

Mark Beech Nursery School

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspector Felicity Gaff

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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

Mark Beech Nursery School is privately owned and opened in 1965. It operates from two rooms in a village hall near Edenbridge, Kent. All children share access to a fully enclosed outdoor play area. A maximum of 24 children in the early years age group may attend the nursery at any one time. The setting opens from 9am to 12 noon on Mondays, Thursdays and Fridays during school term times, with an optional lunch club on Mondays and Fridays from 12 noon to 1.30pm. The setting opens from 9am to 3pm on Wednesdays. A maximum of 24 children may attend at any one time. There are currently 22 children on roll who are all within the early years age range. Children are drawn from the surrounding rural area. The setting makes provision for children who speak English as an additional language. There are five members of staff. Of these, three hold recognised qualifications and two others are in training. One staff member is a qualified teacher. The nursery school provides funded early education for three- and four-year-olds. It receives support from the local authority.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children make good progress because staff provide a rich learning environment and work closely with children to engage them fully in their learning. The newly established key worker system enables staff to monitor the progress of each child and to recognise their individual learning preferences. This enables them to identify the next steps for individual children's learning, and to plan activities that will attract and interest them. The provider ensures staff receive the training they need to develop their professional skills. In order to secure continuous improvement, she evaluates how any changes to established practice affect the children.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- 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
- develop the provision for active physical play indoors

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children's safety and welfare is well promoted by clear safeguarding procedures. Staff understand how to protect children by recognising, recording and reporting any concerns about their welfare. The provider carries out thorough checks to ensure staff are suitable to care for children. Children enjoy a safe and secure

environment because staff routinely assess and minimise potential hazards on the premises. They organise play areas well to enable all children to participate in purposeful play activities. Since the last inspection, the provider has made good use of the support offered by the local authority to address identified weaknesses. Sufficient staff now hold relevant qualifications to meet the minimum legal requirements. The provider encourages staff to develop their expertise by undertaking further professional training. All the policies, procedures and records required to support children's welfare are now in place. The provider evaluates the effect of planned improvements to ensure they benefit children. For example, staff know that changes to the organisation of snack and lunch times have enhanced the social experience for the children. However, staff do not systematically reflect on their practice in order to identify ways they can continually improve the quality of their provision.

Staff forge effective partnerships with parents. Effective systems for exchanging information before children first attend ensure staff understand each child's learning and care needs. Children feel secure and at ease, and benefit from the close relationships they form with their key workers. Parents are delighted with all aspects of the service offered. They feel their children are cherished as individuals and enjoy a very rich and stimulating learning environment. Parents receive regular information about the progress their children make. The provider organises regular events which families celebrate alongside their children. These include the Christmas play, Easter egg hunts and a summer picnic. The nursery school works in partnership with other early years settings that children attend, which enables them to complement the care and education children receive elsewhere. There are clear policies for cooperating with outside agencies to meet the needs of children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Staff ensure that children who use a home language other than English have the opportunity to develop their English language skills.

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

Children feel valued within the welcoming, nurturing ethos of the setting. They behave exceptionally well and form firm friendships. Staff support children effectively in developing their social skills; for instance, they encourage shy children to use puppets to help them gain confidence when talking to others. Children reflect the courtesy and respect shown to them by the staff in their behaviour towards each other and to visitors to the setting. Children have confidence to follow their own play agendas because staff do not limit their activities by setting arbitrary restrictions on what they do. They enhance their imaginative role play by selecting non-stereotypical dressing-up clothes and by constructing the props they wish to use. Staff only intervene when over-boisterous play might harm or upset others, and do so positively by redirecting children's attention to alternative interesting activities. Staff help children keep themselves and others safe by teaching them to use tools safely. For example, children understand how to carry scissors and use them carefully. They use cameras and printers to produce their own photographs and use real tools such as an electric mixer when baking cakes, which develops their confidence and independence.

Children learn to keep themselves healthy by, for example, managing their own personal hygiene independently. They learn to use tissues correctly and dispose of them appropriately, which minimises the risk of cross-infection. Children bring their own snacks and lunches, so that they receive the food their parents wish them to have. These are stored in the fridge to keep them in good condition. The policy for healthy eating provides parents with suggestions for creating a well-balanced packed lunch. Staff are aware of children's dietary requirements and ensure they are met.

Staff organise everyday routines such as story-time to meet the needs of children at different ages and stages of development. This allows all children to experience the pleasure of well-read stories in comfortable, welcoming surroundings. Children become engrossed in well-presented first-hand play activities, that are suitably adapted to provide appropriate challenges for all children. Enthusiastic staff give them a great deal of attention and inspire children to persevere at the activities they choose. Children concentrate intently for extended periods of time to set and solve their own problems. For example, a child slotted coloured discs into a frame to create her own choice of patterns. They become fascinated by magnets, eagerly explaining to interested adults what they observe. Adults use open-ended questions very effectively to make children think. This encouraged a child to systematically explore how far he could move the magnet and still make something stick to it. Staff make good use of incidental opportunities to count and compare numbers. They skilfully extend children's self-chosen play activities to encourage wide-ranging conversations that support children's development across all areas of learning. Children are active, inquisitive learners who are eager to learn and consequently make excellent progress. Most activities are well organised to ensure all children can take part at an age-appropriate level. For instance, activities such as practising the Christmas play are skilfully planned and managed to minimise the time children spend waiting. Staff supplement outdoor activities by arranging vigorous physical play inside. On occasion, they do not organise this to ensure the developmental needs of younger children are fully met.

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	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	1
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	1

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