

Meadow Pre School

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspector Karen Scott

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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

Meadow Pre-school was re-registered as a limited company in 2008 and is managed by a committee. It operates from two rooms in a community hall which has steps leading to the entrance. Children have access to an enclosed outdoor play area. The pre-school is situated in Rochester. It is open each weekday from 09.00 to 14.45, term-time only.

The pre-school is registered on the Early Years Register. A maximum of 30 children may attend the pre-school at any one time. There are currently 71 children aged from two to under five years on roll, some in part-time places. The provision is registered by Ofsted on the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. The pre-school currently supports a number of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those for whom English is a second language.

There are eight members of staff, five of whom hold appropriate early years qualifications to at least NVQ level 2. One member of staff is undertaking further training. The setting provides funded early education for three and four-year-olds.

Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good. Staff have formed strong relationships with the children that they care for and know them very well, planning activities to meet their individual needs and interests. Consequently, children are making good progression and are very happy to attend the setting. Realistic evaluation of the setting and a great desire to enhance knowledge and learn from others promotes continuous improvement to the care that children receive.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- continue to develop children's portfolios enabling parents and carers to review their children's progress regularly and to contribute to their child's learning and development record.

To fully meet the specific requirements of the EYFS, the registered person must:

- keep a record of risk assessments for all outings and review before embarking on them, keeping a record of any action taken (Documentation).

09/07/2009

The leadership and management of the early years provision

Staff agree that reflecting on their provision and all areas of practice is a positive thing to do in order to enhance and improve their setting. Consequently they come together as a group to look at their strengths and weaknesses and to put plans in place to make improvements. They liaise with other settings taking examples of good practice back to their pre-school and understand the importance of parental contribution to evaluation. Staff attend much training, some of which is reflective, helping them to offer up to date care to their children. When areas for improvement are noted the setting takes action. For example, the nappy changing area has been relocated offering children privacy but protecting staff too. Parents and carers are welcomed warmly into the setting and like to support the group by helping to do gardening and decorating, for example. The group further involves them by asking for suggestions on how to extend themes that children's play is centred on. For example, parents suggested making cookies and offered the resources to enable the children to do this when the home corner was turned into a café. Parents and carers are kept informed about the provision through notice boards, detailed policies and procedures, newsletters and other helpful information that may be of interest. Staff talk to parents and carers daily and concerns are shared. Formal sessions are also arranged and overall parents and carers are very happy with the care that their children receive.

All staff have an excellent understanding of the possible signs and symptoms of child abuse and the procedures to follow should they have any concerns and ensure that parents and carers are aware of this when they place a child in their care. The nominated person understands her role and ensures that her training is up to date and that everything she has learnt is cascaded to her colleagues. The setting understands the importance of their role in the protection of children and consequently are working towards safeguarding children from harm.

The quality and standards of the early years provision

Children play in a safe, secure and well-organised environment and staff risk assess throughout the day in order to keep children safe from harm. The outdoor play area is checked for safety and action taken to minimise risks to children. Although all outings are risk assessed and procedures are in place to protect children when away from the setting not all are recorded in writing. Fire evacuations are practised regularly and children are given reminders about keeping safe such as not climbing on chairs but are encouraged to undertake sensible risks such as climbing trees with adult supervision. Children make choices about whether they wish to play indoors or outdoors and do so whatever the weather as appropriate clothing is provided. They also go on regular walks in the surrounding areas. The daily physical exercise and the regular fresh air that they receive helps children to lead a healthy lifestyle. This is further promoted when they have snacks, making choices from a range of fruit, vegetables and other healthy snacks. Children's independence is also promoted as they pour their own drinks of milk or water, receiving help when required. The setting understands the importance of healthy eating and reinforces this message to parents and carers who send in

packed lunches for their children. However, not all lunches contain healthy options. Children do eat the healthier food first though and staff are working hard to think of ways to improve children's diets. Children eat off plates and lunch time is a social occasion with staff sitting with children and involving them in much discussion. Children show care and concern towards each other and are very good at sharing resources and taking turns in conversation and when playing. They are very proud of their artwork which is displayed prominently and staff give them lots of praise, building their self-esteem. Children are encouraged to talk about their feelings and staff involve them in conversations about things that are important to them such as their siblings. A settling in procedure that is sensible and sensitive to children's individual needs helps to ease the transition from home to group. Diversity within society is threaded into all play and differences are acknowledged positively. When caring for children with special needs staff work closely with parents and other agencies in order to support the child.

Children make choices about what they play with and activities lead on from their interests. Children are active learners and consistently engaged and interested in the activities they are participating in. Staff understand that children are individual and have different ways of learning. They know the children that they care for very well and extend their learning through activities that meet their individual learning styles. They also know their likes and dislikes and plan activities that children enjoy doing and therefore wish to participate in. The main room is divided into different areas of learning and resources are easily accessible. The outdoor area is a further area of learning and children may move resources around the different areas in order to continue learning themes. Children are encouraged to use their imaginations when creating and during role play. All artwork is different and there are many opportunities for children to explore texture. Real objects are used in the role play area and staff are good at introducing extra resources such as water to enable children to pursue their game such as really washing up using rubber gloves and tea-towels. There is a great emphasis on communication, language and literacy and it is an integral part of the routine and children's play. Staff are skilled at asking questions that extend children's learning and involve them in lots of discussion. There are many opportunities for children to practise their pre-writing skills when playing. Children love listening to stories and their enthusiasm is acted on as stories are used as a basis for many learning opportunities. Mathematical concepts are introduced into play. Children regularly explore nature and grow fruits and sunflowers. Their economic well-being is enhanced through visits to many local places and by using programmable toys. Children are excellent at taking turns and sharing resources and are independent learners. There are many opportunities for children to develop their large and finer motor skills. They use a range of resources such as whisks, scissors and other tools when playing and climb large apparatus skilfully.

Staff make observations of children and share what they have learnt with each other in order to think about how they can, as a staff group, extend children's learning. They know their children well and as a consequence extend their learning at activities that interest them and help them to achieve. As a result of this children are making progression through the developmental stepping stones. The setting is in the progress of developing children's portfolios in order that they are more easily accessible to parents and carers to enable them to share in their children's learning journeys but this is an area that requires further development.

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?	2
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement.	2

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?	1
How well does the setting work in partnership with parents and others?	2
How well are children safeguarded?	1

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?	1
How well are children helped develop skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being?	2

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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