

Pumpkin Patch Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	EY334466
Inspection date	14/05/2009
Inspector	Chris Mackinnon
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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

Pumpkin Patch Nursery was first registered at its current location in 2006. The nursery is easily accessible and is situated in the Preston Park area of Brighton and Hove. Childcare takes place on the ground floor and first floor, with children also having access to outdoor play areas. The nursery is open five days a week, from 08.00 to 18.00. The nursery is registered on the Early Years Register and on the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. A maximum of 60 children in the early years age group may attend at any one time and there are currently 138 children on roll. The nursery is also in receipt of funding for the provision of free early years education. There is a staff team of 22 and all staff have appropriate early years qualifications, with five currently training.

Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good. The nursery successfully supports children's welfare and learning and is safely organised to provide childcare over a range of ages. Staff key persons have an effective knowledge of individual children's learning stages, and maintain a sound approach to inclusive practice. Children play and learn happily in a well prepared childcare environment, that makes much good use of outdoor play. A good range of activities are also provided to effectively support children's learning, and the nursery staff and management have a positive approach to improvement. Children enjoy being at the nursery and benefit from the close care and encouragement provided.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- develop the planning of the educational programme to include more of the children's interests and opportunities for child-initiated learning

The leadership and management of the early years provision

The nursery is successfully led and managed by trained and experienced staff. Nearly all staff have completed NVQ training to level 3 and the nursery also has the benefit of a qualified teacher within the staff team. The nursery has four members of staff whose level of training is almost at degree level, which makes them likely candidates for Early Years Professional Status. The nursery is also in the process of completing the Brighton and Hove Quilt quality assurance scheme, which provides scrutiny of all aspects of the nursery's childcare practice. The nursery has an ongoing staff training development plan, where staff are able to update their training and a staff appraisal system is also in place. Recently all staff have completed training for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) and several staff have also completed training in how to organise and maintain self-evaluation. There is a significant strength therefore in the confidence and ability of the nursery

staff, who are effectively supported by the manager and deputy. Another strong aspect of the nursery's care provision is the successful delivery of a stimulating learning programme, with the observation and assessment of children's learning progress particularly well organised and established. The nursery also has a recognisable strength in its provision of an attractive and stimulating play and learning environment. Children benefit greatly from being able to explore a wide range of play resources easily, in the nursery's well prepared play rooms. Much outdoor play and learning is also provided, in the nursery's purpose-built garden play areas.

The nursery has a consistent and well organised approach to self-assessment. The manager and staff have a clear understanding of the need for reflective practice, and are able to regularly appraise the learning content of the activities provided. The organisation of the children's learning environment is also frequently assessed, and children are consistently observed as they explore resources and engage in play. The nursery is also in the process of completing the Ofsted self-evaluation document, where they clearly identify areas for development and improvement.

The nursery is committed to maintaining good working partnerships with parents. This is achieved by much close contact between parents and their children's key persons. Consistent use is also made of individual children's learning records, to keep parents informed and involved in their children's care and learning. Parents also have access to clearly written and detailed documentation that describe the nursery's play programme and regular learning topics. The nursery's key persons also take care to support and include parents by providing good day-to-day information on individual children's healthy growth and development. Parents are also asked to complete starter sheets and regular learning response forms about their children's interests and home based activities, which has a beneficial impact on children's learning and staff knowledge of the individual children attending.

Children are effectively safeguarded within the nursery and close consideration is given to ensuring all children feel welcome and able to play and learn. The nursery staff have a clear understanding of the need to protect children at all times and keep them safe and secure. A soundly organised and consistent policy of staff training ensures that an appropriate safeguarding awareness is maintained within the staff team. The nursery also has clearly written and up-to-date guidance on safeguarding and child protection procedures.

The quality and standards of the early years provision

The nursery successfully supports and encourages children's learning and development. Staff provide a well presented range of activities that are specifically organised to meet the learning needs of the children attending. The nursery has three distinct learning groups, which allows staff to plan the play environment and focus on the learning expectations of different ages. The nursery's organisation of activities also shows a definite commitment to supporting children's development, with many opportunities provided out-of-doors to support children's physical confidence and their knowledge and understanding of the world. The nursery follows a fortnightly play plan that includes well organised learning themes that

helps children learn to count, use a range of words, and learn about nature and the seasons. The nursery also provides a particularly well prepared learning environment with an attractive range of resources to help children explore and be creative. Younger children are well supported with activities designed to encourage their tactile and sensory awareness. Older children's learning is also effectively provided for, with activities well presented to challenge their manual skills and ability to play and learn happily together. The nursery makes good use of the EYFS framework, but is not yet fully able to take note of the children's interests when planning activities, which has a limiting effect on the opportunities provided for child-initiated play.

