

St Catherines C of E Private Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	124114
Inspection date	13/02/2009
Inspector	Jackie Cousins

Setting address	St. Catherines Hoddesdon C of E Primary School, Haslewood Avenue, Hoddesdon, Hertfordshire, EN11 8HT
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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).

Description of the setting

St. Catherine's C of E Private Nursery opened in 1994. It operates from one room within St. Catherine's Primary School, in Hoddesdon, but is independent of the school. Children use the main school hall, two outdoor areas and the school playground. The nursery is open five days a week during school terms from 9.00 until 11.30 and from 12.40 until 15.10 on Monday, Tuesday and Thursday, and Friday afternoons.

A maximum of 22 children who are between the age of two and four years may attend the nursery at any one time. Currently 38 children are on roll and of those 36 receive funding for nursery education. The nursery is on the Early Years Register. It supports children who have learning difficulties and/disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery employs six members of staff including a qualified early years teacher. All staff hold appropriate early years qualifications. The nursery has achieved the Hertfordshire Quality Award and works in partnership with Hertfordshire County Council to access training.

Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

St. Catherine's Private Nursery gives a good start to children's education. It is a fun and interesting place for children to learn because it is led and managed effectively. The children achieve well in their learning because effective methods are used and they are cared for well. Children from all backgrounds and abilities are included successfully in all learning activities. Significant improvements made since the last inspection demonstrate it has a good capacity to improve in the future.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- enhance the way staff explain to children what they can do each session so that they are clear about which skills they are expected to develop
- ensure the national guidance on stages of development is used more rigorously to assess children's attainment.

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

- ensure that at least one person who is caring for children has an appropriate first aid qualification (Safeguarding and welfare)

01/03/2009

The leadership and management of the early years provision

A good leadership team creates detailed policies which make sure that children's welfare is given a great deal of importance. The leadership and staff work outstandingly successfully with parents. Staff meet with parents and discuss children in depth before they start at the nursery. Parents can formally meet with staff on two occasions to discuss their child's progress and personal targets. These targets and the success that children have had in meeting them are recorded effectively. Staff are always available to discuss any concerns with parents. All the parents spoken to said that their concerns are acted on extremely attentively by staff.

A good team of staff work well together to support the manager. The team use self-evaluation in effective ways and they are enthusiastic about improving the nursery. Significant improvements since the last inspection include the fact that the complaints policy is up to date. Staff regularly develop their teaching skills by attending training courses. The leadership has not kept a careful watch on when key training courses need renewing. This means that although children's rare accidents are handled suitably, a member of staff has not completed a first aid qualification for younger children in the last three years. The children are safeguarded well because the leadership holds details of all the required checks carried out on staff. The staff are clear about how to report any safeguarding issues with children.

The quality and standards of the early years provision

Children progress well because staff provide many thoughtful practical activities for them to explore. They develop their key skills successfully because staff plan challenging sessions for them. Children learn to use language effectively as a result of staff placing a high priority on this area of learning. Staff's careful and challenging questioning ensures children learn to describe the features of different types of animals using words that specify the typical characteristics. They explain to children what activities are available to them, but they do not always explain what skills they could use. This means that children are not totally clear what staff expectations are of them and what they are looking for. Children's literacy skills develop in a consistent manner due to the systematic teaching of letter sounds. The staff assist children to learn to be accurate when they encourage them to count using their fingers. Children's physical development is promoted well. For example, they are taught how to control their movements when they balance bean bags on their heads while walking. They learn to be creative due to the thoughtfully planned activities and the wide selection of resources made readily available to children. Their creative skills develop imaginatively when they combine pieces of dough, for instance, when one child made a model of a face with a moustache. Effective teaching helps children learn that plants need soil as they explore the best ways to plant pansies in pots. Staff assess children carefully and record the next steps that children will take. The new national guidance is not always used successfully to evaluate children's attainment. This means that staff are not fully aware of those children who may be falling behind.

The children have good relationships with staff. This is because they are welcoming and frequently offer children positive feedback. The staff's enthusiasm and expertise ensures children enjoy all sorts of activities in the nursery such as singing songs like 'Humpty Dumpty.' Children keenly recycle paper because staff explain global issues carefully. Children behave well and maturely due to the astute supervision of staff. For example, they walk sensibly to the playground round the edge of some puddles due to staff guidance. The children handle resources safely because staff guide them thoughtfully. They are kept safe as a result of comprehensive policies. For example, children's allergies are recorded effectively on a wall so that all staff can freely refer to it. Risk assessments and fire drills are completed regularly. Clear guidance on evacuation procedures are displayed effectively so that everyone is clear about how to handle an emergency.

The children learn to cooperate well at snack time because they sit at a table together. Children enjoy eating healthily as they are offered a rich variety of savoury foods and fruit. They drink water or milk half-way through the session as routines are well established. They know to go and get a drink at any time because a jug of water is left out for them on a worktop. A good balance of activities, some chosen by children, and some led by staff allow them to develop their independence effectively. Children are successfully prepared for the next stage of education because of their good personal development and well-developed key skills of literacy and numeracy.

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

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?	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

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.