

Baby Barns Kindergarten

Inspection report for early years provision

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EY101659

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Inspector

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Setting address

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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).

Description of the setting

Baby Barns Kindergarten opened in 2002. It is an annexe to a larger day nursery, Orchard Barns, which is situated close by. It operates from a converted barn in Ardleigh, Essex, which has level access. Children have access to an enclosed outdoor play area. The kindergarten is open each weekday from 08.00 to 18.00 for 51 weeks of the year, with the exception of bank holidays.

The kindergarten is registered on the Early Years Register. A maximum of 12 children aged from three months up to three years may attend at any one time. There are currently 29 children aged from six months to two years on roll, some in part-time places. The kindergarten is happy to support children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and children for whom English is an additional language.

There are seven members of staff, six of whom hold appropriate early years qualifications to at least NVQ Level 2, with most at NVQ Level 3 and above. One member of staff has recently achieved Early Years Professional Status. The setting is a member of the National Day Nurseries Association (NDNA) and has NDNA accreditation. It is also a member of the Pre-School Learning Alliance (PSLA). The kindergarten was awarded Nursery of the Year in November 2008 by Nursery World magazine.

Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall, the quality of the provision is outstanding. The kindergarten provides a very welcoming and safe environment of discovery, where young children flourish. They have fun developing and learning through an imaginative variety of play experiences, both inside and outdoors. Committed and visionary management leads a competent team of staff, who are extremely caring and attentive towards the children and operate a successful key-person system. Trusting partnerships are established with parents to ensure all children are included and their individual needs are met appropriately. All documentation is stringently maintained to support children's welfare. The setting effectively and proactively monitors and reflects upon practice, to promote ongoing quality and improvement.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To further improve the high quality early years provision the registered person should consider:

- Continue to review and self-evaluate, attend further training and integrate aspects of other identified good practice, to enhance and develop the existing excellent practice at the kindergarten.

The leadership and management of the early years provision

Experienced and caring staff work as a well-motivated and creative team, inspired by the enthusiastic and exemplary leadership of a management committed to providing high quality care and learning for all the children. Staff's training, and their knowledge of current childcare practice, is kept up-to-date through in-house and external training events. Acquired knowledge and skills are applied in practice to benefit and enhance the quality of care and learning for the children. Staff are clear of the robust procedures which are in place to safeguard children and understand their responsibilities should they have a child protection concern. The setting effectively monitors and evaluates its provision by ongoing reflection of practice. This is achieved through regular staff meetings, where all staff contributions are welcomed, staff appraisals, parent feedback and liaison with local authority support staff. Esteemed methods in other settings are also considered and best practice is incorporated as the management strive for excellence.

All documentation and procedures are well maintained and easily referenced, to promote children's wellbeing. Rigorous procedures for alerting staff to any allergies or particular health requirements are in place throughout both nurseries. Thorough risk assessments are maintained to promote children's safety in the kindergarten and garden. Very inclusive practice is applied to staff, the children and their families. Staff work closely with parents, carers and other professionals to provide individually tailored care for all children, especially those with particular needs such as disabilities and/or learning difficulties. Children for whom English is an additional language are well supported, with staff using some familiar words and gestures, sometimes supported by Makaton, whilst the children gain proficiency with the English language.

Staff develop trusting and open relationships with parents and get to know the children well as individuals to ensure their particular needs and preferences are well catered for. Children's records are comprehensive and all required parental consents are completed to ensure children are cared for according to their parents' wishes. There is strong emphasis on maintaining consistency with a child's existing home routine and new parents are encouraged to complete a care plan, which they discuss with their child's key-person, to promote this. Transitions from one room to the next are sensitively and individually managed around the child's readiness and stage of development, rather than a set age. Informative daily diaries are maintained for babies and thorough feedback of each child's day is given to their parent when they are collected. Parents are offered questionnaires when their child has been present six weeks and their opinions and ideas are welcomed and valued on an ongoing basis. Parents' comments are extremely positive. They express that they have confidence in the staff and receive excellent feedback about their children, who are making considerable progress and really enjoy coming to the kindergarten.

