

Castle Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number EY305509
Inspection date 12/01/2010
Inspector Christine Clint

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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

Castle Nursery has been registered in the purpose built premises since 2005. The nursery is situated in a residential area of Guildford in Surrey, close to the city centre and within access of the A3. The setting is registered to care for 70 children under eight years, all of whom can be in the early years age range; including no more than 30 children under two years. Children are accommodated on two floor levels, in age related rooms with all facilities available. There is a secure rear garden for outdoor play, which is separated for different aged children. All meals are cooked on the premises.

The nursery operates for 51 weeks of the year and is open from 8am until 6pm from Monday to Friday. There are 23 members of staff caring for the children, including the manager and there is also an employed cook. Over half the staff are qualified and many staff are continuing to train. The nursery is registered on the Early Years Register and on the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. There are currently 129 children on roll, all children attending are in the early years age group. The nursery is in receipt of funding for educational places and supports children with special educational needs and any who speak English as an additional language. The setting has support from two other jointly owned nurseries in the area and regular links are in place with the local early years network.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

The nursery provides a very welcoming and well organised environment for children and their parents. There is strong leadership and continual, forward thinking vision for improvements. The management have included fully comprehensive and updated policies and procedures to meet the needs of children, parents and staff. There is very effective team work and daily cooperation between the manager and staff, with a clear emphasis on continually working together to meet all regulations, to maintain and support children's welfare and to promote and encourage children's individual learning and development.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- include all visiting children in the daily register and ensure that times of arrival and departure are noted
- ensure that all room leader staff have gained the relevant qualifications and experience to supervise children
- provide daily opportunities for babies to be in contact with older children, or to have time outside their designated room.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The nursery has very organised and effective routines for safeguarding children. The premises are entirely secure and there are fully organised systems for monitoring and viewing the main entrance; all visitor records are completed. There are robust procedures in place for checking all new staff and regular staff appraisals are carried out to maintain staff suitability. All staff attend safeguarding training and the manager, as the responsible person, has attended in-depth training. There are clear systems of recording accidents and these are transferred to the manager daily; there are also very thorough systems in place for administering medication. The nursery maintain a high ratio of staff to children and this is monitored thoroughly throughout the day to cover staff breaks and meet the children's needs. Full risk assessments records are included in each nursery room and the room leaders take responsibility for assessing and managing all hazards for indoor and outdoor play. Arrangements for outings are risk assessed separately. Daily registers are completed in each nursery room and parents record children's times of arrival and departure, however, there is no record to show the attendance of babies who are on timed visits without their parents. The nursery has a clear and detailed record of complaints and the manager follows all procedures for informing Ofsted.

There are clear plans for future improvements and the nursery manager shows strong and resourceful leadership. She has exact knowledge of all current training levels of staff, she has close links with the early years network locally and includes regular plans for new staff to attend first aid, child protection and food hygiene training. There is continual progress in adapting and updating procedures, for example, a fully comprehensive staff appraisal form is currently being introduced to monitor staff ability, knowledge and understanding. The manager and room leaders have also implemented changes following the recent environmental assessment, for example, by removing the cupboard doors in the pre-school room to enable children to see and access resources easily. New equipment is also introduced to meet the needs of particular age groups. The manager shows quick thinking and responds very promptly to areas of need, for example, she immediately contacts parents when children have sustained even slight bumps to the head. However, recent changes of staff have resulted in room leader staff being left responsible when they have not fully become qualified.

The nursery has a strong ethos of regular outdoor play provision and the garden is separated to ensure safety for different ages. Although, during the inspection there was less evidence to show that babies have regular contact with older children or have time out of their designated room. Children do have continual close attention from well-deployed staff in all rooms. Babies individual routines are recorded and individually followed; as children progress through the age related rooms, they gradually follow the nursery routines. Older children show increasing levels of confidence and have the ability to choose activities as they become more independent. Staff plan and organise a wide variety of activities and play resources, which are entirely age appropriate in each room. They often take advantage of spontaneous play, for example, by taking the planned mark making

activity outside and using the snow. Equality and diversity is constantly considered and maintained, especially for children who have allergies or dietary requirements. These are very clearly indicated in each nursery room and there is close liaison with the cook. Staff show a good understanding and sound knowledge about individual children and they respond effectively, especially if there are any special learning or development needs. All children are allocated to a key person who manages their development through recording observations of ability and also assesses their ongoing next steps in development. Staff show sound experience in dealing immediately with children's reactions, they understand and respond appropriately.

