

Chiddingstone Nursery School

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspector

Lisa Toole

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

Chiddingstone Nursery School opened in 2004 and operates from buildings within the grounds of Chiddingstone Castle near Edenbridge, Kent. The nursery serves the local area.

A maximum of 20 children from two years to under eight years may attend the nursery at any one time and the nursery is registered on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. The nursery provides care for children aged from two to under eight years and is open 9:00am to 2.50pm on a Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday with a craft club from 2.00pm to 3.00pm for children under four years old, accompanied by their parents. The nursery is open on a Friday from 9.00am to 12.00pm. The nursery is open during school term only.

There are currently 39 children on roll and of these, 32 receive funding for the provision of free early education. The nursery currently supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

There are five members of staff, all of whom hold appropriate early years qualifications.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is outstanding.

Children flourish at the nursery and their individual needs are being supported exceptionally well. The staff team has very strong leadership; they all work very well together acting as excellent role models and highly valuing each child as a unique individual. Children's learning and development is excellent because the curriculum is strongly child-led and influenced by their interests; it is challenging and fully encourages children to be inquisitive, active learners. The nursery rigorously identifies areas for further development, reflecting its ambition and outstanding approach to continuous improvement.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- extending further the opportunities for children to try things out and take risks through their play and exploration

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children's welfare is given a very high priority within the nursery. Robust recruitment and vetting procedures are in place, along with all of the required documentation, policies and procedures to safeguard children within their care. The nursery is extremely well organised and the management ensures the nursery reviews and updates its documentation and policies to reflect current guidelines. Staff have a comprehensive understanding of their role and responsibilities, including regarding child protection, to ensure children are safeguarded. They are vigilant about where children are and what they are doing at all times, using effective risk assessments within the nursery and on any outings they undertake. The staff team demonstrate a professional and enthusiastic approach to their roles, acting as dedicated key workers. They create a very welcoming, harmonious and child-friendly environment, displaying a lot of the children's creative work to reinforce their feelings of belonging. This is reflected in how happy, confident and inquisitive the children are. Space within the nursery is purposefully divided up into stimulating areas of learning and the children benefit from having independent access to a wealth of resources and play equipment, both in and outdoors. This results in a rich learning environment both in and outdoors, that is extremely well used by all of the children to help them reach their full potential.

The nursery is forward thinking and keenly drives improvement in numerous ways, in order to enhance outcomes for children even further. Staff value the importance of developing their skills and knowledge by attending a broad range of training courses, critically reflecting on and evaluating their practice as well as holding team meetings and consultations with parents to seek their views. The views of the children are also sought through day-to-day discussions; children comment very positively about their experiences at nursery, for example, saying that it is so funny and that they prefer this nursery. Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities are given exceptionally good support to help them feel as included as any other child. This is supported through successful partnership working with special needs services and the parents. It results in children feeling valued, safe and being able to develop towards their full potential.

There is an excellent partnership with parents and the extended family. Parents indicate through discussion that they feel very involved in their children's care and learning at nursery, like the key person system and are very happy with the nursery provision. Parents and staff work collaboratively to ensure each child is cared for according to their needs and the parents' wishes. A wealth of information is made available to them, including how to support their children's transitions to school so that each child is fully prepared regarding their key skills, is confident and can manage their personal care needs. Partnerships with others, such as the local primary school and other settings the children attend are also highly successful because of the strong links the nursery establishes with them, as part of their collaborative working, for the benefit of the child.

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

Children's individual learning is exceptionally well planned for and evaluated by their key person and whole staff team to ensure it reflects the unique child and provides sufficient challenge to help them progress towards the early learning goals of the Early Years Foundation Stage. Their progress is monitored through regular observations and assessment, which identify their next steps for learning. These are carefully recorded in individual portfolios, along with photographs and examples of their creative work. Children very positively influence the play and type of activities they undertake because staff treat them with respect, as well as valuing their individuality and diverse needs and interests. For example, children delight in experimenting with pouring water down tubes they have joined together outdoors, problem solving and working together to create a puddle so the water can then go down the drain. The role play area reflects children's current interests, such as a ballet academy where both boys and girls have a great deal of fun dressing up and acting out imaginative play. Staff act as exceptionally good role models; their use of questioning is superb to stimulate children's ideas, language and critical thinking. For example, children are captivated by a discussion about blossom, what fruit is produced from it, and how some fruit only grows in warmer climates. This leads on to a child then commenting how coconut trees grow on islands. Children are encouraged to bring in items from home, leading to interesting and worthwhile discussions about words that link to the letter 'd' after a child brings in a deer antler they found on a walk. This contributes to their developing communication, language and literacy skills. Numerous activities are provided to support the children's developing understanding of the world around them, including learning about technology, nature and cultural diversity and equality. Outings to the local farms, the school and church contribute to children being part of a community, as well as learning about seasons as they visit new born lambs and find out about harvesting.

The nursery is a vibrant, enabling environment, where every child truly matters and is valued. The children behave exceptionally well; they listen to each other, suggest ideas to extend their play in different ways, delighting in seeing how far they can each throw bean bags and roll a ball in the garden. Staff foster their self-esteem through plenty of praise and encouragement as well as ensuring they are consistent in their approach to help children learn about right and wrong. Staff also look for signs of non-verbal communication to help children overcome any frustrations they may have. Children's health and dietary needs are given a lot of thought and attention to help them remain healthy. They all enjoy a nutritious range of snacks, enjoy their healthy packed lunches and benefit from sociable meal times because everyone sits down together to eat. Drinking water is easily accessible to help children gain independence about remaining hydrated throughout the day. Their physical health is supported through free-flow outdoor play, where the children decide for themselves when to go out and play. They show skill using equipment such as balls, tricycles, balancing, jumping and pouring with sand and water. Each day children do warm up exercises to get ready for the day, with children also commenting how they need to warm up before playing a throwing game to enable them to throw better. Children clearly understand how to

keep safe and healthy during their day at nursery. They understand how to use tools such as scissors with care and wash their hands routinely, as well as covering coughs and using tissues to reduce risks of cross infection. Staff challenge the children in many ways and have identified woodwork as an area they would like to develop but so far have not given the children real tools to use, under their close supervision. This does limit somewhat how they develop their understanding of risk and trying things out safely; this is an area for further consideration as part of the excellent provision they offer the children.

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

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
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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
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The provider confirms that the requirements of the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are:	Met
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