The quality and standards of the early years provision

Children are sensitively introduced to the nursery and consequently settle well. They soon become very comfortable and confident with the staff and their peers, and make positive attachments to key persons. Staff are warm and attentive towards the children and gently cuddle, soothe and reassure any children who become upset, for example, when they are tired. Children's individual routines are carefully maintained and respected, rather than being governed by the nursery timetable. For example, children who are sleeping during meal times are given their food soon after they awake. Children have a dedicated cot, with their individual bedding and are stringently monitored by staff whilst they are sleeping. Diversity is valued and respected and evident from the individual care offered, as well as being reflected in the resources and activities available.

Staff have a very secure knowledge of child development and the EYFS, and provide a superb range of stimulating activities and experiences. Children are busy and play purposefully with an exciting range easily accessible, good quality resources. They delight in discovering a variety of media and textures such as paint, playdough, sand, gloop and pasta pieces. They enjoy exploring natural objects using all their senses, for example, feathers and flowers as well as everyday objects like saucepans, brushes and mirrors. Babies are supported to investigate many multi-sensory objects such as mirrors, crackly cellophane, bubbles, soft cushions, silky material and coloured lights. Social skills, such as sharing and sitting together for meals, are promoted and children gradually learn how to feed themselves. A quiet period after lunch enables children to rest or sleep according to their individual needs. A delightful variety of books are available and children eagerly snuggle round staff, who sit down at the children's level, to share the experience and delight in the sounds and pictures of a pop up book.

Planning for each child is based on observations and assessments made by their key-person, recorded in an Individual Observation book and Development Matters Profile, which are shared with parents. There is emphasis on child-led activities and staff endeavour to build upon children's interests and extend their learning by providing extra resources and props linked to a child-initiated theme. For example, the focus area is set up as a garage workshop, complete with some real tools, car magazines and toy vehicles. Staff carefully consider the daily routine from the children's perspective and are creative and imaginative, for example, putting together themed treasure boxes for children to investigate whilst they wait for lunch. The rooms are regularly tidied and the toys presented appealingly, inviting children to explore and participate. Interaction between staff and the babies and toddlers is fun and spontaneous. Staff are enthusiastic and animated and are skilled at using props to focus the children's attention, for example, during music and rhyme time.

Children are very well nourished and thoroughly enjoy the healthy and well-balanced meals and snacks, which are made from fresh, nutritious ingredients. Stringent measures in place to maintain awareness of children's allergies and intolerances and each baby is offered their own preferred variety of milk. Scrupulous hygiene routines and procedures are in place, such as regular sterilising

of toys and equipment and stringent nappy routines, to minimise the risk of cross-infection. Children begin to learn about health and hygiene as they routinely clean their hands with wet wipes prior to eating and after messy activities or being outside.

Children delight in frequently playing outside, where they benefit from fresh air and exercise. They are appropriately dressed to experience all sorts of weather, for example, sunhats or all-in-one waterproofs. The outdoor area is a vibrant extension of the play and learning environment, with wind chimes, chalk board, sand play, books, pictures and numbers. They have chance to gain confidence and co-ordination as they toddle and crawl and older children develop their physical skills and competence on a mini climbing frame plus ride-on and push-along toys. They begin to learn about and appreciate the natural world as they watch the birds on the feeders and help with planting a selection of fruits and vegetables, which are eventually picked and sampled at meal times. Props and themed resources promote their imaginative and role play, for example, the play house is set up in a variety of themes such as a home, vets and shop. Staff readily support children's play to increase their enjoyment, knowledge and understanding, for example, conversing freely and using a broad but simple vocabulary with them.

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?	1
How well does the provision promote inclusive practice?	1
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement.	1

Leadership and management

How effectively is provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	1
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?	1
How well are children safeguarded?	1

Quality and standards

How effectively are children in the Early Years Foundation Stage helped to learn and develop?	1
How effectively is the welfare of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage promoted?	1
How well are children helped to stay safe?	1
How well are children helped to be healthy?	1
How well are children helped to enjoy and achieve?	1
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?	1

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