

Poppies Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number EY292576
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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 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

Poppies Pre-School opened in 2004. It operates from two rooms in a church in Weedswood, in Chatham, in Medway. The facilities used are all on the ground level. The premises are within walking distance of local bus routes.

The group opens each weekday during school term times and serves families from the local community. Sessions are from 09.00 to 11.30. The group is registered on the Early Years Register and the Childcare Register and can care for 26 children from two years to under five years at any one time. There are currently 26 children on roll. Children attend a variety of sessions. The group receives nursery education funding for three- and four-year-olds and supports children for whom English is an additional language and children with a disability and/or learning difficulty.

There are four childcare staff who work with the children. Over half the staff hold an appropriate early years qualification. The setting receives support from an advisory teacher from the local authority and it has developed partnership arrangements with local primary schools.

Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall, the quality of the provision is inadequate. Children's unique needs are not met because practitioners do not have enough knowledge about their individual needs to ensure this. The system in place for planning, observing and assessing children's learning is not effective for all children and therefore it is difficult to ascertain how children are progressing. Weaknesses in the suitability process, risk assessments and practitioners' knowledge of how to safeguard children mean children's welfare is not promoted appropriately. Inclusive practice is not evident because children's individual needs are not fully known and therefore the provision is not addressing these or improving outcomes for all children. The capacity for continuous improvement is limited because the setting does not implement an effective self-evaluation process as a basis of ongoing internal review against robust and challenging quality criteria.

Overall, the early years provision requires significant improvement. The registered person is given a Notice to Improve that sets out actions to be carried out.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To comply with the requirements of the EYFS the registered person must take the following action by the specified date:

- make systematic observations and assessments of each child's achievements, interests and learning styles and use these to identify learning priorities and plan relevant and motivating learning experiences for each child (Learning & development)

08/11/2009

- for each specific outing carry out a full risk assessment, which includes an assessment of required adult: child ratios. This assessment must take account of the nature of the outing, and consider whether it is appropriate to exceed the normal ratio requirements, in accordance with providers' procedures for supervision of children on outings (Safeguarding & promoting children's welfare) 08/11/2009
 - conduct a risk assessment of the areas used and review it regularly – at least once a year or more frequently where the need arises (Suitable premises, environment & equipment) 08/11/2009
 - ensure that there are effective procedures in place for checking that staff are suitable to work with children and ensure evidence of required checks is readily available for inspection (Suitable people) 08/11/2009
 - ensure at least one member of staff who holds a full and relevant level three qualification is on site (Suitable people) 08/11/2009
 - request written permission from parents for seeking emergency medical advice or treatment (Safeguarding & promoting children's welfare) 08/11/2009
 - plan and provide a suitable range of activities for children, which are appropriate for their stage of development, based on their individual needs and reflect differentiation to offer sufficient challenge to help children progress towards the early learning goals (Organisation) 08/11/2009
 - implement effective systems to ensure that the individual needs of all children are met (Organisation) 08/11/2009
- To improve the early years provision the registered person should:

- consider implementing the 'look, listen and note' system to help practitioners assess the progress that all children are making
- ensure all practitioners have up-to-date knowledge and understanding of safeguarding issues
- promote positive attitudes to diversity through activities that encourage children to talk about similarities and differences and the reasons for these; where necessary help children to learn and value aspects of their own and other people's lives
- improve the two way flow of information with parents to promote a shared understanding of children's individual needs and involve parents in practical ways to support their child's learning and development
- implement an effective self-evaluation process and quality improvement process as a basis of ongoing internal review- assessing what the setting offers against robust and challenging quality criteria
- review the effectiveness of the key person system to ensure parents are encouraged to be actively involved in their child's learning and development and care needs
- obtain written permission from parents for general outings

The leadership and management of the early years provision

The setting is led and managed by a manager/owner and deputy who, although they are caring and well meaning towards the families using the setting, are unable to lead effectively and ensure the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) are being maintained and this means the unique needs of the children are not effectively promoted. The deputy has a good relationship with team members, however, she is not fully informed by the manager of all aspects of the setting and responsibilities when covering the manager's role and this means she is not completely effective in the role. The lack of an effective recruitment and suitability process means children are not appropriately safeguarded. Practitioners have varying levels of knowledge of safeguarding issues due to lack of information and inconsistent training in the area. This results in practitioners not being fully aware of their roles and responsibilities in regards to child protection issues. Furthermore, when the manager is absent, there is no level three qualified person on site. Practitioners have friendly, informal relationships with parents, however, there is little relevant information shared to enable them to meet children's individual needs. Parents receive a written progress report for their child's transition to school, however, systems for exchanging and reporting on children's progress throughout their time in the setting are very limited. As a consequence, they are not involved in their child's learning and do not have a good understanding of their child's progress.

The setting has yet to develop a self-evaluation process and this means the process of monitoring and evaluating the quality of what they do and for identifying what is successful and areas for improvement is not effective. Some progress has been made in addressing the previous recommendations raised at inspection, for example, the implementation of a lost child and uncollected child policy, however, those recommendations relating to learning and development remain and several more have been raised as a result of this inspection.

