



Scalliwags Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	127519
Inspection date	05 March 2007
Inspector	Jackie Liffen
Setting Address	Youth Hall, St Andrews Playing Field, Paddock Wood, Tonbridge, Kent, TN12 6HT
Telephone number	01892 835980
E-mail	
Registered person	Scalliwags Pre-School
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 satisfactory. 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?

Scalliwags Pre-School has been established since 1988 and opened in the current premises in 1999. It operates from one room in a single storey building. A maximum of 26 children may attend the pre-school at any time. It is open each weekday from 09:15 to 11.45 and 13.00 to 15.30 during school term time. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 69 children aged from two to under five years on roll. Of these, 48 children receive funding for early education. Children come from the local area and surrounding villages. The pre-school currently supports a number of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and also supports children who speak English as an additional language.

The pre-school employs 15 members of staff, including clerical staff. Of these, six hold appropriate early years qualifications and two are working towards a qualification. The setting receives support from an advisory teacher working for Kent Early Years.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are beginning to learn about simple good health and hygiene practices as they wash their hands after visiting the toilet. Staff make it easier for them by providing step stools, low level toilets and wash hand basins. However, children are not always washing their hands under hot running water because of a maintenance problem, although staff contribute to their health by providing anti-bacterial soap and disposable towels. Children are generally not affected by the spread of germs because staff ensure the setting is clean by sweeping the floor after every session. They also use anti-bacterial cleanser to wipe the snack table and sterilise combs which children play with at the pretend hairdressers. Children sometimes lay on a small sofa to sleep, however, occasionally the cushions are a little grubby and need washing more regularly. Children often take part in physical activity both indoors and outside where they exercise in the enclosed garden. Children are well nourished by staff who provide healthy snacks and drinks. The group work with parents to ensure that children's dietary needs are met and enable children to help themselves to a drink of water whenever they are thirsty.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Generally children are cared for in a welcoming, secure, child-friendly and safe indoor and outdoor environment because staff ensure that the facilities are suitable for them. However, sometimes the risk assessment is ineffective because maintenance problems are not rectified at an early stage. Children have the freedom to explore the premises where the space is sufficient to accommodate them. They use small individual mats when sitting on the cold floor. Children play with a large range of suitable and safe toys and equipment including child-sized furniture which helps to include all children. They are involved in a large range of different types of activities because staff rotate toys every six days to ensure they enjoy a wide range of experiences. Children are learning to avoid accidental injury because they quickly respond to instructions and practice fire drills on a regular basis. Children benefit because staff take a number of precautions to prevent accidents. For example, stair gates are used strategically, fires are high up, out of reach, and sockets are covered. Children's welfare is guarded by staff who put their well written policies into practice by confidentially reporting any incidents to the supervisor. She is suitably trained and has a good knowledge and understanding of child protection procedures.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children quickly settle in the setting as they enter the premises with their parents, who help them prepare for the session. They find their names to put on a board and then search out and play with the selection of activities around the room. Some children are very confident and straight away fetch toys from a large range stored in drawers. For example, some gather together farm animals, tip them out onto mats and proceed to erect a farmyard. Most children understand expectations when called to congregate in front of a leader for the register, to sing rhymes or listen to a story. They tend to undertake this activity at least twice during the session and competently choose a small mat to sit on in front of her. Staff use a key worker system so that they rapidly become familiar with each child's needs and stage of development. Children are involved in a broad range of planned activities and spontaneous events, which support their development. For example, sometimes they play with puzzles, play people, building blocks, hairdressers, train set, climbing equipment, sand and craft activities. Although children initiate some spontaneous exchange of conversations between themselves, they do not tend to congregate in particular areas such as the home or book corner, developing co-operative play, because of the organisation of the room.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. As the group tend to have a very high ratio of adults to children, most benefit from one to one interaction at some time, and are helped to progress appropriately. Children are generally taught well because all areas of learning are recognised in the planning and staff's knowledge and understanding of the early learning goals is sufficient to successfully implement it. Staff hold impromptu meetings at lunchtimes in order to discuss the progress and development of individual children; one representative each session is elected to take notes on children's abilities and stages. Children's records are then used appropriately to inform future planning. Staff organise the setting so that children have many opportunities to choose what they wish to play with. Children also help themselves from a wide variety of activities stored in low level containers. However, occasionally it takes a while for children to find a chosen activity because there are no labels on some of the drawers.

