

# Skylark Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Inspection date</b>	25/02/2010
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<b>Type of setting</b>	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*.

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.

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## Description of the setting

Skylark Pre-school is situated in Rowner, Gosport and is one of the child care services operated by the Naval Under Fives organisation. It has been registered since approximately 1994 and serves children and families of service personnel plus children from the local community. The accommodation is in a ground floor maisonette with level access to two playrooms. There is ramp access to a fully secure rear outdoor play area. The setting is open each week day from 8.30am to 5.30pm, for 49 weeks of the year.

The pre-school has arrangements in place to support children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities or who may have English as an additional language, although none currently attend. The pre-school is registered to provide care for a maximum of 18 children at any one time. The provider is on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. There are currently 26 children in the early years age group on roll. Of these 22, including two children aged two years, are in receipt of funding. Children are able to attend for a variety of sessions.

There are currently three regular staff who work at the setting. They have support from other staff within the organisation when needed. The supervisor and deputy are appropriately qualified to work with the children. The pre-school receives support from the local authority.

## The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Staff promote the needs of every child and effectively meet their learning and welfare needs. Children play and explore within safe, stimulating boundaries in an atmosphere of fun and excitement. The partnerships with parents, and with various professionals and organisations, help to ensure the specific needs of the children are addressed. The on-going self-evaluation process means that the setting builds on its strengths and knows exactly how to improve. The pre-school has addressed all recommendations from the last inspection, reflecting the setting's good capacity to improve. This helps to promote effective outcomes for the children attending.

## What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- provide more opportunities for children to gain an awareness of the cultures, religions and lives of others through a range of activities
- continue to develop systems of self-evaluation within the setting to identify and maintain continuous improvement.

## **The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision**

Staff in the setting have a secure understanding of safeguarding procedures and know what to do if they should have concerns about a child. They are aware of the possible signs of abuse to ensure that the needs of vulnerable children who attend the setting are met. The policies and procedures are shared with parents to ensure they are fully aware of the pre-school's safeguarding role and responsibilities. Robust recruitment and vetting procedures are implemented effectively to ensure all staff are suitable to work with the children. Detailed written risk assessments and daily checks are completed to ensure the play and learning environment is safe and secure for children at all times. A full and comprehensive induction programme and appraisal system is used to monitor the ongoing suitability of staff and new members of staff.

All children have access to a wide range of resources, activities and experiences during their time at the pre-school. Equipment and play materials are stored at a low level, ensuring all children can access them independently, increasing their freedom of choice and decision-making skills. The layout of the rooms enables children to self-select and take part in small and large group activities. They are able to move around freely and enjoy a range of table top and floor-based activities. Staff are skilled at differentiating the activities to reflect the varying ages and stages of children, ensuring they can participate fully.

Equality and diversity is promoted within the setting and written policies underpin the group's understanding. Children are taught to respect and care for one another. Each child has equal access to the learning experiences provided, including those promoting positive images of diversity. However, children do not have access to a sufficiently broad range of activities to gain a fuller awareness of cultures, religions and the lives of others.

The management and staff team work hard to identify areas for development and use ongoing action plans to improve the outcomes for children. For example, all recommendations from the last inspection have been addressed. The layout of the play rooms have been reviewed and changed to provide a more enabling environment for the children. Staff training is an ongoing priority, which helps to enhance children's learning and development. They are proactive in seeking advice and support from the local authority as they strive to continually improve the setting for the benefit of the children who attend.

Parents are able to talk to the staff at any time. They record detailed information about the children's care and welfare requirements in daily diaries. Information is currently gathered about the children's starting points with regard to their learning and development to help them make progress and provide them with sufficient challenge and stimulation from when they begin to attend the setting. Parents have access to their children's records on request. They are able to contribute to these to ensure they are fully involved in their children's learning, giving them opportunities to further develop and extend their children's learning at home. Parents feel their children are settled and really enjoy coming to pre-school. They

are involved in special events which help them feel included, such as providing photos for a 'remembrance' display. Parents support their child if chosen to look after the pre-school teddy at home or on holiday. The setting works closely with other organisations and professionals. This partnership is effective in helping to promote continuity for children between home and the pre-school environment.

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

All staff have a clear understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage and spend time observing and recording what the children can do. They use this information effectively to identify the children's next steps in learning. Consequently, planned activities are purposeful and staff are able to fully extend the children's learning and development in all areas. Children are making good progress towards the early learning goals through incidental learning opportunities and the provision of an interesting range of resources. Staff interact well with the children and learning opportunities are maximised because the staff are aware of what the children are working towards.

Children are beginning to use mathematical language to describe size as they sort wooden people into corresponding sizes back into wooden boats. They also count everyday objects as they play. A birthday cake display promotes counting as children have coloured in their candles on their cake linking to the age they are. They have opportunities to express themselves creatively during art and craft activities and practise their emergent writing skills in a variety of ways. For example, children have access to writing materials at all times and make notes or take messages in the home corner. The setting has a lending library, where children pick a book to take home to read with a parent and/or carer and then bring it back to swap for another one. Children are encouraged to recite and talk about their chosen story. This promotes confidence through reading and memory re-call. Children enjoy listening to staff read stories using character voices to bring the stories to life. Staff ask many questions to engage children during story time. This enables children to actively participate and promotes their language and communication abilities. Environmental print is rich, which means children have ongoing opportunities to locate resources and subsequently develop their early word recognition skills.

Children use binoculars to understand how technology works. They have access to a computer on a daily basis; and are learning to use a mouse to operate educational programmes. All children have free access to a fully secure outdoor play area, which has recently been improved with more resources to ensure all six areas of learning are covered both inside and outdoors. Children have opportunities to swing, run and jump and practise their large motor skills riding on tricycles. They also have access to role play equipment and measure rain fall with a water gauge and monitor the wind. Children grow plants and vegetables, such as pumpkins and runner beans. This promotes children's learning about exploring the natural world and their curiosity.

Children are beginning to learn how to keep themselves safe through discussion

and daily routines. For example, children are gently reminded to sit down properly on chairs in case they fall. Children know what to do in an emergency because staff and children practise regular fire drills to ensure the building is evacuated with ease. Children's self-care skills are developing well as they wash their hands independently at appropriate times. Despite not having running water on the day of the inspection, effective contingency arrangements were in place. Staff implement good hygiene procedures when changing nappies to help prevent the possible spread of infection. Children are beginning to learn about the importance of healthy eating through the provision of nutritious snacks. Children can help themselves to their own drink when they are thirsty. Staff talk to them about the types of food they are good for them. They are beginning to learn about exercise, through playing musical instruments and moving to action songs, how their body feels and how it is beneficial to be healthy.

Behaviour management strategies used enhance children's confidence and self-esteem. Staff praise and encourage the children, building sound relationships. They are encouraged to think about one another and they share and take turns well throughout the nursery. Children communicate well with each other and the staff during their time in the setting. They share ideas and explain their thoughts openly during their play. They are able to communicate with the staff expressing their needs clearly. For example, children wanted to make the colour grey, so they are helped by a member of staff to mix black and white paint together. This promotes discussion and an activity about how to mix different coloured paints.

## 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

<b>How well does the setting meet the needs of the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?</b>	2
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	2

### The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

<b>How effectively is the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?</b>	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

<b>Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	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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## **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