

Business Development

GNG Nursery, West Midlands



'Impressive performance in such a short time' Judges

GNG nursery was opened in August 2013 by non-profit organisation and registered charity Smethwick Youth and Community Centre (SYCC).

It was launched because of a lack of available high-quality local childcare in Smethwick, one of the most deprived parts of the country.

The 60-place setting is based in the former youth and community centre, which underwent a radical transformation to make it suitable for the care of children. This included constructing new walls, as well as installing new plumbing to create children's toilets and kitchen spaces. A new outdoor play area was also created and new toys and equipment provided.

When it opened, the nursery, which is

divided into three areas, was the only Ofsted outstanding setting in the area, and just one of three in the borough of Sandwell.

The high-quality setting has drastically improved the lives of local children and families, including those with English as an additional language.

Heavy emphasis is placed on providing early education places for disadvantaged two-year-olds, as well as ensuring three- and four-year-olds from underprivileged families take up the offer of free childcare. More than half of the children that attend the nursery have accessed their free place.

The fees charged by the setting are also set at a low rate, with the aim of breaking the cycle of deprivation that exists in the area by giving children the best start in life and providing

them with the best possible chance to succeed in the future.

Any profit made by the GNG Nursery is put back into the setting or the community centre to continue to improve the lives of local children and families.

The nursery employs eight members of staff, who, according to Ofsted, deliver 'exceptional teaching' and are 'constantly attuned to what the children are doing and when it is appropriate to intervene to support and extend their learning opportunities'.

The inspectorate's comments are echoed by parents whose children attend the setting, with one saying that practitioners at the nursery go beyond what is required of them. Another family described how staff have helped their child develop socially, physically and emotionally.

Highly commended Happy Kids Childcare

Happy Kids Childcare opened its first setting in January 2013, followed by a further eight nurseries across Barnsley, Rotherham and Manchester.

The settings, all of which are graded good by Ofsted, are based in highly deprived communities, where historically childcare provision has

been limited and there is a large number of disadvantaged two-, three- and four-year-olds.

More than 80 per cent of the children who attend the nurseries access just the free entitlement.

The nursery group offers flexible care for working and non-working families, providing a mix of three-, five- and 10-hour sessions.

Four of the settings are co-located with adult learning centres.

Finalist

Slice of Pie, Tootsies Private Day Nursery, Farnham

Criterion

For a new launch of or significant expansion to an early years service in the past 12 months