

Castle Nursery and Pre-school

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	EY305501
Inspection date	23/06/2009
Inspector	Louise Bonney
Setting address	14 South Hill, GUILDFORD, Surrey, GU1 3SY
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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).

Children only attend this setting before and/or after the school day and/or during the school holidays. The judgements in this report reflect the quality of early years provision offered to children during those periods.

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

Castle Nursery at South Hill has been registered under its current ownership since 2005. It is one of three nurseries owned and managed by Castle Daycare and Preschool Ltd. The nursery operates from a former Victorian school building in a residential area of Guildford, Surrey. The town centre is close by and within walking distance. Children are cared for in separate age-groups. Children share access to secure outdoor play areas. A maximum of 39 children may attend the nursery at any one time. The nursery is open each weekday from 08:00 until 18:00, 51 weeks of the year.

The provision is registered under the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. There are currently 83 children on roll within the early years age range, aged from 3 months to 4 years. There is currently no provision for children within the later years age range. Of those attending, 26 children receive early years education funding. Children attend all day or for various sessions. The nursery supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and children who speak English as an additional language.

A team of 12 permanent staff work with the children. Of these, three hold recognised early years qualifications at Level 2 and above, and six hold L5 or L6 qualifications. An unqualified member of staff is currently on a training programme. The nursery receives support from the local authority. The nursery has achieved Investors in People status.

Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall, the quality of the provision is good. The manager and staff evaluate their provision and identify areas for improvement, which supports the continual development of the nursery and staff well. Staff establish good relationships with parents, and a successful start has been made in setting up a diverse group of parents to form a link group who inspire further development of the nursery. Children are happy and well cared for in an environment that safeguards their welfare through the implementation of appropriate policies and procedures. Staff plan for individual children's learning and the wide range of activities helps children make steady progress in their learning and development.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- develop sustained shared thinking by offering encouragement, clarifying ideas and asking open questions which support and extend children's thinking and play and helps them make connections in learning
- reflect children's individual cultural backgrounds and languages within the setting
- ensure planned adult-led activities equally promote all areas of learning

outside in order to use the space and larger resources available as well as children's individual learning styles.

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

- the risk assessment must identify aspects of the environment that need to be checked on a regular basis: maintain a record of these particular aspects and when and by whom they have been checked, and determine the regularity of these checks according to the assessment of the significance of individual risks (Suitable premises, environment and equipment)

09/07/2009

The leadership and management of the early years provision

The owner and manager create an environment where everyone works together and contributes to the evaluation and development of the nursery. The manager liaises with other managers within the nursery group and seeks support from local authority advisors. She is monitoring the gradual introduction quality improvement tools, such as the Early Childhood Environmental Rating Scales. Staff evaluate their own rooms and identify areas for development. The manager ensures that clear action plans are in place and monitors progress closely. This creates a reflective setting that is continually developing. The manager has successfully sought the support of a diverse group of mothers and fathers to establish a link group, and highly values the feedback and ideas that their first recent meeting generated. The manager displays plans for the development of the garden and invites ideas from parents. She acts on feedback from parents, such as the provision of a mini-prospectus for each room to support transitions as children move up into the next group. All parents have biannual opportunities to formally meet with their child's key person to discuss their development and learning, as well as informal opportunities at daily handover. This helps to develop strong relationships with parents.

The owner and manager show commitment to having a highly qualified staff. With staff, they identify training and plan their professional development through accessing training courses. The manager informally monitors the quality of teaching and identifies areas to strengthen, such as interaction and extension of activities. Staff have regular meetings to share information and ideas, and new systems have successfully been introduced for recording observational assessments of children's learning and development and planning. Staff support each other well and show commitment and enthusiasm, creating a happy and relaxing environment for the children.

New staff undergo rigorous vetting procedures to ensure their suitability, and staff implement suitable policies and procedures. This safeguards the children and supports their welfare. Staff carry out regular risk assessments to ensure the safety of the premises and equipment. However, there is no record of daily safety

checks carried out to show when and by whom they are completed. This breaches the Welfare requirements.

The quality and standards of the early years provision

Children settle well and develop affectionate relationships with each other and the staff. Staff discuss new children's development and care needs with parents, which helps ensure children receive appropriate support and activities. Staff show they value children as they act upon their individual needs and routines, such as for sleeps and nappy changes. Parents provide photographs which staff use to create a personal book for each child reflecting their home life, which children enjoy sharing with others. These books provide an important link with home for children and staff as they build trusting and understanding relationships with each other. However, staff do not sufficiently reflect children's home cultures and languages within the nursery to further help children feel valued and included.

Children receive good support for their health and safety. Although the layout of the nursery does not support free-flow from indoors to outside during activities, children enjoy frequent opportunities for outdoor play. Babies and toddlers having a separate area with a safety surface to help prevent bumps as they learn to crawl and toddle. Children enjoy healthy meals and many ask for extra helpings, which they receive. Children learn how to keep themselves safe as they play. Staff support babies closely as they begin to move around, while older children run and chase hoops or learn to take care when throwing Frisbees. They put on sunscreen and hats on hot days and staff ensure drinks are always available so that they take plenty of fluids.

Children freely select from a wide range of interesting resources inside and outside that stimulate their play and learning. Babies and toddlers look at books with staff, play in the sand and explore imaginative resources, such as the holistic basket with its jar lids and hair curlers. Toddlers develop skills as they enthusiastically dance and move in different ways to music and explore different materials, such as cornflour and water or sand outside. Older children initiate their own learning outside as they explore, such as when they dig in the mud patch, help to fill the water tray using a hosepipe, or play in the large sandpit. Staff involve children in developing the indoor roleplay area, and children use creative skills to make props for their pirate ship such as flags and hats. Children develop their play together and show cooperative skills and good sharing as they negotiate the use of resources. Children develop IT skills as they take turns to use the computer for games and staff type up their stories which children print off for display. Children develop independence as they feed themselves, put on aprons and shoes, and make choices about their activities. This helps build their confidence.

All staff carry out an observational assessment of children's learning and development. They clearly identify children's next possible steps in learning and use these to develop future planning. Staff identify any possible concerns in children's development and liaise with parents in order to provide appropriate support. This helps to build on children's abilities, experience and knowledge. There is a balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities, with staff planning

some adult-led activities for each day. However, staff do not ensure all areas of learning are equally promoted through adult-led activities outside, to take advantage of the larger space, resources and children's individual learning styles. Staff support children during their activities, such as when they participate in their role play or talk to them about what they are doing and asking questions. However, staff do not always extend children's learning during their self-initiated play, such as through building on their ideas through sustaining interaction that develops their thinking and understanding. This leads to children making satisfactory progress in their learning and 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?	3
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?	3
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?	3
How well are children helped develop skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being?	3

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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