

The Nursery, St Peter's Church

Inspection report for early years provision

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EY242745

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16/11/2009

Inspector

Stephanie Graves

Setting address

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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*.

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.

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Description of the setting

St Peter's Church Day Nursery opened in September 2002 and operates from four play rooms in a renovated church in Maidstone, Kent. The group is registered by Ofsted on the Early Years and Childcare Registers. The setting is accessible, with the pre-school situated on the first floor. All children share equal access to an enclosed, outdoor play area. The nursery is open each weekday from 7.00am to 7.00pm all year round, with the exception of public holidays.

A maximum of 120 children may attend the nursery at any one time. There are currently 83 children aged from three months to under five years on roll. Children come from the local and wider community. The setting supports children with disabilities.

The nursery employs 30 staff, 24 of whom work directly with the children. Of these, 21 hold appropriate early years qualifications. The manager has a BA (Hons) in Early Childhood Studies and has achieved Early Years Professional Status (EYPS). The deputy manager is also working towards achieving the same status. There is currently one member of staff working towards a qualification.

The nursery provides funded nursery education for three and four-year-olds and receives support and advice from its sister nursery in London and a range of local authority early years professionals.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is outstanding.

Excellent systems are in place to ensure the needs of the children attending in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) are met. The exemplary provision enables each and every child to flourish in a bright, welcoming, secure and stimulating environment. The staff team work extremely well together and forge strong relationships with parents and the children they care for. The provision's capacity to maintain continuous improvement is outstanding, promoting high quality outcomes for the children.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- developing children's interest in illustrations and print in the environment, for example, by continuing to situate these at child height.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children are safeguarded through meticulous procedures that promote their welfare and safety exceptionally well. For example, all adults working with the children are appropriately vetted, including any parent volunteers and support staff. The ongoing suitability of staff is also rigorously monitored. Excellent risk assessments with ongoing safety checks minimise risks of accidental injury to children. All practitioners have attended recent safeguarding children training and know exactly what they need to do in the event of a concern. Records and procedures are systematically monitored, helping to maximise children's welfare and safety at all times.

The staff team work exceptionally well together and strategies for improving the provision are deeply embedded into daily practice. Training updates are a clear priority and innovative use of space maximises children's learning potential. Equality and diversity is clearly incorporated into all elements of the provision through consistently high quality practice. Each child's needs are fully addressed and every child is encouraged to reach their full potential. Toys and resources include many positive images of diversity and naturally help children to learn about the differences between people in society.

Excellent systems for self-evaluation include the input of management, practitioners, outside professionals and parents. Children are also highly involved in the process, for example, by communicating their likes and dislikes and naming an adult they would go to if they felt sad or unhappy. Overall the self-evaluation process is highly effective in continually identifying the strengths of the provision and any areas for development to promote excellent outcomes for children.

Outstanding partnerships are in place with outside agencies. For example, the setting works hard with local authority services and advisors and specialist teams to help support children with disabilities. The group maintains close links with several local schools to promote highly effective transitions for children into reception classes. This promotes clear consistency of care and learning for every child.

The setting promotes an exemplary partnership with parents and carers. Information is continually shared and parents are actively involved in all aspects of their children's learning and development. This commences with home visits conducted by key staff before children join the nursery. A parent forum meets regularly and is highly effective in contributing to the smooth running of the provision. Overall, children's care, learning and development needs are exceptionally well promoted.

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

All children are provided with excellent opportunities to explore new and exciting challenges, because practitioners are highly effective in supporting their learning. For example, pre-school aged children enjoy adult input as they explore dinosaur fossils and natural resources, including sand and tree bark. Good availability of information communication and technology and programmable resources help children to discover how things work. Many show great independence, curiosity, and concentration as they carry out their preferred activities safely and creatively and practitioners know when to support their learning. This helps them to progress exceptionally well in all areas of learning and development.

Practitioners continually develop children's awareness of sounds and letters and excellent communication, language and literacy skills. They extend their understanding of number concepts, for instance, as they use problem-solving cards, to find '7 leaves' or make 'a circle of stones' outside. This helps children become highly competent with problem-solving and number recognition. Younger children enjoy the enthusiastic input of staff, for instance as they take part in physical activity, action songs and many mark-making opportunities. This develops their imaginations and creative skills. Babies settle well with their key person and access an exciting and stimulating range of interactive toys and activities. They happily explore messy play, for example, as they feel the texture of paint or sand on their hands or view their reflections in mirrors. This promotes their curiosity and use of the senses as they happily interact with their carers.

Children's creations are beautifully displayed, with most at a suitable height for them to see and enjoy. The use of signing and picture illustrations are highly effective in supporting communication, language and literacy skills for all children, including those speaking English as an additional language, as they learn to follow routines or find resources independently. Overall, the experiences available are highly effective in enabling children to develop excellent skills for their future learning and development.

Planning includes the active involvement of the children to ensure that all experiences build on their existing abilities and interests. Observational assessment is highly effective in charting children's progress from when they join the provision to when they leave. Their starting points are recorded clearly and regular and methodical assessments demonstrate children's progress. Children with additional needs are supported exceptionally well through strategies that meet their needs and help them progress effectively.

Children develop an excellent sense of safety. Babies demonstrate through their body language that they appear safe and very comfortable as they happily snuggle up with their key person for a feed or to play. This means they are developing an excellent sense of security. Older children use paper towels to dry wet outside play apparatus before using it, so that they do not 'slip and fall off.' The use of safety matting and soft surfaces throughout this area encourage children to take controlled risks and explore the exciting resources provided in safety.

The health and well-being of all children is exceptionally well promoted. Children eat very healthy meals and become actively involved in growing and eating their own produce. A wormery is used to recycle organic food waste to feed the vegetables. This learning helps children develop an excellent involvement in eating healthily. Physical exercise is encouraged at all levels, with daily outdoor play in all weathers to ensure children experience plenty of fresh air and exercise. Babies can sleep in extremely cosy surroundings to promote adequate rest and sleep to promote their well-being.

Stringent hygiene procedures help to prevent the spread of infection. For example, every area within the nursery has anti-bacterial hand gel dispensers in addition to regular hand washing. Older children become independent as they follow visual signs to help ensure they wash their hands properly. Children with infectious conditions remain at home and nappy changing procedures are highly effective in minimising the risk of cross infection.

Children are extremely well-behaved because they are continually involved in exciting, meaningful activity and learn to take responsibility. Babies and the younger children respond well to adult praise and encouragement and all children enjoy excellent relationships with staff and one another. All children flourish because their confidence and self-esteem are continually well promoted.

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?	1
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	1

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

How effectively is the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	1
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	1
The effectiveness of safeguarding	1
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	1
The effectiveness of partnerships	1
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	1

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	1
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	1
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	1
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	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