There are very positive relationships with parents and the nursery has well-established systems in place to share information and ensure that parents are fully informed of all routines. Notices are provided in many areas and all parents understand the systems for the daily registering and collection of children. New parents can organise to attend with their children and settle children at their own pace. Each nursery room has a daily book where individual collection information is recorded. Parents of children in the younger age rooms have individual daily books to ensure they are informed about their child's routines for feeding, nappy changing, sleeping and activities. The nursery has recently responded to parents' wishes to continue the daily books, if required, when children transfer to the pre-school room. Parents know that they can access children's assessment records at any time and they are beginning to be encouraged to contribute. They can attend two open evenings during the year and monthly newsletters are provided.

The nursery has close links with two other local nurseries in the same group, there are regular visits from management and well organised levels of support. Key staff are developing systems to liaise with other carers regarding children's progress and arrangements are made to share information and organise visits to prepare children who will transfer to school.

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

Children show very high levels of independence and developing skills for the future. From the age of two years, they are learning to carry their meals to the table, use cutlery to feed themselves, organise their drinking water and clear away all their utensils when they have finished. Children follow these routines and show strong levels of capability, they know that any left over food is scraped into the bin and older children are also responsible for washing their own plates and cups. Children are happy and very sociable at meal times, they communicate with each other and staff continually. Older children are encouraged to choose a friend and prepare for meals by washing their hands. All children are learning to be independent in their personal care and they automatically manage this well.

Children in the oldest age group know that they can make choices during free play, they dress up and wear role play clothes throughout the session, they are developing close relationships with one another and share imaginative play. They show a keen interest in books and read from pictures, they respond to stories from

staff and know the words. Children remember previous words they have learned and can recite the lifecycle of a butterfly, they know what a cocoon is and that this is what the caterpillar makes. They ask about stick insects and sometimes have visitors who bring different insects. Children learn about being healthy, they recognise and know about germs, they learn through stories about bad habits. Children have regular circle time and sing together, they learn French every week and sometimes play musical instruments. There is frequent opportunity for physical play and all children have an organised exercise session every week. They play outside daily and especially take advantage of learning about the snow. They can touch and feel the snow and ice, they can experience seeing this melt and staff include a variety of ways to encourage children's visual comprehension, for example mixing the snow with glitter and paint. Children play ball and learn to control their movements, they manoeuvre on wheeled toys and have sand and water play outside. Younger children have freedom of movement and clear floor space in their rooms, staff encourage their involvement in cars, trains, and looking at books. They carry dolls and wrap them in blankets, they copy regular routines of patting the dolls on their backs. Some small children often just meander, they watch and learn, they carry and move items, they delight in the attention of staff and show affection.

Older children are encouraged to contribute to tidying the play equipment, they know the sound of the buzzer and staff praise and congratulate them all by name, they clap in response and show a strong sense of purpose by all becoming involved in re-organising the room. They tidy the coloured cushions by stacking them squarely, they find the correct coloured container when staff name this, they put items in boxes and show satisfaction in completing all the clearing away. Children are developing a positive understanding of each other, they share tasks and develop team work, for example by building with the newly acquired wooden blocks, this encourages conversation and questions about size, shape and what they are trying to achieve.

As children progress through the nursery they take part in self registration and they use their skills of emergent writing to sign themselves in when they see parents do this. Staff in the pre-school room also encourage children to practise their own mark making skills by writing under the labels for different areas of the room. Children are recognising letters and sounds and linking these with words they know. Children competently use the computer and the double bench at the computer encourages companionship. They learn to use the programmable equipment and to track their journey with staff assistance.

There is less stimulation at times for the very youngest children attending the nursery, however, the rapid progress that children make once they move into the toddler rooms is apparent and the confident and well developed progress of the pre-school children in the nursery, clearly shows how the outcomes for children are managed.

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	1
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

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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	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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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