

Chalk Village Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY348777
Inspection date	03 July 2008
Inspector	Stephanie Graves
Setting Address	Chalk Parish Hall, Chalk Road, Chalk,Gravesend, Kent, DA12 2ND
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Registered person	Chalk Village 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 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?

Chalk Village Pre-School opened in 2007 and operates from two rooms in a Parish hall. It is situated in the village of Chalk, Gravesend, Kent. A maximum of 30 children may attend the pre-school at any one time. The pre-school is open each weekday from 09.30 to 12.30 for 38 weeks of the year. There is an enclosed, well-supervised area for outdoor play.

There are currently 39 children aged from two to under five years on roll. Of these, 25 children receive funding for nursery education. Children mainly come from a local catchment area. The pre-school employs eight staff. Of these, six staff, including the two managers, hold appropriate early years qualifications.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are actively involved in procedures that help them to learn about good health and hygiene issues. For example, they know when and why they need to wash their hands and staff ensure antibacterial hand wash is available. They also provide gel-based hand cleaner between hand washes. This is particularly effective, for instance, after they have petted animals. Many children know where to find tissues to wipe their noses and those with infectious ailments do not attend the setting. These procedures all help to prevent the spread of germs and infection. Children are well cared for if they have an accident. This is because the majority of staff have up-to-date first aid training and any accidents are recorded. Medication records are in place along with written consent to seek emergency medical advice or treatment. Children have opportunities to be active and also to rest and relax. This promotes their physical development and sense of well-being.

Children can help themselves to a drink at any time to help keep hydrated. They can choose from a range of snack options, which include sandwiches, toast and a selection of fresh and dried fruit. Activities, such as role play experiences help children learn about healthy eating, for instance as they enjoy a pretend picnic. Children experience a range of physical activity through the nursery education curriculum. They are able to self-select resources that help to promote their small muscle movements, including construction, mark making, manipulating play dough and using sticky tape and scissors to make their own models. They have opportunities to exercise and use large apparatus which helps to develop their strength, balance and co-ordination.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are well supervised in a safe and secure pre-school environment. This enables them to move around and play within safe boundaries. Toys and resources are suitable and are easily accessible, enabling children to choose their preferred activities safely. The procedures in place promote children's safety at all times and include carrying out daily checks on the premises. This helps to reduce the risk of accidental injury. Any potentially hazardous materials are inaccessible to children and the outdoor area is risk assessed and well staffed. Visitors to the pre-school are monitored and recorded, helping to ensure children's safety. Children learn how to help keep themselves safe through clear explanations by staff. For example, they learn that tipping chairs back whilst sitting on them can result in a fall through losing their balance. Staff also teach children the importance of keeping their shoes on in case they tread on something sharp on the floor.

Children's welfare and safety are promoted through the procedures in place that help to safeguard them at all times. Although some staff have not yet fully updated their knowledge and understanding in line with current requirements, all staff know where to access up-to-date information and understand their responsibility towards the children in their care. They understand the signs and symptoms of abuse and the know the steps to follow in the event of a concern. This helps to ensure children's welfare remains the priority.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children make themselves at home and settle well. They become involved and interested as they freely select their preferred toys, resources and activities. These include role play materials, a relaxing book area, mark making resources, construction, art and craft resources and small world activities. Children demonstrate good relationships with the staff team who spend most of their time interacting and playing with them. Staff have a good understanding of the range of experiences children need to progress. The younger children are actively involved in all the play experiences available. For instance, they enjoy exploring through using paint, manipulating play dough and playing with interactive toys and resources that help them learn through using the senses. They are encouraged to lead in their play and staff are close by to offer support where needed. Staff observe and assess their progress and ensure activities are suited to their needs. Children's creations are attractively displayed within the setting, which helps to reinforce a sense of pride in what they have achieved. Children enjoy freely moving from inside the setting to the outdoor area, which helps to extend their play and learning experiences.

Nursery education.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children are making good progress through the stepping stones towards the early learning goals. Their achievements are good in relation to their starting points, which are identified through discussions with parents and also recorded in initial observations. Staff implement the Foundation Stage requirements well and observe and assess children's learning throughout their time at the setting. Planning is documented and covers all areas of learning, although the next steps in children's learning are not always recorded consistently to inform future planning. Activity plans help to ensure learning objectives are met and these are evaluated to ensure that activities are worthwhile and promote children's interests. Good relationships with staff from local schools and the completion of a transfer document helps to prepare children for school life.

