

Little Crickets

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspection date

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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*.

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

Little Crickets is a privately owned provision which has been registered since 2005. It operates from a club house on the cricket grounds in Welland Road, Tonbridge. The group has use of a main hall which has direct access to an enclosed outdoor play area. There are suitable toilet and kitchen facilities.

The group is registered on the Early Years Register and both the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. It accepts children from two years of age. A maximum of 26 children under eight years may attend at any one time. There are currently 28 children on roll attending either on a full or part time basis. The group is open from 9.00am to 1.00pm most days but may offer extended hours if there is demand. Any variations to the opening times are advertised in advance.

The setting is able to care for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities as well as those for whom English is an additional language.

The owner employs a total of seven staff and a minimum of four staff work each day. The manager holds an appropriate childcare qualification and at least half of the staff present each session hold relevant qualifications.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is satisfactory.

Children are happy and settled as they play and learn in the comfortable, child-centred environment. A commitment to continual improvement and self-evaluation has begun to result some improvement to the services offered to children. Their individual interests are acknowledged, although, the systems in place to observe and monitor their progress are not consistently maintained. Children's welfare needs are met effectively. The positive partnerships with parents and carers, and the relationships developing with other professionals support the staff to provide consistent, coordinated care.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- utilise the systems in place to assess and monitor children's progress in order to identify their individual 'next steps'
- make the minor amendments necessary to ensure that all written policies and procedures are up to date and improve the arrangements for storing documentation to ensure that staff can gain ready access to information when required
- continue to develop relationships with other professionals involved in delivering the EYFS to children attending the setting in order to support all

parties to work cooperatively to devise appropriate and individual educational programmes.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Robust recruitment procedures ensure that children are cared for by suitably qualified and fully vetted adults. A written safeguarding policy is available for parents and carers and outlines the procedures that will be followed if concerns arise about children's safety. The manager and owner act as child protection coordinators and all staff are trained to identify the potential signs and symptoms of abuse. Children are further protected by a range of safety precautions introduced as a result of the risk assessments undertaken on the premises, resources and activities.

The management and staff team work very effectively together and this impacts positively on the experiences for children. There is a clear commitment to evaluating the service offered to identify strengths and weaknesses. To date, this has resulted in improvements to the play environment and an increase in resources. The setting have also introduced a new system for assessing and monitoring children's progress towards the early learning goals. This is extremely well thought out and clearly organised. However, staff are not using this system effectively and the records are very intermittent. Staff are skilled at undertaking sensitive observations, but the failure to record these correctly means that they are not used to help identify children's next steps.

Children benefit from the friendly, positive relationships that the staff foster with their parents and carers. This supports them to settle easily and helps ensure consistency of care. Parents and carers receive a very good range of written information about the day to day life of the setting and are invited in regularly to speak with staff about their child's progress. However, the benefit of these meetings is restricted by the weaknesses in the maintenance of the assessment and monitoring records. Staff are unable to discuss the specific goals set for each child or to report on the rate at which progress is being made. The setting has begun to make contact with other professionals involved in delivering the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) to the children in order to share information. This process is in its early stages and has yet to become fully effective.

Children are encouraged to learn about diversity through a range of planned activities as well as spontaneous discussions. They play with a very good range of toys and resources which are aimed at promoting positive, non-stereotypical images. Staff competently adapt the level of support given to each child to enable them to join in all activities.

The setting maintains all required documentation; however, one or two documents have elements which are slightly out of date. In addition, the storage of records is somewhat adhoc and does not always enable the staff to access information promptly.

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

Children learn the importance of adopting a healthy lifestyle. They are supported to understand the value of healthy eating. They enjoy nutritious snacks and have drinks available at all times. Children also learn to develop good self-care skills. They routinely wash their hands after using the toilet and before eating. Children have very regular opportunities to take part in physical exercise and, for much of the day, are able to move freely between the indoor and outdoor play areas. They are given a good level of support to learn how to keep themselves safe. They listen well to the advice and guidance of staff and move sensibly around the setting.

The learning environment is carefully organised to ensure that all children have opportunities to enjoy activities which cover the six areas of learning. Whilst they are making progress in all areas, the current systems do not support staff to ensure each child is offered the appropriate level of challenge. Children are able to explore their environment and choose from a variety of activities during extended periods of free play. As a result, they are becoming very independent in their learning. They make extremely good use of the wonderful reading area to select books which they sit and share with their friends. Construction activities are also very popular, offering children good opportunities to develop their problem solving skills and their concentration.

Staff skilfully identify when their intervention will extend children's play and when it is best for them to stand back and observe. Children also enjoy taking part in more adult directed activities aimed at addressing specific areas of learning. The warm, caring attention that children receive from all staff supports them to develop very good self-esteem. They are also developing extremely effective social skills as they have fun with their friends and play very cooperatively.

The procedures in place to care for sick children and to administer medicines are entirely appropriate. There are staff with first aid training present at all times and the required medication and accident records are maintained.

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?	3
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	3

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

How effectively is the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	2
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding	2
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	3
The effectiveness of partnerships	3
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	3

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	3
The extent to which children feel safe	2
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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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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