The nursery has a good and effective awareness of how to extend children's learning. During a wide range of activities, staff are able to introduce counting and learning about numbers. A good example of how problem solving, reasoning and numeracy is supported would be the many cutting and sticking activities provided, where children learn to join materials and encounter numbers, shapes and sizes. During children's role play, staff demonstrate much confidence in supporting children's personal and social development. Frequently during play activities, staff members ask the children questions to prompt their ideas and imaginative development, as well as promoting their communication, language and literacy. A good example of staff extending children's learning is the provision of water play outdoors, where children explore textures and colours, with different sized objects and play items. The nursery staff have a definite and clear ability to effectively ensure children develop and make progress in their learning, and all six of the early learning goals are well explored and extended.

The nursery staff are also confident in how they observe and assess children's learning progress. Each individual child attending has a separate document folder that includes regular written notes on their development and progress through the learning stages. Much good use is also made of photos of children taken during their activities to support their individual learning records. The observation and recording of children's learning is well established within the nursery, and key persons are able to follow and chart children's progress to ensure their next steps in learning are clearly identified. Staff are also effective in sharing information on children's progress with parents to encourage their contribution and involvement.

The nursery is committed to ensuring children's welfare needs are fully met and supported. A range of separate care areas have been organised within the nursery to enable children to be effectively cared for and their learning and development encouraged. Staff follow clear policies and procedures to keep children safe and secure, and the nursery has well organised and detailed risk assessments covering all parts of the premises, including the outdoor play areas. The nursery is also well prepared to provide safe and effective childcare, with all equipment and play resources regularly checked and monitored by staff. The nursery also takes care to ensure individual children's healthy growth and development is well promoted. Staff key persons take a close interest in their individual children's welfare and work with parents to ensure individual children thrive and make progress. A good range of healthy meals and snacks are provided, and the nursery has the advantage of an on-site kitchen. Children benefit from purposely designed meals and menus that support their nutrition and encourage a good awareness of healthy

eating. Children are also regularly encouraged to try new foods and explore different tastes as part of the nursery's programme of activities.

A strong feature of the nursery's organisation and support for children's welfare is the provision of a bright and stimulating play environment. Each learning area is well prepared for the different ages of children attending, with appropriately sized furniture and quiet play areas that encourage children to be reflective and thoughtful learners. The nursery has a wide range of resources and play materials that are well designed to engage children's interest. Many good role play resources are available, which the children use to be expressive and inventive. For example, children particularly enjoy using a play post office, that prompts much writing and mark-making, and encourages children to talk about distances and different places.

The nursery staff demonstrates considerable skill in their support for children's enjoying and achieving. Staff take care to ensure the younger children have much close and positive support with their activities, for example, learning how to hold cups and manage food at snack time, which involves tactile and manual skills. The older children are also well guided and supported by staff. They have access to learning on the computer and have many opportunities to read with staff, and develop an interest in books and stories. Much advanced role play is featured within the older children's play, particularly when outdoors, where they invent journeys and use a range of play materials to make up stories and play ideas. Children are also encouraged by staff to play outdoors as much as they can, and make good use of a wide range outdoor play equipment and resources. Children are also encouraged to sing and respond to music. For example, children particularly enjoy making and creating sounds with drums, bells and musical instruments in the nursery's outdoor play area.

The nursery staff demonstrate much confidence in managing children's behaviour, and successfully help children learn to share and have a positive attitudes to others. Children also learn in groups where they are encouraged to get to know one another, and be confident talkers and listeners. During all their many activities, the children learn to use a wide range of tools and work with different materials. This provides many practical challenges and is a good support for their future learning. The nursery staff also play a part in supporting children's involvement in the wider community, by working closely with parents and linking well with children's other carers and care settings. Children's awareness of diversity is also effectively supported at the nursery, with many different festivals celebrated. The teaching of Spanish words and phrases is a popular feature within the play programme.

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?	2
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 B: the Childcare Register

The provider confirms that the requirements of the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are:	Met
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The provider confirms that the requirements of the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are:	Met
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