

The Meadow Children's Centre Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number EY335427
Inspection date 11/12/2009
Inspector Gillian Walley

Setting address The Meadow Children's Centre, Bell Wood Primary School
Furfield Close, Parkwood Maidstone, Kent, ME15 9EZ

Telephone number 01622 699900

Email

Type of setting Childcare on non-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).

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

The Meadow Children's Centre Nursery opened in 2006 and is currently run by the local authority with a multi agency committee. It operates from several rooms in a children's centre, in Parkwood, Maidstone. A maximum of 45 children may attend the nursery at any one time. There are currently 102 children on roll, many of whom receive funding. The nursery supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language. There is disabled access for adults and children.

The nursery is open each weekday from 8.00am to 6.00pm for 50 weeks of the year. All children share access to secure enclosed outdoor play areas. Children come from the wider and local community. The nursery employs nine permanent staff, all of whom hold appropriate early years qualifications. A number of long term agency staff with early years qualifications are also employed. The nursery is a member of the Pre-school Learning Alliance. The setting also receives support from the local authority.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is outstanding.

The Meadow is an outstanding nursery. It is inclusive and supports all children well so that they make very good progress. The manager and her staff evaluate the provision frequently and make changes, and the nursery has an outstanding capacity to improve because staff are experienced, well qualified and very vigilant in observing and responding to the children's needs.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- displaying print, numbers and shapes in the outdoor learning environment to support the older children's independent learning.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The manager and her staff are a very experienced, strong team who evaluate their procedures regularly in the light of the progress the children are making. There have been many improvements since the last inspection report, and self-evaluation is very thorough so that the nursery has outstanding capacity to improve further. The staff are now more knowledgeable, for example, in understanding children's emotional development. The staff have identified the need to improve the outdoor area further, particularly in supporting the older children to know their letters and numbers. There are very good procedures for ensuring that children are always

safe and secure. For example, when children have an accident or need to have medicine, two adults take responsibility, and parents receive copies of this information. New staff are vetted and staff assess possible risks by carrying out frequent checks throughout the premises. Visitors sign in and wear identity badges. Accident records are checked regularly and used to take any necessary action. The ratio of adults to children is high so that the children are always very well supervised, and the staff can work with small groups when they want to develop specific skills such as understanding letters and sounds. The staff take great care to ensure that the areas where babies crawl are hygienic, and gates separate each area of the classroom so that the younger children are safe. Babies are checked frequently while they sleep.

The nursery works closely with many outside agencies so that children who are finding learning more difficult, alongside their families, are supported well and can make good progress. These children have specific plans for their learning so that they are given the right opportunities and challenges. This careful approach reflects the nursery's commitment to inclusion and equal opportunities. The staff support children well as they move on to their primary schools. The nursery works very closely with parents to involve them fully in supporting their children's learning and development. When children start coming to the nursery, the staff ask parents for detailed information about the children so that they can begin to get to know them and provide activities they will enjoy. There are 'stay and play' sessions so that parents see how their children learn and how they can support them well at home. The manager produces regular newsletters and notice boards showing other sources of support which they might find useful. There are boards showing the children's learning each day so that parents can provide similar activities at home. Parents of very young children can see at a glance information about sleep times or what their children have eaten. Parents complete surveys so that the manager knows their views and can adapt routines to meet parents' needs. Parents can see their children's records at any time and there are regular parents' evenings. They find these helpful in enabling them to understand how well their children are progressing. They may add comments about what children have been achieving at home so that the staff can incorporate this in the activities they plan. Parents find the staff very helpful and approachable. Parents visit the nursery to give the children interesting experiences, for example, by reading them stories and nursery rhymes in different languages.

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

All children make very good progress and they are very well cared for because their key workers know them well. They assess their progress so that they can identify the next steps the children need to take. They monitor the progress of different groups of children in each area of learning to ensure that they are providing children with the right opportunities and challenges. The staff meet daily to review the progress the children have made and to plan for the next day. The children choose the resources they want to play with, and the staff plan activities which will move the children on in every area of their development. The staff are good role models, they have very high expectations of the children and they speak

to them in a positive way. Consequently, children behave well and make very good progress in their social and emotional development. They share, take turns and concentrate well, they persevere with tasks and care about one another. The staff support the children very well, asking them questions, for example, about the books they are looking at. They provide them with stimulating experiences, for example, babies enjoyed finding small toys in water and exploring different textures. There is excellent provision for young children to learn through feeling and listening. Toddlers explored how ice cubes feel while they talked about animals which live in icy conditions, and this helped them to learn new vocabulary.

The learning environment is rich and stimulating, and the children choose from many resources to develop their skills. Toys and equipment are well labelled and easy for the children to reach. The children are given a lot of praise and encouragement, so that they are proud of what they achieve and develop high self-esteem. For example, their paintings and collages are displayed on the walls and can then be taken home to show their parents. The children develop their early writing skills because there are very good opportunities for mark making both in the classroom and in the outdoor area which provides very good opportunities for their physical development. For example, there is a pirate ship and tyres to climb on, there is a play house and large cardboard boxes for role play, and areas for planting seeds and growing plants. There is a safe outdoor area for babies to explore. The children say how much they like playing outdoors with their friends. The staff make good use of other rooms in the setting, for example, when they want to work with small groups of children to help them learn their sounds or to develop their understanding of numbers and shapes.

The children learn about different customs and special times of the year because the staff provide interesting activities. For example, at Chinese New Year they make lanterns, and the older children visit a local restaurant to taste Chinese food. The children enjoyed learning about the Christmas story, and the more able children were challenged to talk about the numbers of each of the animals. The children enjoy visits, for example, from the local police officer who helps them to understand road safety. The children learn about healthy eating because they are given nutritious snacks and they learn how to avoid infection by washing their hands. They understand how to leave the building if they hear the fire bell.

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	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	1
--	---

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

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