Children interact well with staff and one another and independently access their preferred activities. They ask for help when needed and staff are on hand to support them where necessary. They are well behaved and learn to share and take turns, which enables them to play in co-operation with others. Opportunities for mark making are varied and children use mark making tools for different purposes. For example, some children enjoy painting at easels in the outdoor area, while others can freely access pens, pencils or crayons to develop their own play. Children communicate well and know when or speak and when to listen, for example, during stories. Staff ask very effective questions to enable them to work out what might happen next and leave the ends of sentences open for children to complete. This enables them to become fully involved in story-time. They are encouraged to recognise and write simple words, such as their own names. However, limited environmental print means their early awareness of written words and numbers is not fully reinforced.

Mathematical resources are freely available and encourage children to learn about size, shape and measure. Children also have ongoing opportunities to sort, match and explore number concepts, for instance during games, stories and songs. They enjoy opportunities to explore capacity, such as through water play or filling moulds with sand and then tipping this out into the sand tray. Children explore and investigate using all the senses and experiment with 'opposites' including hot and cold, big and little and wet and dry. They learn about living things and relish the opportunity to observe and learn about hens and chicks, discovering what they eat and where they live. Staff ask children whether the feathers are soft or hard and as they

observe newly laid eggs, staff encourage them to think about whether they eat eggs and how they are cooked. This helps to extend children's learning.

Children are creative and enjoy opportunities to make their own creations using recyclable materials. They can be heard to discuss what they are making, including 'a rocket aeroplane.' They enjoy taking part in action songs and rhymes and learning about colours, for example, through singing a rainbow song. Children enjoy role play and talk about what they are doing. For example, they can be heard to make comments, such as, taking 'baby Annabel for a walk but she is heavy and asleep.' Role play resources are available to build on children's interests and help them represent real life scenarios through play.

Overall, children are engaged in many purposeful experiences helping them to learn, progress and enjoy pre-school life.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are welcomed and cared for as individuals and treated with equal regard. Staff help them settle and regularly acknowledge and affirm them, which helps them to develop a sense of belonging and security. Children develop a knowledge of the local community through outings and the wider world through learning about various cultures, festivals and religions. Toys and resources reflect positive images of equality, helping them to acquire an early understanding of diversity. Children are well behaved and demonstrate good relationships with staff and one another. This is because they receive plenty of praise and encouragement for their individual achievements and learn good manners from staff who are effective role models. Behaviour management strategies promote children's welfare and development. Children receive continuity of care through an effective partnership with parents. All information is shared and the provider takes positive steps to ensure parents are kept informed of all relevant policies and procedures. Parents feel their children are settled and well cared for. They believe they know where their children are developmentally and that staff keep them informed and included.

The partnership with parents is good. Parents of children in receipt of funding for nursery education are given quality information about the curriculum and the staff who will be caring for their children. Children's progress records are shared, the planning is displayed and parents are encouraged to visit to share their own special knowledge and skills. This works well in practice and enhances children's learning opportunities. Children's spiritual, moral, social and emotional development is fostered. They show a sense of wonder, for instance, as they observe the hens and chicks brought in by a parent. They behave well and enjoy opportunities to play, communicate and learn together. They talk about their favourite activities and interests and staff respond in a way that enables them to feel their contributions matter.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children are cared for within a well organised environment where they demonstrate good relationships with staff and have free access to a good range of play and learning experiences. Effective systems are in place to ensure the adults working with children are suitable and staff work well as a team. Although some improvement is necessary concerning training, staff development and training needs are generally well considered. The registration certificate is displayed clearly and all the necessary records are shared with parents. Daily attendance records

are kept for children and staff. The range of policies and procedures underpin the group's professional practice, helping to promote children's welfare, care and learning effectively.

The leadership and management is good. Staff understand the Foundation Stage requirements and implement the early learning goals well. The group has clear aims in place to promote the development of all the children. Although some improvement is required regarding the next steps in learning and promoting the use of more environmental print, children's good progress is evident. Curriculum plans include all aspects of the early learning goals and staff integrate care and nursery education well to promote successful outcomes for all children. The provision of toys, equipment and resources is good and enable children to remain interested in what is provided. The quality of teaching and learning is evaluated along with the overall effectiveness of the experiences provided. The setting enjoys close links with local primary school staff, which helps to prepare the children for school transitions.

Children receive good quality care and a range of different opportunities to play and learn. The pre-school provides a professional service. The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

Not applicable

Complaints since the last inspection

Since registration 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 all staff have an up-to-date knowledge and understanding of the procedures for safeguarding children.

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):

- continue to develop systems to ensure the next steps in children's learning are recorded consistently and are used to inform future planning
- develop the use of labels and environmental print to reinforce children's early understanding of words and numbers.

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