

The Kindergarten

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspector Sylvia Shane

Setting address Fawley Methodist Church Hall, Chapel Lane, Fawley,
Southampton, Hampshire, SO45 1EB

Telephone number 0781 7739145

Email

Type of setting Childcare on non-domestic premises

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Royal Exchange Buildings
St Ann's Square
Manchester
M2 7LA

T: 08456 404040
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

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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

The Kindergarten works to the Montessori principles and practice to deliver the early years curriculum; it opened in 2001 and is privately owned. It operates from a church hall in Fawley near Southampton. The facilities are at ground level, with ramps to the garden area. It is registered on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. Children have the use of two rooms and a secure outside play area. A maximum of 24 children under eight may attend at any one time. The Kindergarten opens five days a week during school term times from 9.00am until 3.15pm.

There are currently 15 children from two years to five years on roll, of these 10 receive funding for nursery education. Children come from the local and surrounding area and attend for a variety of sessions. The Kindergarten welcomes children who have special educational needs or disabilities or who speak English as an additional language.

There are four permanent members of staff working with the children all of whom have relevant early years qualifications.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

The kindergarten is highly successful in meeting the needs of individual children who all make rapid progress. Great care is taken to ensure that staff get to know each child and their unique family circumstances. A dedicated and skilled staff team provide an excellent range of activities and resources to support each child's unique needs. Self-evaluation, although informal, brings positive outcomes for children. The kindergarten fosters good relationships with parents and carers, however, robust systems and are not in place to engage parents in the self-evaluation process.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- further develop the use of reflective practice in order to bring clarity to the aims and objectives of continuous improvement
- further develop the system of self-evaluation in order to gather and respond to the views of parents

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The kindergarten's well established staff team work very well together to provide an organised, very safe and stimulating environment for all children. Staff show a

very clear understanding of their role and responsibility in protecting and safeguarding children and robust recruitment procedures contribute to this. In addition a range of effective policies and procedures underpin and support the kindergarten's outstanding practice. Thorough and highly effective risk assessment procedures take place and action taken to minimise or eradicate risks. Supervision is excellent, all staff are trained in first aid and any accidents or administration of medicines are accurately recorded. The premises are clean and children routinely take part in the process, keeping their environment tidy and safe. Since the last inspection all records are completed efficiently and accurately and support children's welfare and development needs, as a result, they are very well met. All staff are involved in evaluation and continue to access training to improve their skills.

The kindergarten has a strong commitment to equality and inclusion and this is thoroughly embedded through all the processes and practices. Staff are superb role models; children follow their lead, mirror their practice and are very well behaved. An excellent range of well planned play resources and activities ensures that children begin to learn and understand about each other and the positive ways that each individual contributes to society. Good links are fostered with the local community and children, staff and parents are involved in raising funds for both local and national projects. Effective systems are established with other providers of care and education, ensuring that all children receive an individual holistic package of care and education tailored to their needs. This fosters smooth transitions between other providers of early years care and education.

A real strength is the way the kindergarten embeds the Montessori philosophies. All staff know the children exceptionally well, due to the excellent communication and effective key worker system. Children access the well organised play resources both indoors and outside and this empowers them to initiate their own play. Some of the resources are unique and designed and used by the staff providing targeted opportunities to meet the needs of individual children. Excellent use is made of the natural environment so children take a keen interest in nature and love to explore.

Parents are provided with a wide range of information about the setting and are kept very well informed about their children's progress and daily routines. Parents interviewed state that they really appreciate the warm welcome they receive and feel fully informed of every aspect of their child's care. They are regularly invited in and at a time to suit them.

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

All staff talk to parents about children's interests and capabilities before children start at the setting. Staff deploy themselves extremely well and use good questioning techniques, to encourage children to think, express themselves and problem solve. They are highly effective in implementing the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage framework; children are consistently challenged and making excellent progress. Planning covers all areas of learning and a range of both child and adult-led activities take place for all age groups. Observations and

assessments are used to identify and plan for each child's next steps and include their individual interests. As a result, these are highly effective in ensuring children have fun and learn at a pace that suits their needs.

Children arrive at the setting very happy and are excited to see their friends. Children show a high level of maturity as they set up their own games. Sensitive support is given to those children that need help, for example, when children are unsure which button to press to start the tape recorder. Children are very well behaved and are sensitive to others' feelings, for example, telling the child that is visiting, 'Sorry but we have to tidy up now'. They are extremely independent in self care skills as they put on their own coats and Wellington boots and pour their own drinks. Staff are aware that meeting children's emotional needs is key to their ongoing learning and development. They prepare well and support children to make transitions and change and deal with life events that might cause them disruption and distress. They provide appropriate resources to help them express their emotions. Children feel safe and as a result, begin to come to terms with life events and are helped to move on. Children respond well to the attention and praise they receive. They are keen to show off their displays of work and talk about how they made the spider from pipe cleaners and how they used wool and sticky pads, twigs and leaves to make their spiders' webs. Parents are asked to contribute photographs of their family so each child has an 'All about me' book showing how they have grown and the significant events and people in their lives. Special events are celebrated such as Hanukah, Christmas and birthdays.

Children love being outside and this contributes to their good health. In the immediate nursery garden, they enjoy climbing on and through the bright and robust caterpillar. They engage in imaginary play, for example, using the play house as a base for their ice-cream parlour. They have easy access to writing materials and pretend to take orders. Children love digging in the earth and moving soil around in large dumper trucks, delivering it to the children who are making ice cream sundaes. They look for natural resources and find twigs to decorate them. Photographs show children explore beyond the garden gate. They take regular trips to explore the common and into the forest. Children listen very well and respond to their name being called as the register is taken. Their language skills are further extended as staff ask them to identify the sounds that they hear. Children sing a favourite song specially adapted by staff so that they learn the names of the trees and children clearly identify the box tree and the ash tree; they talk about the changes in the seasons and children understand it's autumn as most of the leaves have fallen from the trees. Children recall the day they went to look for the Gruffalo as staff had strategically placed his footprints in the garden to capture their imagination and get them to act out this favourite and familiar story.

Children are developing a heightened sense of their own safety as they take part in risk assessments. When going into the churchyard, staff ask them to recall what they need to be careful of and children respond well, showing they can remember identified hazards. Staff explain that the church yard is a special place where people go to remember the people they love, gently introducing them to understand about loss. Children understand their boundaries and walk on well defined paths. Children are kept healthy, any health needs are well met and

parents are given clear guidance on infectious diseases so that they know how to respond should their children be ill.

Indoors, children receive the same high quality learning experiences. Staff have worked with the local librarian and developed books themselves to help support children understand the concept of positional language, such as under, over, and on top. Children begin to understand that print carries meaning helping themselves to the exceptionally well organised labelled resources. They choose from exciting and colourful resources of differing textures, confidently using glue sticks. Story times are innovative and fun and capture children's imagination, as staff use a range of resources, for example, children dress up and re-enact the story of the Gruffalo and they paint and design a tree as a prop. They have regular music sessions, which are innovative, fun and capture their imagination. Children were keen to show their parents what they knew about the Gruffalo, so staff arranged for them to come and see a monster show and share in their children's learning experience.

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	2
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	1
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding	1
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	1
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

The provider confirms that the requirements of the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are: Met