The quality and standards of the early years provision

Children do not make good progress in their learning because the main planning is based on the group as a whole and does not reflect any differentiation for individual needs, learning styles or child's stage of development. Furthermore, the planning is completed by the manager and does not involve the whole staff team. Although observations of older children are completed on an irregular basis by practitioners, these do not influence planning or reflect the interests, progress or individual needs of the children. Parents are not encouraged to be actively involved in their child's learning and very little information relating to the curriculum is shared with parents; as a consequence the key person system has little impact on partnership working. Information regarding children's achievements, interests and needs is not used well enough to support children to take the next step in their learning and development. Children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are well supported in their learning because the special educational needs coordinator

(SENCO) works closely with parents and the area SENCO to achieve this.

Children are settled and happy in the environment. They make good use of the large hall and outside grassed area for riding bikes, pushing prams and throwing and catching. They are well behaved and approach staff, who are responsive to their needs, confidently. Practitioners are on hand to support children's play, answer questions and assist them if they want a particular toy. The environment is light and airy, however, there is very limited depiction of positive images of the local community and wider world and furthermore the opportunities for children to learn about themselves and others through planned themes, activities and resources are few. Because practitioners are not fully aware of each child's family background and home language, these are not respected or acknowledged in everyday practice.

Children have access to a suitable range of resources to support their play and they particularly enjoy role play and dressing up. However, many of the activities lack challenge and excitement. For example, all children play on the small slide regardless of ability and all children take part in the same painting activities on a Wednesday, which can result in some children missing out on this opportunity and children's free creativity being stunted. Children know the daily routine and listen to their name at registration time and help tidy up after play. Practitioners reinforce behaviour boundaries and talk to the children calmly, which helps children learn right from wrong.

Children learn about healthy eating because they have fruit, milk and water at snack times and use the grassed areas for exercise on a daily basis. However, opportunities to extend this learning through general discussion are few and children do not participate in the preparation of the fruit. Practitioners are not clear about the systems for nappy changing or whether this is done or not. Conflicting information relating to this is evident, this means children can be left in a nappy for the session or until parents arrive to change the child. As a consequence, their welfare is not promoted in this area. Practitioners hold current first aid qualifications and are familiar with the procedures for administering medication, for dealing with accidents and for the exclusion of unwell or infectious children. However, written consent to acquire emergency medical advice or treatment in the absence of the parents is not obtained. This could result in a delay in accessing required treatment. Children learn to play safely because practitioners remind them about sharing, taking turns and playing with toys appropriately. Practitioners deploy themselves effectively to ensure children are well supervised at all times. However, children are not fully safeguarded because not all practitioners are aware of their responsibilities in regards to child protection procedures, which potentially compromises the safety of children, and risk assessments for the areas used and for outings are not completed.

Annex A: record of inspection judgements

The key inspection judgements and what they mean

Grade 1 is Outstanding: this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality

Grade 2 is Good: this aspect of the provision is strong

Grade 3 is Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound

Grade 4 is 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?	4
How well does the provision promote inclusive practice?	4
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement.	4

Leadership and management

How effectively is provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	4
How effective is the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement?	4
How well does the setting work in partnership with parents and others?	4
How well are children safeguarded?	4

Quality and standards

How effectively are children in the Early Years Foundation Stage helped to learn and develop?	4
How effectively is the welfare of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage promoted?	4
How well are children helped to stay safe?	3
How well are children helped to be healthy?	3
How well are children helped to enjoy and achieve?	4
How well are children helped to make a positive contribution?	4
How well are children helped develop skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being?	3

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Annex B: the Childcare Register

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

Not Met (with actions)

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

Not Met (with actions)

The registered provider does not meet the requirements of the compulsory and or voluntary part/s of the Childcare Register.

To comply with the requirements of the compulsory part of the Childcare Register, the registered person must take the following action/s by the specified date:

- implement effective systems to ensure that the registered person and any person caring for, or in regular contact with children is suitable to work with children which must include obtaining an enhanced CRB check, is of integrity, has skills and experience suitable for the work and is physically and mentally fit for the work (Suitability to care for children, or have regular contact with children) 08/11/2009
- undertake a risk assessment of the premises and equipment at least once in each calendar year, and immediately, where the need for an assessment arises. The registered person must ensure that all necessary measures are taken to minimise any identified risks (Suitability and safety of premises and equipment) 08/11/2009
- make the following information available to parents: information about the activities the children will undertake and information about the registration system for the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register (Providing information to parents) 08/11/2009

To comply with the requirements of the voluntary part of the Childcare Register, the registered person must take the following action/s by the specified date:

- take action as specified in the Compulsory part of the Childcare Register (Suitability to care for children, or have regular contact with children) 08/11/2009
- take action as specified in the Compulsory part of the Childcare Register (Suitability and safety of premises and equipment) 08/11/2009
- take action as specified in the Compulsory part of the Childcare Register (Providing information to parents) 08/11/2009