

Early Years Childcare Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	113469
Inspection date	11/09/2008
Inspector	Felicity Gaff / Fran Fielder
Setting address	11 Bartholomew Way, Horsham, West Sussex, RH12 5JL
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Type of setting	Childcare on non-domestic premises

Introduction

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under Sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006 on the quality and standards of the registered early years provision. 'Early years provision' refers to provision regulated by Ofsted for children from birth to 31 August following their fifth birthday (the early years age group). The registered person must ensure that this provision complies with the statutory framework for children's learning, development and welfare, known as the *Early Years Foundation Stage*.

The report includes information on any complaints about the childcare provision which Ofsted has received since the last inspection or registration whichever is the later, which require Ofsted or the provider to take action in Annex C.

The provider must provide a copy of this report to all parents with children at the setting where reasonably practicable. The provider must provide a copy of the report to any other person who asks for one, but may charge a fee for this service (The Childcare (Inspection) Regulations 2008 regulations 9 and 10).

The setting also makes provision for children older than the early years age group which is registered on the voluntary and/or compulsory part(s) of the Childcare Register. This report does not include an evaluation of that provision, but a comment about compliance with the requirements of the Childcare Register is included in Annex B.

Description of the setting

Early Years Childcare Nursery was registered in 2000. It operates from purpose built premises in Horsham, West Sussex. The nursery is open each weekday from 08.00 to 18.00 for 52 weeks of the year excluding bank holidays. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area. There are currently 199 children attending who are all within the Early Years Foundation Stage, of whom 46 receive funding for early education. Children are drawn from Horsham and a large surrounding area. The nursery currently supports a number of children who speak English as an additional language. There are 42 members of staff. Of these, 27 hold appropriate early years qualifications and 11 others are working towards a qualification.

Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Children are cared for in secure, well maintained premises where there are effective procedures to keep them safe. There are good arrangements for staff and parents to work together to share information about children's individual needs. The nursery is very well equipped, but staff do not use the available resources equally well in all areas of the nursery. The quality of the provision is inconsistent and children do not experience an equally rich learning environment in all rooms to ensure they all make good progress towards the early learning goals. Systems for self-evaluation have identified weaknesses in the organisation of the nursery and suitable steps have been taken to monitor and address them. However, they are not yet fully effective in improving the consistency of care and education.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To further improve the early years provision the registered person should:

- improve opportunities for children to become active learners, setting and solving their own problems and learning from their mistakes
- ensure all staff have appropriate knowledge and skills to provide a stimulating child-centred learning environment for all children
- improve the organisation of everyday routines such as snack and mealtimes to minimise the time children spend waiting passively
- organise space and resources to ensure all children can benefit from a wide range of attractively presented play opportunities at all times
- improve the written equal opportunities policy to promote consistent practice in all areas of the nursery.

The leadership and management of the early years provision

The nursery receives good support from the company's knowledgeable quality and development team. Effective self-evaluation systems have accurately identified areas of weakness in the setting and the company has taken decisive action to

address them. A new management structure has been set up and a team assembled with the necessary knowledge, skills and experience to ensure that equally high standards of care and learning are enjoyed by all the children. The recently appointed management team has a clear focus on the areas of weakness to be developed and the support and training staff need in order to improve their practice. There are very clear, comprehensive policies and procedures to support managers and staff, which cover all the required areas. However, the equal opportunities policy does not show clearly how all children will be included and their individual needs met, or how this area will be monitored to ensure consistent standards across the provision. This means that there are differences in the quality of care children receive.

There are effective systems to safeguard children by ensuring all staff are suitable to care for them and undertake appropriate training. Children are well protected from harm or abuse because staff understand how to recognise, record and report concerns about their welfare. The nursery is committed to working closely with parents. They provide an unhurried induction period for all children where staff and parents can exchange information. This enables staff to accommodate parents' wishes for their children's care, and helps children feel secure as they see their parents' relationships with key persons. However, there are limited opportunities to exchange information about what children can do to establish their educational starting points. Parents receive regular written observations of what their children do and achieve and are invited to add their own comments. The quality of these observations varies, and many parents choose not to contribute to them.

