise is shared among the team at every opportunity.
- Staff are given time to come together and share what they know about each child, moderate assessments and plan for children's next steps.
- Staff are given time to observe and critique one another's practice.
- High quality, bespoke, in-house training is provided as required.
- Links with high quality settings are established and good practice is shared through regular meetings or shared training sessions.
- Staff visit other settings and opportunities are provided for others to visit their own setting in return.
- Leaders have developed links with other early years professionals and experts to keep up to date with new initiatives and teaching strategies.

The good practice case studies that Ofsted publishes highlight specific examples of practice that providers of education, learning and children's services have used to achieve successful outcomes.

For education, the case studies do not recommend a single particular approach to teaching and learning. Ofsted has no preferred lesson structure or teaching style. We showcase and share a wide range of approaches that providers have found work well for them in achieving good outcomes for children, young people and learners.

Are you thinking of putting these ideas into practice; or already doing something similar that could help other providers; or just interested? We'd welcome your views and ideas. Complete our survey [here](#).

Click [here](#) to see other good practice examples.

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