

Great Ballard Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspector

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Type of setting

Childcare on non-domestic premises

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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*.

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Description of the setting

Great Ballard Nursery extended the registered provision to accept children from the age of two years in 2009. It is run by Great Ballard School Ltd. The nursery is part of the pre-prep department of Great Ballard School, an independent school which caters for children from two to 13 years old. The school and is located in Eartham, near Chichester, West Sussex. Nursery age children use two classrooms in the pre-prep department, with additional facilities for physical activities and lunch in the main school. Children have free access to a walled garden which is allocated to the nursery and pre-prep department. The outside play area is mostly grassed and contains large play apparatus and a quiet area. There is also a separate soft surface area for activities with wheeled toys and a new covered outside area for sensory play. Children use the extensive school grounds for nature walks and more vigorous play activities. All areas are easily accessible.

The nursery is registered on the Early Years Register and up to eight children in the early years age range may attend at any one time; of these none may be under two years. Children attend all day or for various sessions between 08:30 until 15:15, extending from 08:15 until 17:30 by prior arrangement, Monday to Friday during term time only.

There are three members of staff who work with the children. All staff are qualified and hold Early Years Professional Status or National Vocational Qualifications at Levels 2 and 3. The nursery receives support from the local early years network and incorporates funded educational places. There are currently nine children on roll in the two-year-old age group.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

The nursery staff have a high level of knowledge and understanding about the Early Years Foundation Stage. They have fully introduced new systems to manage the needs of the younger nursery children and to include extended choice and child-led play. Staff provide a sound base for settling smaller children and their dedicated awareness of individual children's needs, enables them to effectively nurture and promote children's welfare and learning. There is a strong focus on maintaining a safe environment for all nursery children and for including smaller children in all the wider aspects of nursery activities that utilise the school's facilities.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- ensure that the checking systems for staff includes evidence of medical suitability

- include the hours of children's attendance in the daily register
- continue to develop the assessments of children's progress to show their next steps in learning

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

There is consistent communication and a very positive attitude from the nursery and pre-prep staff within the school; this forms a progressive link for children who transfer to the main school. The nursery has regular contact with the early years network and the head of pre-prep shares information with other independent schools. Staff frequently assess the wider provision and show a clear commitment to making changes to meet the early years regulations. For example, the whole organisation of the nursery has been adapted to enable a higher level of choice for children throughout all sessions and a daily choice of indoor or outdoor play. The nursery offers space for children's freedom of movement and is very well equipped in all prepared areas of play. A wide variety of activities are offered and children can access their play resources readily; a newly furnished role play area has recently been added.

Staff show a strong commitment to equality and willingly follow activities according to children's individual levels of interest. For example, seeking special books from the school library about ancient Egypt and planning activities to link with 'mummies' and masks. Staff also encourage parents to visit and share their different Christmas celebrations, or read to children in their home language. Staff show sound experience and competence in engaging with children and monitoring their progress. They have updated children's individual learning journals and parental contributions are being encouraged. Staff and key worker observations are fully recorded and these clearly show that children are achieving, although the records do not include where children need support or their next steps in development.

The nursery has a highly positive relationship with parents, who recognise and appreciate the happiness of their children and the care and nurturing that smaller children receive. Parents have very regular verbal feedback, they are keen to come into the nursery and liaise with staff. There is ample information displayed about children's learning in the early years and parents can see the daily activities for children noted on the white board. Parents are invited to informal evenings prior to children attending, they have information packs from the school and they can visit the nursery and spend as long as necessary settling smaller children. Parents are beginning to contribute to the learning journals and to make links with children's development at home. All parental permission is in place and documentation for individual children is confidentially maintained. Children's daily attendance is noted, although times of arrival are not recorded.

Children's safety is prioritised and the school have included several refurbishments to improve safety and modernise the facilities. New fencing has been added to the outdoor play area, a soft play surface has also been included and the toilets have been updated. Children are well supervised during outdoor play and when moving

between different areas of the school; there are well organised routines to ensure that all gates remain secure. Clearly written risk assessments are in place and daily routines have been adapted to suit younger children, for example, using straps with booster seats at lunch time. The school has developed organised procedures for checking all new staff and clear evidence is available to support this, but the current systems in place do not include a health clearance or information to verify individual health for staff. Nursery staff have regular training to ensure their knowledge of safeguarding is updated and the school has full procedures in place for raising any concerns. There are fire and emergency evacuation procedures displayed and these are practised regularly. A wide range of policies and procedures are available for staff and parents.

The quality and standards of the early years provision and outcomes for children

Smaller children share all play areas with older nursery children, they are settling and freely choosing from a wide variety of organised play provision throughout the nursery. Children help staff to feed the fish in the fish tank, they spontaneously count and announce, 'we only have three fish now'. Some children know how to count in French and in Spanish and they teach each other. Children show they can count spontaneously when they jump on the hopscotch mat. All children are encouraged to self-register by attaching their named photographs to the organised pockets on the wall. They use these throughout the session for their personal items and can add items they wish to take home. Children paint at the easel and they take part in painting trees on larger sheets of paper to add cut out photographs of their family. Some children have individual ideas for creating a treasure map and staff encourage this, by enabling them to stick their photographs to the map instead.

Children often play alone and independently increase their imaginary skills, they play with small people in the castle and make sounds to fit the actions of the people falling down the slide. Staff encourage children's thinking when they ask questions about the weather; children wonder if it is raining at home and staff encourage them to think how far away their home is, because the weather is most probably the same as at nursery. Children like to wear dressing-up clothes and they remain in these for long periods, often wearing items for outside play. They take part in special music sessions and dance with scarves in time to the music, they learn to recognise the sounds of music and respond to high and low notes. Children pretend to be caterpillars and a chrysalis, opening up into a beautiful butterfly, when the music suggests. They learn to move like tadpoles and end up jumping like frogs.

Children are engrossed in rolling the play dough, they cut out shapes and talk about how big the dough is, they recognise difference in size and can understand when it is bigger or smaller. Children use different utensils to dig in the sand, they recognise that one item is not a shovel and they know this tool is mainly used for flattening not digging. They try to make sand castles and when the castles do not work, they know it is because the sand is too dry. Children ride tricycles and manoeuvre these well, they ride through the willow house at times. They learn to

balance on the climbing apparatus. Children use pipes and pieces of guttering for cars to travel down, they send balls on this route too and when this causes a blockage, staff encourage them to learn how to manage by working together to bang the pipe up and down on the ground until the ball is freed.

Children choose when to have snacks and drinks, they sit together and use wipes for ensuring their hands are clean. They are encouraged to help themselves to water at any time and staff offer to help the younger children to increase their independence. They take turns to share the biscuits and they are encouraged to say please and thank you. Staff praise children for responding automatically and they also praise children for managing their own personal care. Children can often repeat snack time if they choose, during the session and other children can continue to play if they do not want to stop for snacks and drinks. Children are learning to share and staff encourage this by becoming involved with their play, creating further interest and adding ideas to extend children's thinking and creativity.

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

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

How well does the setting meet the needs of the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?	2
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	2

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

How effectively is the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	1
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	1
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding	2
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	2
The effectiveness of partnerships	2
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	2

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

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Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	1
The extent to which children feel safe	1
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	2
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	2

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