

Whitehall Nursery School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	109333
Inspection date	26/03/2009
Inspector	Alison Weaver
Setting address	15 Elphinstone Road, Hastings, East Sussex, TN34 2EE
Telephone number	01424 436642
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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

Whitehall Nursery School opened in 1982. It operates from three rooms in a detached house in the centre of Hastings. The group opens five days a week during school term times. Opening times are from 08.45 to 16.00. All children share access to several secure enclosed outdoor areas. There are steps in the outdoor area.

The provision is registered on the Early Years Register and on the compulsory part of the Childcare Register. A maximum of 24 children may attend at any one time. There are currently 24 children on roll in the early years age range. The provision also sometimes offers care to children aged over five years to eight years in the summer holidays. Children come from a wide catchment area. The setting currently supports a number of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and also supports a number of children who speak English as an additional language.

The setting employs four staff. All of the staff, including the manager, hold appropriate early years qualifications.

Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good. In general, children's welfare is promoted well so that they stay safe and in good health. Effective staff interaction and assessment processes help individual children make good progress in their learning and development. Overall, children with additional needs are given the necessary care and support to help them develop, although opportunities to recognise and value home backgrounds are not fully exploited. There are good links with parents that keep them well informed about their child's progress and encourage them to be involved in their education. The setting is in the early stages of their evaluation of the provision, but is committed to development and has started to implement new ideas to improve outcomes for children.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- ensure that all individual staff records are accessible
- provide more opportunities for children to develop and use their home language in their play and learning and for their home backgrounds to be acknowledged
- develop more effective evaluation of activities to help ensure that children are enjoying motivating and challenging learning experiences that meet their needs.

The leadership and management of the early years provision

Children are adequately safeguarded as, in general, staff are aware of the signs and symptoms of abuse and their responsibility to report any concerns they have about a child. Children's behaviour is managed well and their self esteem is promoted by praise and encouragement. There are appropriate recruitment procedures to help ensure that staff are suitable to work with children. However, the evidence to show the necessary checks have been carried out on staff is not readily available. All other required documentation is in place and generally well organised and maintained. There are comprehensive risk assessments carried out on all aspects of the setting to help ensure children stay safe at all times. Daily safety checks also result in children being able to move freely and safely in the setting. Staff carry out appropriate hygiene procedures so that children play in a clean environment and are kept free from infection.

Children are cared for by a team of suitably trained staff who attend further courses to update their knowledge and skills. Yearly staff appraisals are used to develop and support staff in their role. Staff are committed to improving their practices and have started to identify areas they want to develop. Their development plans show that improvements include making the outdoor area a more effective learning environment for the children. However, they are not effectively evaluating the activities they plan and provide to ensure that they are meeting the needs of children.

The setting forms good partnerships with parents. They are encouraged to share what they know about their child's learning and development. Staff give parents 'Activities at home' sheets so that they know what their child will be learning at the setting and how they can extend this at home. They are also encouraged to complete a weekly feedback sheet to let staff know what children have been doing at home so the information can be used with their key persons to fill in the news books. Parents are consulted regularly and kept well informed about their child's learning and development through formal consultations and written feedback. Staff work particularly closely with parents who have children with learning difficulties or disabilities. Extra support and advice is sought when needed to enable these children to make progress.

The quality and standards of the early years provision

Staff gain useful information about each child from parents before they start in the setting. This helps the staff settle the children in and gives them a starting point for each child. Overall, there is an effective observation and assessment process implemented in order to help individual children make progress. Staff identify next steps for each child and provide activities that will promote their continuing development and learning. Children needing additional support are able to join in the 'TALL' group with a member of staff who plans activities that meet their specific needs.

Good relationships are built between adults and children. This results in children

being happy, secure and confident. Their independence develops well, for example, as they move between the different play rooms to choose activities and pour out their drinks. They learn to put on their outdoor clothes and take themselves to the toilet. Children enjoy a varied range of safe and suitable activities that cover all areas of learning. Children enjoy listening to, and making up, stories. The construction activities are very popular and children show good imaginative skills as they create different models. They play well together and plenty of language is used as they talk about their creations with each other and with adults. They also like to play on the computer, showing good mouse control and printing off different images.

Children are encouraged to count and recognise shapes in a wide variety of activities and routines. The snack time and regular cooking activities are used very effectively to promote numbers and the use of mathematical language. Children take turns to be the helper who counts out the cups, plates and fruit for all the children. They learn about division as the staff cut up the fruit into pieces. They eat healthy snacks and parents are encouraged to provide healthy packed lunches. Visits from a dentist help children develop an understanding of the importance of what they eat and how to stay healthy.

Children enjoy daily fresh air and exercise. They show good coordination and have fun outside on the climbing apparatus and riding on the different wheeled toys. They have opportunities to dig in the garden and plant seeds. Staff are developing the outdoor area so that children can use their senses to explore. Children find out about their local environment as they go on walks to look at what is around them. They learn about how to keep themselves safe through visits from a police officer and also through their own road crossing lady. Children explore the wider world through activities, such as finding out about different festivals. Their own backgrounds and home languages are respected and satisfactorily acknowledged in the setting.

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?	2
How well does the provision promote inclusive practice?	3
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement.	3

Leadership and management

How effectively is provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	2
How effective is the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement?	3
How well does the setting work in partnership with parents and others?	2
How well are children safeguarded?	3

Quality and standards

How effectively are children in the Early Years Foundation Stage helped to learn and develop?	2
How effectively is the welfare of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage promoted?	2
How well are children helped to stay safe?	2
How well are children helped to be healthy?	2
How well are children helped to enjoy and achieve?	2
How well are children helped to make a positive contribution?	3
How well are children helped develop skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being?	2

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

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

There have been no complaints made to Ofsted since the last inspection.

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.