



Cherubs Pre School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY246080
Inspection date	09 June 2006
Inspector	Susan Jennifer Scott
Setting Address	Linton Village Hall, Linton Hill, Linton, Maidstone, Kent, ME17 4AP
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Registered person	Cindy Jo Fox
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	Sessional care

ABOUT THIS INSPECTION

The purpose of this inspection is to assure government, parents and the public of the quality of childcare and, if applicable, of nursery education. The inspection was carried out under Part XA Children Act 1989 as introduced by the Care Standards Act 2000 and, where nursery education is provided, under Schedule 26 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.

This report details the main strengths and any areas for improvement identified during the inspection. The judgements included in the report are made in relation to the outcomes for children set out in the Children Act 2004; the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding; and, where nursery education is provided, the *Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage*.

The report includes information on any complaints about the childcare provision which Ofsted has received since the last inspection or registration or 1 April 2004 whichever is the later.

The key inspection judgements and what they mean

Outstanding: this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality

Good: this aspect of the provision is strong

Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound

Inadequate: this aspect of the provision is not good enough

For more information about early years inspections, please see the booklet *Are you ready for your inspection?* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE AND NURSERY EDUCATION

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

The quality and standards of the care are good. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are good.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Cherubs Pre-School was first registered in 2003. The group operates from the village hall located in Linton, a rural area of Maidstone. The pre-school uses the main hall, a separate side room and a kitchen. There is a main toilet block in the hall and a single toilet in the hall way. There is access to a secure outside area used for play.

The group are registered for 24 children aged between two and five years. There are currently 45 children from two to five years on roll. This includes 32 funded children.

The group supports children who have special needs and those who speak English as an additional language.

The pre-school is open five days a week from 9.45 to 12. 15. The Wednesday session is extended to include a lunchtime session for the older children from 12: 15 to 13:30.

There are seven staff working with the children, of these four have early years qualifications. The setting receives support from a teacher and special needs advisor from the local Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children enjoy a good range of energetic physical activities that contribute to a healthy lifestyle. They develop self confidence in their physical skills as they use a wide range of indoor and outdoor toys and equipment which are well organised to promote purposeful challenges. For example, staff organise a 'parking' game using numerals for children using the toy cars. All children learn about keeping healthy through imaginative activities such as making yogurt and to rest and be active according to their needs.

Children learn the importance of good personal hygiene through well organised activities and routines. They wash their hands after using the toilet and before eating their snack. Children's health is effectively promoted because the staff are well informed about children's health care matters and provide very good support for individuals. For example, there is information about common childhood illnesses for parents and staff to refer to.

Children benefit from healthy food and confidently choose when they want a drink and pour cups of water themselves. Children enjoy healthy snacks such as fruit, savoury biscuits or cereals and make food to eat such as yogurt and ice cream. Staff sit with children and regularly have relaxed social interactions during snack times. The staff take account of the wishes of parents when providing food for children.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children arrive happily and settle very well; this is partly due to the system of 'meeting and greeting' used by staff which supports children's sense of security. They benefit from using the spacious, secure and welcoming environment, where there are attractive displays of their work which shows that staff value children's contributions. The posters, photographs, alphabet letters and varied pictures all increase the sense of welcome to parents and children.

Children have easy and safe access to a good range of toys and resources

appropriate for their age and stage of development. Resources are used well by staff to meet the needs of the children; for example, there is a system to ensure the variation of imaginative resources in the play house for every session. This means that children are interested and involved in their play.

Children enjoy their play in a safe, secure environment and regular risk assessments, indoors and outdoors, ensure their safety. For example, there are alarms on the door and the outdoor play area is enclosed. Clear procedures and good security of the premises ensure that children are unable to leave the premises without a suitable adult. Staff are vigilant all the time and have a good understanding of the procedures to follow in the event of a fire because these are regularly practised. This ensures all children are aware of the procedures to keep them safe.

Good staff interaction helps develop children's awareness of safety within the setting and when they go out. For example, children suddenly remember when they return inside that they should not be running and spontaneously tell the inspector 'We're not supposed to run, we can run outside!'

Staff have experience and a good understanding of the procedures to be followed if they have concerns about child protection issues. This safeguards children's welfare in the setting.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children who attend the setting are confident and secure. Staff work together effectively, utilising regular team meetings to get to know the children and to plan for their development effectively. Children have a relaxed relationship with the staff who use their skills to ensure they benefit from routines and activity plans. Children have good conversations with staff, who ask open ended questions and encourage them to talk about themselves; this is helped by the fact that staff know the children and their needs well.

Children are eager for the 'Reward Bears' which are taken home with a book to record parent's comments and photographs. This encourages children to involve themselves in the routines and to share their news when they return the bears. Children are so keen to take these bears home that staff have to reassure them that they will all have a turn. Children also bring in items to support activities or just to share their pleasure in showing these.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children's assessments are regular and frequent and cover their progress in all six areas of the curriculum. The staff ensure that children are assessed during planned and spontaneous activities and use individual play plans. Staff adapt the activities so that these are linked to the assessments of children. Children make good progress because the staff make good use of individual and group opportunities to encourage their learning.

