

St Catherine's Childcare

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	205442
Inspection date	18/06/2009
Inspector	Fiona Robinson
Setting address	St Catherine's Primary School, Marlpool Lane, Kidderminster, Worcestershire, DY11 5HP
Telephone number	01562 753 555
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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

St Catherine's Childcare opened in September 2000. It operates from one room in St Catherine's CofE Primary School, Kidderminster, Worcestershire. The setting generally serves the local area, but children from all over the Wyre Forest can attend. There is ramped disability access to the setting. There are currently 43 children aged from three years to under five years on roll. This includes 42 funded three- and four-year-olds. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The setting supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The setting is registered on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. The group opens five days a week during the school term. Sessions are from 9:00 until 12:00 and from 12:00 until 15:00. Children can also attend for full days. There are three full-time members of staff working with the children, all of whom have early years qualifications and one part-time member of staff who is currently undertaking an early years qualification. The setting receives support from a mentor teacher from the local authority. The setting provides before and after school care in addition to the current nursery provision.

Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall, the quality of the provision is outstanding, because the pre-school provides an exciting, busy and stimulating environment for the children to explore. The excellent relationships between staff and parents and carers ensure the children's individual needs are met. Consequently all children feel valued and fully included in very well-planned activities. The manager and staff have an excellent understanding of the pre-school's strengths and areas for improvement. There is an outstanding record of continued 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:

- develop the use of technology in the setting

The leadership and management of the early years provision

Children's safety is protected very well, because staff are vigilant in ensuring children are kept safe and secure. Comprehensive policies and procedures are fully implemented to ensure that children's welfare is safeguarded and promoted. Staff have an excellent understanding of safeguarding issues and positive steps are taken to minimise risks. Children are cared for in a very well-maintained and safe environment. Detailed risk assessments are completed and reviewed regularly to assess potential risks and very effective steps are taken to minimise them.

Partnerships with parents and carers are outstanding and children benefit from the

excellent communication between staff and themselves. Feedback from parents indicates that staff are very welcoming and supportive. They say that their children enjoy coming to the nursery and that there is always something interesting and fun for the children to do. Very clear information is shared with the parents through informal discussions and parents have access to well-written policies and procedures. High quality written information is provided for parents before their children start the group. Staff keep parents fully informed of their children's achievements and regularly share information at 'stay and play' sessions. They have introduced 'All About Me' books which provide parents with an interesting, informative and well-recorded account of their children's experiences and progress. Comprehensive newsletters keep them well informed of activities, topics and special events. The setting also benefits from excellent links with the host school and regular liaison with staff from the reception class.

Excellent self-evaluation systems ensure that improvements have a strong impact on the experiences of those involved in the pre-school. Manager and staff value the views of children and parents and take these into account when identifying priorities for improvement. They have an outstanding understanding of the setting's strengths and areas for improvement. Action plans for ongoing improvements are comprehensive and the manager and staff have identified the need to develop technology in the setting. Well-qualified and experienced staff are keen to implement new ideas. They regularly access relevant training courses and share their experiences with other staff. The setting has also become involved in a project entitled 'Every Child a Talker' which helps to enrich the children's experiences and develop their speaking and listening skills.

The quality and standards of the early years provision

Children have excellent opportunities to learn through a wide range of play and practical activities. A highly effective key person system ensures that children experience continuity of care and have their individual learning and development needs fully met. Knowledgeable and experienced staff use the 'All About Me' books and learning journals to record children's achievements and to establish their individual next steps in learning and development. Children are very effectively supported with very carefully planned resources and activities to access a rich and varied curriculum.

Children are eager and enthusiastic to come to school. They enjoy talking and joining in circle time conversations and are quick to become engaged in meaningful activities. Their personal, social and emotional development is promoted very effectively. Children are encouraged to choose their own activities and work together very well in teams as they water their vegetables and flower gardens. There is an excellent atmosphere and free-flow access to the outside area is the order of the day. Children are keen to explore and investigate the sand and water trays. They have great fun painting fish shapes for an underwater collage. They use their imaginations well as they go camping in their indoor role play area. Outdoors they take turns to run their fire station and practise skills such as throwing, catching and balancing. Children listen well to stories such as 'We're Going on a Bear Hunt' and enjoy painting colourful pictures of their adventures.

They enjoy mark-making and writing postcards to their friends. Most can count up to 10 and beyond and they enjoy practising their counting through singing songs such as 'Five Little Starfish'. Children's communication skills are developed well through helping to programme a robot to find the numbers on the grid.

Children are developing an excellent understanding of how to keep themselves healthy and safe. They learn how to make healthy choices at snack time and enjoy making healthy sandwich fillings for their teddy bears' picnic. They learn excellent social skills at dinnertime and snack times. They also learn that it is important to exercise through dance and enjoy following the balance trail in the garden. Regular practises of the fire drill helps children to learn how to keep themselves safe and they enjoy informative visits from firemen and police officers. Children's attitudes and behaviour are outstanding, because adults have high expectations. They provide a calm and consistent environment for children and they encourage them to take responsibility for helping each other. Overall, children are prepared very well for life outside the school day and their next steps in learning.

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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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