

# Merry Go Round Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

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**Unique reference number** EY287735  
**Inspection date** 10/03/2010  
**Inspector** Linda Patricia Coccia

**Setting address** Jubilee Road, Sandwich, Kent, CT13 0QP

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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*.

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## Description of the setting

Merry Go Round Pre-school opened in 2004. The provision is a registered charity run by a parent committee. It operates from one room in a single storey detached property in Sandwich, Kent. There are separate kitchen and toilet facilities. Children have access to a secure outdoor play area. There is suitable restricted access to the building. It serves families from the local community and surrounding area.

The provision is registered on the Early Years Register. There are currently 46 children on roll who fall within the early years age range. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The setting currently supports children with special educational needs and disabilities. The group opens five days a week, from 9.15am until 3.15pm for approximately 38 weeks of the year. There are six members of staff who work with the children, all of whom have a recognised early years qualification to NVQ level 2 or above.

## The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

The provision provides good quality care for children. They cater for children's individual needs effectively by providing support for children and their parents when special educational needs and disabilities are identified. They also provide activities based on individual children's likes and abilities which is effectively reflected in their planning.

The provision has addressed recommendations given at their last inspection and has made a number of changes to their operation to enhance the experiences available to children. For example, all activities are now evaluated to give staff a clear picture of children's well being and involvement. This shows the provision is able to maintain the continuous improvement of their service.

## What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- ensure the observations of children are consistently assessed to ensure that next steps and achievements are recorded
- develop mathematical understanding through all children's early experiences including through stories, songs, games and imaginative play
- use robust and challenging quality criteria in order to continue to develop the provision's self evaluation and improvement processes

## **The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision**

The parent committee employ a well informed supervisor to ensure the smooth running of the pre-school. She and her staff manage the day to day running of the provision well. They work closely as a team. The committee are responsible for the recruitment and vetting of staff and the procedures used are rigorous and robust. This ensures that children are looked after by suitable adults. All staff hold current Criminal Record Bureau clearance checks and the supervisor holds a list of their clearance numbers and dates. The provision has a range of good procedures to further ensure that children are safeguarded and protected. These include procedures to deal with allegations made against staff. All staff have attended local authority safeguarding children training and are aware of the internal referral procedures for the provision. Children are safeguarded. The supervisor values the views of the staff and any decisions are made by the staff team through discussion and evaluation. Regular staff training is promoted. Staff are encouraged to attend any training they feel will enhance their professional development and which will provide new and interesting activities for children. For example, the story sack workshops which enhance storytelling with items other than books. Children benefit from the staff's experience and expertise.

The supervisor and the staff are committed to driving the improvement of the provision. They have compiled extensive plans which will improve all aspects of the provision including the layout and maintenance of the building and outside play area. The plans have been compiled by evaluation of the provision by means of staff and committee meetings as well as through written assignments from staff qualification courses. So far there has not been any formal collective evaluation of the provision to identify their strengths and weaknesses. The pre-school has a range of good quality toys and activities, the majority of which are readily available to the children. Toys include many positive images of race, culture and disability. The staff are aware that the children need help accessing some toys due to the limitations provided by some of the storage units. This has been addressed in the past and is still under review. Local amenities are also well used by the children. Parents provide written permission for children to be taken on local walks which in turn means that children experience their local community.

The group has a Special Educational Needs co-ordinator who has completed the appropriate training. She is able to assess children's abilities and provide individual educational plans for those children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. She offers support for children and their parents and works closely with other agencies who may need to be involved with the children. For example, the local speech therapist. Staff ensure that any additional languages spoken by children are acknowledged. They learn words and phrases to pass on to other children. Many notices and labels are dual language. This allows children who speak other languages to feel valued. The pre-school has good links to local primary schools. This ensures that children are fully supported during their transitions to school. Links also cover local pre-schools for those children who attend more than one setting. The group also works closely with local childminders whose work with children also covers the Early Years Foundation Stage. This

ensures that children's individual needs are met and their achievements recorded. The provision engages well with parents. The key worker system used by the group ensures that each parent is fully informed of their child's latest achievements and gives parents the opportunity to share current information about their child. Those parents interviewed stated that they are very happy with the care given to their children. Parents feel they are given plenty of written and verbal information about their child's development and know how to access their children's learning journeys. Children receive consistent care.

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

Children are welcomed on to the provision by their key workers. Children are keen to recount events from home and talk about their families. Children are immediately ready to play and swiftly move to their chosen play area. This shows that children are keen to participate and feel safe in their surroundings. Children free flow around the provision and participate in activities which cover the six areas of learning. Activities are used by all children but are adapted by staff to cater for older or younger children as necessary. Children enjoy listening to stories in the book area and readily choose books for themselves and to share with their friends. Their creative abilities are promoted through music and craft work. For example, whilst some children investigate the good range of ethnic instruments, others make Easter cards for their parents. Children enjoy construction toys and problem solving as they make train and road tracks. However, there is no dedicated numeracy area to promote the full range of mathematical games and equipment available. Staff do not promote mathematical understanding by including it in the other areas of learning. The well stocked home corner offers children plenty of opportunity to dress up and emulate their home lives. For example, they make meals for their babies in the play microwave oven and chat with their friends on the pretend mobile phones. Staff often convert the home area into doctor's surgeries or post offices to allow children more scope for additional role play. Physical play activities are available both inside and in the garden where children use the large climbing frame or use ride on toys. More and more children are utilising indoors activities outside such as, painting and role play. Through active learning the children develop skills for the future.

All children are subject to initial written development assessments when they start which help staff identify their starting points. From these, staff are able to plan individual activities for each child. Observations and assessment of the children's progress allow staff to chart the children's achievements within the stepping stones. However, assessment of the observations is inconsistent which means that occasionally children's next steps are not identified and ultimately not planned for.

Children choose when to stop playing and have a snack. They are provided with food which is healthy and nutritious, such as tomatoes and cucumber, and a good variety of different fruits. They cut up their own food at snack time and are proficient at spreading their own fillings on sandwiches. They pour their own drinks. Children understand and use the group's good hygiene procedures before they have their snack or get involved in cooking activities. Photographic evidence shows the children have talks about keeping their teeth clean and healthy. They

learn about their bodies and how to keep it safe from the sun by wearing hats or drinking lots of water on hot days. This means that children adopt healthy lifestyles. Children understand the need for rules as staff discuss desired behaviour with them at every opportunity. Staff reinforce good behaviour by being positive role models. Children receive lots of praise for good behaviour and therefore develop good self esteem. They work and play well together and co-operate well with staff. Children also learn about safety as staff promote the safe use of toys and equipment and remind children about being kind to each other and sharing. Children regularly practice the group's emergency evacuation procedures in order to be able to keep themselves safe in an emergency.

## 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

<b>How well does the setting meet the needs of the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?</b>	2
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	2

### The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

<b>How effectively is the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?</b>	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	2
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding	2
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

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
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### Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

<b>Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	2
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	2
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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