Children develop their personal, social and emotional development when they explore topics about themselves and discuss their home lives and experiences during routines such as snack times. This enables them to develop their confidence and feel valued. Children independently help themselves to drinking water and take themselves to the toilet, showing that they have considerable confidence. However, there are occasions when their independence is not fully promoted, such as being able to decide when to have their snack. They are successfully encouraged to persist at activities; for example, one boy sits for some time alone, trying to tie laces after staff has shown him and a staff member remarks 'You managed to do a loop, well done!'

Children extend their communication and language skills when they happily share books, make cards, and listen to stories. They have free access to mark making facilities and many of the older children are beginning to recognise and write their names. Children experience good opportunities to develop their written language and reading skills; they have good opportunities to recognise labels used on many of the resources and write their names on cards they make.

Children confidently participate in counting activities, developing their familiarity with numbers. They build these skills by identifying who has painted numbered shirts and comparing numbers during action songs. Planned activities provide opportunities for children to measure ingredients, for instance, when they make ice cream or yogurt and they learn about quantities. Children use beads and threading activities, and develop their understanding of colour, pattern and sequence through the use of pattern cards for making mosaics.

Children experience interesting opportunities to celebrate varied festivals such as Diwali and Chinese New Year and develop their knowledge and understanding through trying varied foods, such as Chinese or Italian foods and using chopsticks. Children have opportunities to learn through exploring water using the water wheel and other versatile tools. They extend their knowledge of technology by using the computer and varied technical resources. They enthusiastically explore colour, smell and texture using shaving foam.

Children's physical development is successfully encouraged through both outdoor and indoor activities such as action songs, which they perform confidently and with great enjoyment. They develop their dexterity when they use a variety of resources and equipment such as scissors and glue spreaders.

Children experience interesting opportunities to paint, such as using the 'window' to look through and paint each other on. Their pictures they decorated are displayed to support topic work as well as the alphabet frieze, giving them a sense of pride. Children experience frequent and innovative opportunities for imaginative play in the role play area which stimulates their imagination with a variety of scenarios such as an Indian or Chinese restaurant or a Pizza Parlour.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

Children experience good opportunities to develop their awareness of differences which enables them to feel valued as individuals. They develop a positive attitude to others and gain a balanced view of society and their community through celebrating festivals, tasting food from a variety of cultures and having access to a good range of play resources which show positive images of culture, ethnicity, gender and disability.

Children share their thoughts and feelings and during individual interactions with staff these are valued. These opportunities for affirmation are fostered effectively within the routine or through activities, as a result children strengthen their feelings of self worth.

The individual needs of all children who attend are met successfully. The setting has made very good arrangements to care for children with special needs and frequently liaise with various specialist agencies to support those who attend. As a consequence, children feel secure and enjoy their experiences at the setting as they are well supported.

Children successfully develop their confidence and their self esteem is promoted as they receive excellent recognition for their achievements. Their behaviour is positive and they play together harmoniously. They begin to understand right and wrong through consistent boundaries, praise and the age appropriate methods staff use to manage their behaviour. These include extensive one to one support. Children receive gentle reminders and lots of praise to boost their self esteem. The setting fosters children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well.

Partnership with parents and carers is outstanding. Children benefit from parents' involvement in their learning. Parents are given information on the planned activities and routines so that they can support their children and share information on the Foundation Stage curriculum when reviewing their frequent progress reports. Parents can contribute to their children's individual learning plans. For instance, staff work on skills to develop any area which has been identified as a concern. This helps staff and parents work together to help children make progress. The parents and children benefit from effective communication through newsletters, verbal feedback and a record of progress report when children leave.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children are safeguarded by the rigorous systems for staff employment and appraisal. They benefit from the support of staff who are trained and qualified and who are enthusiastically increasing the children's enjoyment of the provision.

Children are exceptionally happy and enjoy the benefits of very effective organisation of space and resources. For example, key workers have relaxed relationships with the children in their groups and construct good opportunities to get to know the children. The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Children's welfare is promoted through the use of appropriate records, policies and procedures. There are accurate registers for children, staff and visitors, accident and

medication records and the policies and procedures are well constructed and highly relevant to practice.

Leadership and Management are outstanding.

Staff have secure knowledge of the Curriculum Guidance for the Foundation Stage and how to use this to support children's development successfully. They have identified areas to improve the setting, such as providing an outside area for play and the use of a second room for small group work. They are continually reviewing the provision to promote children's development through stimulating and challenging activities.

Clear procedures and policies enable staff to work very successfully in partnership with parents and carers. The comprehensive range of planning enables staff to focus activities towards all the children's needs with a high degree of skill. The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

The risk assessment procedures have been clearly defined and staff are aware of their responsibilities. Children benefit from staff who use effective procedures to ensure their safety at all times.

Complaints since the last inspection

There have been no complaints to Ofsted since the last inspection. The provider is required to keep a record of complaints made by parents, which can be seen on request. The complaints record may contain complaints other than those made to Ofsted.

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WHAT MUST BE DONE TO SECURE FUTURE IMPROVEMENT?

The quality and standards of the care

To improve the quality and standards of care further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- further promote opportunities for children to exercise independence during routines and activities (also applies to education)

The quality and standards of the nursery education

To improve the quality and standards of nursery education further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Building better childcare: Compliments and concerns about inspectors' judgements* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk