

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number 145842
Inspection date 10/12/2009
Inspector Rosemary Davies

Type of setting Childcare on domestic premises

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It rates council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 08456 404040, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

Royal Exchange Buildings
St Ann's Square
Manchester
M2 7LA

T: 08456 404040
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2009

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.

Please see our website for more information about each childcare provider. We publish inspection reports, conditions of registration and details of complaints we receive where we or the provider take action to meet the requirements of registration.

Description of the setting

Catkins Nursery opened in 1987. It is privately owned, operating from a house in Bradford-on-Avon, Wiltshire. It serves families from the surrounding residential area and from further afield in and around this market town. It provides funded early education for three- and four-year-olds. Children use a designated playroom and two further downstairs rooms; cloakroom facilities are located on the ground floor too. There is ready access to an outdoor play area.

The nursery opens for five weekdays during school terms. Sessions run from 09.15 am to 12.15 pm, with an optional lunch club from 12.15 pm until 1.00 pm. The nursery keeps a pet tortoise and children have occasional contact with the household's dog.

The nursery is registered on the Early Years Register. A maximum of 14 children may attend, at any one time. There are currently 20 children aged from two to under five years on roll, all in part-time places. The nursery is registered on the Childcare Register for children aged up to eight years, although no such children attend currently. The nursery supports a number of children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND).

The nursery has four part-time staff. The owner is a qualified early years teacher and two staff hold relevant qualifications at level 3.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Excellent relationships within the nursery and in partnerships with parents and other concerned with the children, are key to the high standards of care provided. All children are welcomed warmly, including any with additional needs; staff do all they can to ensure individual needs are met. All children make good progress in their learning and development. The nursery's owner works hard to make her home into a suitable learning and care environment. She keeps her finger on the pulse of the nursery, knowing where she needs to improve and takes suitable steps overall to do so; consequently, she is strongly placed to maintain continuous improvement.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- continue to explore ways of providing children with ways of making decisions about when to play outside
- fully implement the planned arrangements to extend the assessment system by detailing children's next steps in learning.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The nursery owner provides clear leadership to the close-knit staff team, placing children's welfare and safety at the heart of the nursery's provision. She makes sure that all who live or work on the premises are cleared as being suitable to be with children. Staff update their knowledge of safeguarding issues regularly. All required policies are in place, reviewed and monitored to ensure the procedures for maintaining children's health and safety are implemented. Additionally, the owner undertakes daily checks personally; consequently, children are safeguarded exceptionally well.

The owner drives improvement well through evaluating the provision accurately overall. She places strong emphasis on staff gaining suitable qualifications and undertaking regular training. This improves outcomes for children because staff make effective use of their new understanding. They create a 'sounds box', for example, stemming from 'Letters and sounds' training that they use well to develop children's listening skills.

Staff use the wealth of indoor resources effectively to support children's learning and development. These are arranged well to help children become independent learners. The outdoor area offers many suitable resources but some, such as the climbing frame, are underutilised during colder months of the year. This means children do not have sufficiently regular access to items to support some aspects of their physical development.

The nursery owner works extremely hard to establish highly worthwhile, positive links with a variety of other professionals, such as staff from several local schools, nurseries and a children's centre. Such links help children transfer between settings readily. Additionally, she seeks and acts on the advice of designated local authority support staff, to help her provide the best care possible for all children, including those with learning difficulties and/or physical disabilities. Equality and diversity are promoted exceptionally well, therefore, with each child known and treated as a valued individual by each member of staff. Parents speak appreciatively of the 'genuinely caring' attitudes of the staff. They receive an abundance of useful information about the nursery's work and are kept extremely well informed about their children's progress.

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

All children thoroughly enjoy their time in the nursery. Staff provide exceptionally inviting, stimulating and cosy playrooms, which children enter confidently. They understand staff expectations for how sessions run, gathering willingly for short group times. They listen carefully to stories and instructions but readily offer their views and contributions when appropriate. Staff clearly value these, which builds children's self-esteem and this contributes to the exceedingly good relationships between staff and children. Children feel extremely secure in the nursery and are

therefore ready to learn.

Children's trust in staff is justified. Staff provide them with safe premises but give some responsibility to children to keep themselves safe, such as allowing them to sit on the bottom steps of the stairs to peruse books and teaching them that they must not go up any further. Children develop their personal independence very well, many using the 'sparkly toilet' independently, but staff remain on hand to support those who need help.

Children enjoy operating independently in the playrooms. They decide what they want to do, moving around freely and learning through exploratory play. They delight in creative and imaginative activities linked to Christmas, sprinkling 'reindeer dust' over Father Christmas and his sleigh or pretending to take care of babies in the 'stable'. Staff move around to support and extend children's learning as needed, developing storylines about 'elves', for example. Staff provide excellent role models to the children, being upbeat and enthusiastic, whilst retaining a calm atmosphere. Children's behaviour is excellent. They develop extremely useful skills for their future lives through solving problems as they use construction kits, developing a love of books and using early technological resources. Additionally, staff place emphasis on developing children's listening skills and vocabularies, teaching them about 'volume', for example. They learn about the wider world through walks around the locality and by engaging in topics such as 'Divali'.

Children experience all six areas of learning daily both indoors and outside, owing to thorough planning by staff. Successful recent reviews of planning and assessment systems result in children's interests and capabilities informing what is provided on an everyday basis, so their needs are accommodated well. Staff have identified that children's records do not state the 'next steps' for their learning and plan to incorporate these shortly. Children receive a good balance of adult-led and child-chosen activities, but they are not able to make their own decisions about when to play outside or take their snack.

Children are encouraged outside whatever the weather, using the 'Rainy day' or 'Windy day' resource boxes when appropriate. This helps them develop positive attitudes to being outdoors and enjoying fresh air. They learn a great deal about healthy living through the self-service, snack bar, as staff provide a wide selection of nutritious options, and provoke discussions on which foods are 'good for you'.

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	1
The effectiveness of safeguarding	1
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	2
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	2
--	---

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	1
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	1

Any complaints about the inspection or report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

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