

Children's Cottage Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspector

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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

Children's Cottage Day Nursery was re-registered in 2009 and is a privately owned nursery. It operates from a two storey house based in the grounds of Clavering County Primary School in Clavering, Essex. Children have access to a fully enclosed outdoor play area.

The setting receives funding for early education. It is open each weekday for 51 weeks of the year and sessions are from 8.00am to 6.00pm. The setting is registered on the Early Years Register to provide 16 places and there are currently 21 children attending who are within this age group. The setting serves a wide catchment area. A small number of children attend other settings such as local pre-schools. The setting maintains appropriate links with the school on which it is sited.

There are five staff members, all of whom hold relevant childcare qualifications. One staff member has achieved Early Years Professional Status.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children's needs are consistently met and they are offered appropriate support because staff work well with parents and pay close attention to developing a thorough understanding of children's needs and interests. They also use their good knowledge of each child to inform daily planning and ensure that children are offered activities that successfully promote their learning and development. A key strength of the setting is the thorough knowledge staff have of the Early Years Foundation Stage and their confidence in enabling children to develop their own play. This means that children take an active role in their learning and develop positive attitudes to this. The owner, manager and all staff are committed to continuously improving the setting. They have effective procedures in place to support self-evaluation and inform the prioritisation of improvements.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- develop the assessment procedures to include an initial assessment of children that can be used to inform planning and ongoing assessment
- develop further the use of the self-evaluation process as the basis of ongoing review of practice.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children's welfare is consistently promoted because the setting has robust safeguarding procedures. Stringent checks are carried out to make sure that all staff are suitable to work with children. Staff attend additional training and regularly review their knowledge of child protection issues, ensuring that they are aware of their responsibilities and can work together to protect children. Appropriate risk assessments and daily checks mean that hazards are minimised or removed. Children develop a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe because staff engage them in discussions and offer clear explanations. For example, they discuss and practise good road safety procedures each time they go out. Good daily practice, such as the provision of nutritious snacks and meals, means that children's health and development are promoted.

The owner and manager demonstrate an enthusiasm for their work and a clear commitment to reviewing and improving the setting's practice and, therefore, the outcomes for children. Effective self-evaluation procedures support them in identifying weaknesses and developing action plans to address these. Recent improvements include the reorganisation of the base room for younger children, which means that children can now access resources easily and play an active part in determining their play and activities. Although there is a clear vision for the future, the self-evaluation process is not fully utilised to inform the overall review of daily practice and to evaluate the impact of changes made. Staff have a good understanding of issues relating to equality of opportunity, enabling them to provide a service which is inclusive for all children and their families. They make sure that they understand each child's background and beliefs, making use of this information when planning activities. Staff show a genuine enjoyment of their work and are supported in attending training. This creates a positive environment, where children are happy and enjoy their time at the setting. Resources are used well to support children's learning and development. For example, good use is made of community resources, such as shops, walks and the library bus, to offer children an extended range of opportunities.

Staff maintain good relationships with parents and ensure that they are able to exchange information about their children. Parents are well informed of their child's progress and activities through daily diaries, parents' evenings, newsletters and daily discussions with staff. The setting also has good procedures for liaising with other professionals involved with the children. For example, they share information with the school and can therefore help to prepare children for this transition.

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

Children make good progress in all areas of learning and are supported in achieving because staff have a secure knowledge of the Early Years Foundation Stage. They use thorough procedures for assessing children, actively utilising this

information to inform activity planning and to plan specific activities to support and promote individual development. However, this is not fully promoted because assessment procedures do not consistently include an initial assessment that can be used to inform activities when children first start at the setting.

Children feel welcome and valued because their views and interests are reflected in the daily planning. This is further supported as staff utilise information from parents to regularly update children's assessment files and to inform individual planning. The environment is attractive and generally accessible, enabling children to make independent choices. For example, children sitting at a table to write choose further resources, such as scissors and coloured pens, from the nearby storage unit. Children's play is enhanced as the setting purchases additional resources according to their likes and interests. For example, when children demonstrated an interest in digging in the garden, staff purchased a wider range of age-appropriate gardening tools in order to extend this. Children's play is enhanced and their knowledge extended because staff play alongside them. For example, children have time to explore the cards of a matching game before being joined by a staff member who encourages them to discuss the different vehicles illustrated on the cards, introducing vocabulary, such as 'the same as' and 'different from'.

The consistent approach to behaviour management enables children to feel secure and develop their understanding of appropriate behaviour. Staff offer children ongoing explanations about behaviour and encourage them to share and work together to organise turn-taking. Staff also act as good role models and children respond positively to this, demonstrating a developing sense of responsibility for their behaviour. Their understanding of diversity is developed as they participate in daily discussions and access relevant resources. For example, they enjoy using an interactive globe where they discuss different countries, thinking about the climate, traditions and animals associated with each of these. Children are gaining a clear understanding of the relevance of good health practices. Posters and displays reinforce the relevance of healthy eating and staff sit with children at meal times, discussing what they are eating and encouraging them to try a wide range of foods.

The setting's clear procedures for working with parents and other professionals mean that they are able to adapt activities and offer appropriate support to children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. Children are encouraged to explore and determine their own play and staff are skilled in supporting this. For example, children explore the large bricks and a staff member helps them build a tower and count the number of bricks; children become engrossed in this activity and are inspired to construct a path that they then walk along. Children's individual development is promoted because staff utilise their individual learning styles and interests. For example, children showing an interest in numbers are offered activities to extend this; they happily work with a staff member and thoroughly enjoy the challenge of reading three digit numbers. Good planning means that children are offered additional opportunities. For example, older children enjoy weekly French lessons.

The good use of community facilities and outdoor areas means that children are

offered an extended range of opportunities. They grow and cook their own vegetables, walk to the local church and visit the shop to purchase resources for cooking activities. Children's behaviour demonstrates that they feel safe. They are actively involved in their learning, confidently selecting resources and playing independently or with other children and staff. They are positively encouraged to explore and extend their knowledge. For example, they enjoy looking at shapes and colours on the light box and building tents so that they can use the torches. Children are gaining an appreciation of books and reading. They help choose books from the library bus each week and thoroughly enjoy choosing books to read independently or with staff. Children of all ages learn about the uses of information and communication technology. For example, they use a laptop computer, weighing scales, a cash register and calculators.

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	3
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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