The quality and standards of the early years provision

The quality of care and education are satisfactory overall. There are appropriate systems in place for observing and recording what children do and know but staff use them to variable effect when planning for children's future learning. For example, staff responded to the attempts by babies to climb on furniture by providing soft play materials on which they can develop their physical skills in safety. Staff maintain cumulative records of children's work but these do not always show the progress children make. Staff do not routinely record why examples of children's work were chosen or what they show children understand. Photographic records are often posed rather than showing a child involved in an activity. There are marked differences in the quality of the narrative observations that staff make. Some provide a clear analysis of what children know and can do, and identify future provision to take them forward in their learning. However, others simply describe what a child enjoyed doing and state that staff will provide more of the same thing. This inconsistency prevents staff planning equally effectively to meet the needs of all children.

Children across the nursery delight in books and take great pleasure in listening to well-told stories. They work together to create attractive displays and enjoy experimenting with a range of creative materials in two and three dimensions. Staff work well with parents and outside agencies to meet the needs of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. However, the quality of the organisation of daily routines and activities varies from room to room. In some rooms staff provide

a good balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities. They enthusiastically participate in children's imaginative play and use it creatively to extend children's understanding in all areas of learning. For example, a staff member helped children extend a game where they were 'lost' by introducing the idea of making a map to help them find their way. Consequently, children in this room are eager to participate and become engrossed in the activities. They become independent learners and make good progress because they gain self-confidence by testing their ideas through trial and error. In other rooms staff plan too many adult-controlled, limited activities where children do not contribute their own ideas because staff offer no opportunities for discussion. Staff do not organise everyday routines to minimise the time children spend with nothing to do. They often praise passivity and discourage initiative which limits how well children develop as active learners. Some children do not learn to recognise and value their own achievements, or follow interests for their own sake, because staff offer indiscriminate praise whatever they do.

Staff create a safe, welcoming environment, they carry out thorough risk assessments and take suitable steps to minimise identified hazards. Children are well protected from illness and infection because staff maintain good standards of hygiene and follow clear procedures for caring for sick or injured children. Children are well-nourished; they receive well-balanced, home-cooked food and staff liaise closely with their parents to ensure any special dietary requirements are known and met.

Children form trusting relationships with staff and behave very well.

Annex A: record of inspection judgements

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

Overall effectiveness

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?	Satisfactory
How well does the provision promote inclusive practice?	Satisfactory
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement.	Good

Leadership and management

How effectively is provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	Good
How effective is the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement?	Satisfactory
How well does the setting work in partnership with parents and others?	Good
How well are children safeguarded?	Good

Quality and standards

How effectively are children in the Early Years Foundation Stage helped to learn and develop?	Satisfactory
How effectively is the welfare of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage promoted?	Satisfactory
How well are children helped to stay safe?	Good
How well are children helped to be healthy?	Good
How well are children helped to enjoy and achieve?	Satisfactory
How well are children helped to make a positive contribution?	Satisfactory
How well are children helped develop skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being?	Satisfactory

Any complaints about the inspection or report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance available from Ofsted's website:
www.ofsted.gov.uk

Annex B: the Childcare Register

The provider confirms that the requirements of the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are: Met

The provider confirms that the requirements of the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are: Met

Annex C: complaint/s made to Ofsted

This section of the report includes details of any complaint/s made to Ofsted when:

- we took action for the provider to meet the requirements of the Early Years Register; or
- we asked the provider to take action in order to meet the requirements of the Early Years Register; or
- the provider had already taken any necessary action to meet the requirements of the Early Years Register.

We will not report on any complaint where the provider met the requirements of the Early Years Register or did not require any action by Ofsted or the registered provider.

Detail of the complaint/s

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

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.