Children are becoming confident to make decisions, explore and investigate as they involve themselves in the activities on offer. They are becoming interested, excited and motivated to learn especially when they enthusiastically join in with group activities. Children relate well to adults and hold informative conversations. Some children are beginning to interact with their peers because they have the opportunity to play lots of imaginative games using dressing up clothes and props such as mobile phones. However, they are not always taking time to browse and talk together about books because of the way the seating is arranged in the specified area. Children often explore their environment during their creative play and also when prompted by the leader at circle time, when she speaks about a variety of subjects such as the weather. They have the opportunity of investigating a range of technological toys such as a hairdryer, computer, and calculator. Children are beginning to recognise number, shape and size because they are exposed to various stimuli during their play. For example, some children measure things at the work bench whilst others count marbles or match similar colour and sized small plastic elephants. Children are also encouraged to take turns in counting at circle time. Children are naturally becoming creative as they join in an inspiring music and movement session. They undertake regular projects using a variety of materials such as glue, paper and pencils and

produce work that is enjoyed by all as their learning is extended by singing action rhymes. Children exercise indoors as they move freely about the room or climb in and out of the caterpillar climbing frame. Outside they experience a great deal of enjoyment from joining in a parachute activity or have fun extending their skills by using their limbs in running, skipping, jumping and in other ways. They promote their physical capabilities on large apparatus such as a climbing frame and also improve their fine manipulative skills as they construct and create things during their play, for example, when junk modelling.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

All children are valued and respected within the group because staff become familiar with each child's needs and quickly identify any individual problems. Staff enlighten children about the society they are in by using projects and posters to inform them. Children benefit from activities and resources which help them value diversity. For example, they assimilate knowledge and understanding from the different toys that they play with, including books, puzzles and dressing up clothes. Children are also improving their social and spiritual awareness because staff introduce a number of relevant topics and they celebrate different religious festivals. Overall, spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. Children have their specific needs met by adults who work in close partnership with parents and carers in order to provide well for each child. Disabled children have easy access to the building and there is plenty of room for a wheelchair within the flexible accommodation. Children with specific needs are included in all activities as far as possible and the co-ordinator keeps careful records so that their development needs are met well. Children are beginning to learn to respect others and to consider the consequences of their words and actions because they are taught the difference between right and wrong by staff who take a sensible approach to behaviour management. Children gain in self esteem as staff praise them for achieving something or for putting a great deal of effort into activities such as collage or drawing. Partnership with parents and carers is good. Children benefit because staff provide very comprehensive information for parents, including an explanation of the curriculum. Children are pleased that their parents have the opportunity of helping within the group at any time and are secure because their continuity of care is enhanced well.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

The leadership and management of the nursery education is satisfactory. It contributes to children's progress towards the early learning goals by ensuring that the group employs the best staff possible and that all of them are suitable. Staff have regular appraisals and embark on a number of training courses so that children's welfare and education is promoted. Children are secure because the parent committee involve all members of staff and parents in making decisions and ensure that children always receive the attention that they need. Adults tend to organise the setting so that children have plenty of space to move around and explore. However, sometimes children's comfort is affected because of broken fixtures and fittings. Children's safety and enjoyment is enhanced because a key worker system is used which enables staff to become familiar with different children and their families, in order to promote their welfare

and ability to take an active part in the setting. Documentation is sufficient, confidentially stored and well presented so that children's well being is actively promoted at all times. Policies and procedures work in practice to promote children's security and achievements.

The provision meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the group were asked to ensure that their knowledge on the Data Protection Act is current; to ensure that written lost child procedures are in place and to increase the provision of multi-cultural activities and resources. Staff now use the internet to check that all their knowledge is up to date. A lost child policy is in place and children play with a variety of multi-cultural activities.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the last inspection there have been no complaints made to Ofsted that required the provider or Ofsted to take any action in order to meet the National Standards.

The provider is required to keep a record of complaints made by parents, which they can see 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):

- ensure that anyone responsible for health and maintenance is aware of, and complies with, Environmental Health requirements
- produce an effective daily risk assessment
- encourage children to further interact with their peers and develop co-operative play by suitably organising the room.

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):

- consider how to further increase children's ability in language and literacy.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Complaints about Ofsted Early Years: concerns or complaints about Ofsted's role in regulating and inspecting childcare and early education* (HMI ref no 2599) which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk