

Scalliwags Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	127519
Inspection date	12/10/2009
Inspector	Joanne Wade Barnett
Setting address	Youth Hall, St Andrews Playing Field, Paddock Wood, Tonbridge, Kent, TN12 6HT
Telephone number	01892 835980
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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

Scalliwags Pre-School has been registered since 1999. It operates from one room in a single storey building in Paddock Wood, Kent. The group have access to an enclosed outdoor play area. The pre-school serves the local area and surrounding villages.

The group is registered on the Early Years Register and both the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. A maximum of 26 children may attend at any one time. There are currently 43 children aged between two and five years on roll. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The pre-school supports children for whom English is an additional language and/or have special educational needs and disabilities. The pre-school opens five days a week during school term time. Sessions are from 09:15 to 11:45 and 13:00 to 15:30.

There are nine part time staff who work with the children. Over half the staff hold an appropriate early years qualifications to NVQ level two or three. The setting receives support from the Local Authority and is a member of the Pre-School Learning Alliance.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is satisfactory.

The needs and interests of the children are promoted by staff who support their welfare and learning effectively. All children are able to explore the play environment within safe boundaries and have secure relationships with the adults who care for them. Children's welfare is safeguarded, inclusive practice is evident in the pre-school and children enjoy their day. The setting's capacity for maintaining continual improvement and self-evaluation is evolving under the new supervisor, who is starting to identify the pre-school's strengths and weaknesses.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- ensure that children's next steps are being clearly identified and used in leading future planning
- continue to develop the use of reflective practice and self-evaluation to identify strengths and priorities for development that will continuously improve the quality of the provision for all children
- ensure all policies are up to date and in line with current welfare requirements

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Most of the required documentation for the safe and efficient management of the pre-school is in place; however, some policies documents have elements which are out of date. The systems for recruitment and vetting help to protect children, and staff are vigilant about children's safety while in their care. 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. 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.

Staff have a positive attitude and are working together as a team. They take advantage of training opportunities and are supported well by the local authority to help improve their practice. Staff deploy themselves well and organise space, time and resources effectively to meet children's needs. The setting have introduced a new system for assessing and monitoring children's progress towards the early learning goals. The staff meet regularly to reflect on their practice and provision. However, staff are not using this system effectively and the records are very broad. Staff are skilled at undertaking sensitive observations, but as yet they are not used clearly to help identify children's next steps.

Parents and carers receive a range of written information about the pre-school. There are regular newsletters and dedicated notice boards keep parents informed about pre-school events, while information about the children's progress and recent experiences is exchanged through the new daily diaries and discussion with the child's key person or 'buddy' if the key person is unavailable. Parents have very positive views about the service they receive. They describe staff as 'friendly and approachable' and the pre-school as 'welcoming and fun'. Links with other childcare professionals are effective and the partnership with parents is good

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

Children's welfare, health and well-being is given good priority. Personal care routines are taught and children quickly learn these. Visual aids to help children understand the routine are starting to develop, providing further opportunities for children to become more independent. Effective cleaning procedures help keep the spread of infection to a minimum. Staff offer children nutritious, well balanced snacks throughout the morning and afternoon sessions. Water is always available to drink, with some children bringing in their own beakers.

The children are enthusiastic about playing outside, where they have many opportunities to move freely and in different ways, boosting their physical development in the process. Children enjoy messy play, feeling different textures with play dough and shaving foam both indoors and outdoors. The storage is low level, and the boxes and drawers all have pictures/words on the front showing what the contents are. Different learning areas provide different and stimulating

experiences for children. There is a quieter section, where comfortable cushions are used by the children, for relaxing and looking at books or listening to stories.

Children develop a strong sense of belonging within the pre-school. They see many photographs of themselves on display and are eager to show their friends pictures of themselves. Children feel listened to and acknowledged as staff take time to engage in conversation with children and are responsive to their individual requests, preferences and ideas. Staff are very sensitive to children and regard all children as individuals. Staff show respect for children and adopt a positive role model for all children to follow. As a result, children are polite to each other and recognise children's differing needs.

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	2
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	2

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
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Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	2
The extent to which children feel safe	3
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	3
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	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
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The provider confirms that the requirements of the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are:	Met
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