

# The Firs Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

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**Unique reference number** 127688  
**Inspection date** 13/01/2009  
**Inspector** Carol Vant

**Setting address** Chartham Primary School, Shalmsford Street, Chartham,  
Canterbury, Kent, CT4 7QN  
**Telephone number** 01227 731876  
**Email** firs.chartham@virgin.net  
**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

The Firs Nursery opened in 1994 and operates from several rooms including the two main play rooms in premises located in the grounds of Chartham Primary School, Shalmsford Street, near Canterbury, Kent. A maximum of 32 children may attend the nursery at any one time. The nursery is open each weekday from 09:00 to 15:15, term time only. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area. There are currently 44 children aged from two years to under five years on roll. Of these, 36 children receive funding for nursery education. Children come from a wide catchment area. The nursery is able to support children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and also supports children who speak English as an additional language. The nursery employs eight staff. There are six staff, including the supervisors, who hold appropriate early years qualifications. There is one member of staff who is working towards a qualification. The nursery is a member of the Pre-School Learning Alliance. They also receive support from the Local Authority. The setting is on the Early Years Register, compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. There is disabled access into the setting via a ramp at the front of the building.

## Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

The Firs is an effective nursery school. It is inclusive and provides a safe, welcoming environment where children can enjoy variety of play opportunities inside and in the secure outside area. Parents are kept well informed about their children's welfare and are encouraged to play an active role in the learning and development of their children. The nursery strives for continuous improvement.

## What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- offer children stimulating play opportunities linked to the weekly themes that they can self-select and to use these for more focussed assessments of their learning
- improve the outside area to create an environment where children can experience high quality learning opportunities across all six areas of learning

## The leadership and management of the early years provision

Leadership and management of The Firs Nursery is good. The very capable supervisor leads a team of suitable, well-qualified staff who have a shared understanding that improvement must be a continuous process. Self evaluation is accurate and focussed on achieving the very best outcomes for the children. When areas for improvement are identified, detailed plans for action are drawn up and, where necessary, staff training arranged. When a number of children were displaying behavioural difficulties, it was recognised that their

parents would need support. With the help of local authority support staff, a leaflet was produced offering help and advice to parents. The setting has good relationships with the local community and is well supported by local organisations. For example, children enjoy taking part in the fundraising activities such as Toddle Waddle.

All safeguarding policies are in place and are regularly reviewed and updated. Risk assessments are regularly reviewed so that outdoor and indoor spaces, furniture, equipment and toys are suitable and safe for children. Good emphasis is placed upon security so that children do not leave unaccompanied. The setting recognises the importance of involving parents fully in what it does and takes their views seriously when planning to meet the needs of their children. Parents are kept fully informed about their children's learning, development and welfare. Induction Days are held on a Saturdays to enable both parents to attend. The individual records of children's progress are available to their parents and they are encouraged to contribute to them.

Good relationships with external agencies and with the local authority ensure that any children, who may need additional support, receive the help they need quickly. The setting is very inclusive and welcomes all children whatever their background. All staff have been trained to appreciate cultural diversity and gender issues. Strong links with the adjacent primary school ensure that children feel comfortable and confident when they move on to the next stage of their education.

## **The quality and standards of the early years provision**

The quality and standards of the early years provision is good. Staff have a good understanding of children's development and fully embrace the Every Child Matters agenda and the Early Years Foundation Stage principles. Although each staff member is responsible for a particular group of children, they work effectively as a team and know all the children well.

The children are well cared for and positive relationships with the adults who support them gives them the confidence to make good progress and become more independent in their learning and development. Children use their name cards to self register which not only encourages independence, but also helps them to recognise their own name.

Meticulous hygiene routines prevent infection and ensure a clean environment. Children learn to wash their hands after toileting and before eating.

At lunchtimes they learn about healthy eating and develop good social skills while enjoying nutritious, healthy food. Sitting in small groups around tables, they are well behaved, choose their own food and serve themselves, preparing them well for the next stage of their education.

Behaviour is well managed by calm, trained staff who act as good role models.

A variety of age appropriate resources are easily accessible to the children, encouraging independence and self-selection. Children develop good social skills as they play happily independently, alongside each other and collaboratively. Weekly planning, based on themes such as Rain, includes a range of play opportunities across all six areas of learning, including adult led group activities. Observations of children's play build up a picture of the child's progress that is recorded in their individual records. However, less attention is given to providing activities, linked to the themes that the children can self-select and which can be used for more

focussed observations to assess their learning and development. Weekly planning is displayed in the entrance area so that parents can support their child's learning. Their observations are valued and added to their child's record.

The setting regards the three well-fenced outside areas as extensions of the learning environment. The children have free access to the outside area, but the facilities are basic and this limits the quality of the learning that takes place there. The setting has rightly identified the outside environment as a priority for improvement.

There are a variety of visitors to the setting, who contribute to the children's learning and development. Children learn how to stay safe when crossing the road and how to take care of their teeth, they also enjoy a visit from the Kent Discovery Bus.

## 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

|   |   |
|---|---|
| <b>How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?</b> | 2 |
| How well does the provision promote inclusive practice?   | 2 |
| The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement.   | 2 |

### Leadership and management

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

### Quality and standards

|   |   |
|---|---|
| <b>How effectively are children in the Early Years Foundation Stage helped to learn and develop?</b>  | 2 |
| <b>How effectively is the welfare of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage promoted?</b>       | 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?   | 2 |
| 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](http://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**

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.