

The Orchard Pre-school

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

The Orchard Pre-School originally opened in April 2000 and became a limited company in January 2008. It operates from three rooms in a community centre in Rainham, Kent. Two rooms have access to a secure outdoor play area. There is suitable, easy access to the premises. The pre-school serves the surrounding area. The pre-school opens on Monday to Friday mornings from 9:15 to 11:45 and Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday afternoons from 12:45 to 3:15 during term time only. The provision is registered to look after a maximum of 58 children who fall within the early years age group. Children attend for a variety of sessions. There are nursery, pre-school and 'Pre-school Plus' sessions. The setting also operates a lunch club. There are currently 87 children who fall within the early years age group on roll. The setting supports children who have special educational needs or disabilities and children who speak English as an additional language. The provider/manager's qualifications include a BA Early Years degree and Early Years Professional Status. She works with a team of 13 staff, including a caretaker, with two volunteer helpers. Most staff hold an early years qualification. They receive support from the local authority. The provision is on the Early Years Register only.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is outstanding.

The setting provides outstanding care and learning in all areas. Children are able to flourish in the welcoming, imaginative and inclusive environment. There are extensive and comprehensive policies and procedures in place to ensure children feel consistently safe and secure. The team of qualified and experienced staff work exceptionally well together. They provide inspiring and stimulating play opportunities for every child. Highly informative progress and development records demonstrate an extremely successful partnership with parents, who are wholly involved in their child's care and learning. The provider is strongly committed and dedicated to ensuring continuous improvement within the setting, resulting in high quality outcomes for all children.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- review and improve the two-way flow of information with other professional carers, further promoting the shared understanding of children's individual needs, learning and development

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children are protected and safeguarded through meticulous procedures that promote their welfare and safety exceptionally well. For example, a robust recruitment policy ensures all staff are appropriately vetted. The continued suitability of staff is actively monitored, using rigorous supervision and appraisal systems. On going risk assessments are carried out, checking safety in all areas and minimising risks to children. Policies, procedures and records are systematically reviewed, resulting in maximum safety measures in place to protect the welfare of every child at all times. Safeguarding children training has been attended by many of the staff members and all practitioners are very clear about what to do if they have any concerns about a child in their care.

The provider manages two separate play rooms, one is used by children aged 2 years and the other, larger one is for children aged around 3 years and over. Both areas have direct access to outside play areas, which children are able to use freely throughout the sessions. The outdoor play spaces are well equipped. For example, there are child height planters where children grow vegetables they can cook and eat, and have access to climbing and balancing activities. Children themselves extend the indoor play resources to the outdoors. Outings to local places, such as shops, parks and primary schools regularly take place, enabling children to learn more about how their local community works.

The provider and her dedicated staff team work exceptionally well together. There are evaluative and reflective processes embedded into every day practice, ensuring the continued development of the provision. Staff training opportunities are given high priority throughout the setting. Staff use the knowledge and experience they gain from courses and workshops, to bring about creative change and improvements. Equality and diversity is incorporated into all elements of the provision through consistently high quality practice. Every child's needs are fully addressed and they are constantly encouraged to reach their full potential. Resources and activities consistently include positive images of diversity and naturally help children to learn about the differences between people in today's society. All children have the opportunity to learn British Sign Language, a valuable skill for them to use in the future. There are also visual posters with pictures and the relevant signing action shown, displayed around the play areas. Many children are also learning French, promoting a basic understanding of the benefits to speaking another language. These additional communication skills helps all children feel valued and included in the everyday routine of the setting.

The systems for self-evaluation are excellent. They include the input of children, management, staff practitioners, outside professionals and parents. Children are involved in the process, by being included along with their parents, and able to comment on their likes and dislikes within the setting. Overall, the self-evaluation process is extremely effective in continually and clearly identifying the strengths of the provision and any areas for development and improvement. This ensures excellent outcomes for children are sustained.

Effective partnerships are in place with outside agencies. For example, the provider works hard with local authority services and specialists, to help support children with disabilities. The setting also maintains close links with several local schools to promote successful and smooth transitions for children into reception classes. These practices result in excellent consistency of care and learning for every child. The engagement the setting promotes with parents is exemplary. Information is creatively and continually shared with parents and they are actively involved in all aspects of their children's learning and development. Overall, children's care, learning and development needs are extremely well promoted.

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

Children are very happy, settled and safe at the setting. Children are clearly comfortable with approaching staff for guidance and support in their daily routines. Staff respond with an expert knowledge and understanding of each child's individual needs. Children show they feel safe as they make independent choices about their play, moving around the area with a clear sense of purpose and direction. Many activities are planned around children's interests and requests, ensuring they are eager to participate gainfully in all activities available to them. Staff skilfully use daily routines to encourage children's learning in all areas. For example, children have good opportunities to develop their counting, name and colour recognition skills at snack times. Even younger children are able to find their name on a card, relating to their own coloured place mat, which uses a traffic light system to indicate any allergies and dietary intolerances. Healthy eating options are provided, such as apple, banana or toast, with milk or juice to drink. Parents supply their own children's lunch boxes, guidance on what constitutes a healthy packed lunch are made available for all parents, to further encourage healthy eating for children. Children talk with each other at the table, this maybe about what they are eating or what they want to do next.

Role play areas are superbly equipped. In the large play room there is a home section, a supermarket, a pet shop and a vet's surgery. Children become totally involved in their imaginary play as they buy food for the home and their pets. Real dry pet food is used and children enjoy weighing this out, learning how to use scales to get the quantity they want. Children take their toy dogs for walks and to the vet to be weighed and examined. These activities are very well managed by staff, ensuring that the experiences are a worthwhile learning opportunity for everyone. A sensory area with mirrors, different textured activities, musical instruments and visual posters, helps to promote children's use and knowledge of their senses. The book and language areas are designed to be comfortable and relaxing. A large and diverse selection of books is available, along with story sack, props and puppet theatre. This allows children to act out the stories they know and enjoy. Information and technology is promoted effectively through remote control toys and computers for both younger and older children. They are able to find their way around age appropriate and educational software. One child enjoys his inter-active game involving various animals, looking at size and colour. He then competently prints off a sheet of animals which he proceeds to colour in and put stickers on. He displays a confidence and self assurance evident in children

throughout the setting.

Children are able to experience and enjoy the extensive range of activities and resources, which support their excellent progress towards the early learning goals. The system for recording what children do and achieve is very clear, easy to use and understand. These help identify individual children's next steps, which staff then plan activities around, so children can continue to progress. Key persons are involved in supporting their key children, as they know them well, further developing their learning styles and interests.

The older children are very confident and are happy to talk to the inspector. They are able to explain what they are doing and what they like best. Younger children also show how well they know their way round their own play space. They dip in and out doors, displaying delight in whatever they are doing by laughing, chatting and discovering new experiences and skills. Children enjoy their time at the pre-school and feel valued as staff recognise their skills and praise their achievements. This is confirmed by displaying children's work around the setting. The positive role models of the staff are reflected in children's relationships with each other. Children's behaviour is excellent and they play very well together. Overall, the setting provides outstanding opportunities for every child that attends, it encourages them to be independent learners and ensures that they are developing essential skills for the future.

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	2
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	1

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	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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