

Culverstone Pre-School Group

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspector	Vicky Turner
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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

Culverstone Pre-School Group is a committee run setting. It opened in 1979 and operates from a mobile classroom on the school premises. It is situated in a rural area in Culverstone, a few miles from Gravesend, in Kent. A maximum of 20 children may attend the setting at any one time. There are 23 children aged from two to five on the register and 12 of these are funded for nursery education. The setting is open each weekday from 8.35am to 12.00pm for 30 weeks of the year. All children share access to secure outdoor play areas. The children come from a wide catchment area. The setting welcomes children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and also welcomes children who speak English as an additional language. The setting employs seven staff. All of the staff, including the manager, hold appropriate early years qualifications. Six hold a National Vocational Qualification at level 3 in Pre-school Practice and one holds a National Vocational Qualification at level 2 in Pre-school Practice. The setting is registered on the Early Years Register. There is no disabled access at present, but this has been included in the plan for the new premises.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

This is a good setting where children play, learn and develop in a safe stimulating environment. The setting works particularly well with the school, parents and external agencies to ensure children receive the support that they need and as result make good progress. The rigorous self-evaluation process at all levels has enabled the setting to highlight its strengths and identify areas for improvement. All recommendations from the previous inspection have been fully addressed which means that the capacity for continuous improvement is good.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- develop systems for analysing children's progress, in order to gain an overview of progress and to identify where provision could be better
- ensure that staff update their training in safeguarding more regularly
- further develop links with other early years providers.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The designated officer and the supervisor have had recent training in child protection. Other members of staff are booked to update their training in child protection in May 2010. Rigorous checks and vetting procedures of all staff ensure that they are suitable to work with children. The premises are secure with padlocks on external gates and secure fences around the garden play area. Regular risk

assessments, fire drills and daily pre-opening checks means that children are kept safe.

The supervisor leads a well-established staff who share the vision of high quality care and education where children can play safely, learn and develop in confidence in an inclusive and stimulating environment. The effective self-evaluation process at all levels has enabled the setting to understand its strengths and identify what needs to be done to improve. These include new premises which should be completed in September 2010 and which will allow for free flow access to their own covered play area. All recommendations from the last inspection have been addressed, all staff are now trained in first aid and overhanging branches have been cut.

The setting is very well resourced with recently purchased resources to enhance the home corner with a larger equipped area. Resources are of good quality, meet safety standards and are accessible to all the children. A well-considered staff deployment rota ensures that all areas of play are fully supervised.

The staff promote inclusive practices and all children are valued and treated equally. The staff member with responsibility for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and other staff work closely with parents and external agencies to support children with such needs. Individual Education Plans, activities and resources are adapted to cater for the range of children's needs. The staff use a good range of resources, including dressing up clothes, play food and cooking utensils, reflecting a breadth of cultures, very effectively to develop the children's awareness of diversity.

The setting has established exceptionally good relationships with the school which means that children have access to the school's fields, its nature area and outdoor musical instruments. It also ensures continuity of provision and ease of transition into primary school. Excellent relationships with several external agencies such as health visitors means that children receive specialist support that they need. The setting has started to make links with other early years providers to ensure a smooth transition.

Parents are kept very well informed with regular newsletters, regular key person meetings, contact books and informal chats at the end of the day. New parents receive a Parent pack on their first visit. Parents are encouraged to contribute to their children's 'My Unique Story' and receive information on their progress. They engage in fund raising activities and quiz nights. They respond to parent questionnaires and have representatives on the committee. Parents are very happy with the provision because the staff are 'very helpful' and the children 'are happy' and 'they love it'.

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

Children make good progress and contribute really well to their learning. Key persons, whereby each member of staff has a close responsibility for a small group

of children, ensure the welfare of the children. They accomplish this through regular observations and by supporting children's play to encourage exploration of their feelings and emotions. The Early Years Foundation Stage guidance and targeted observations inform planning to provide for the specific needs of individual children. There is a good balance of adult led activity and those chosen by the children themselves. Adults are on hand to develop children's learning while allowing them to follow and explore their own ideas. Staff ask open-ended questions to encourage children to think critically and solve problems. Staff know their children well but do not have a clear enough view of progress overall. Children make good progress particularly in language and communication and reading. They particularly enjoy participating in the puppet show of 'Goldilocks and the Three Bears' and 'The Three Billy Goats Gruff', narrated by an adult. They are eager to imitate different characters' voices and do so with confidence.

Children feel very safe and move around confidently and access resources independently. They engage in road safety role play activities and enjoy visits from the local police officers who talk to them about 'Road Safety' and 'Stranger Danger'. They listen to stories about the dangers of playing with matches. This is reinforced by visits from local fire officers. They play safely and handle toys and equipment very safely.

Children adopt healthy living very successfully. This is because they learn the importance of good personal hygiene through hand washing routines and adult reminders. They are encouraged to use tissues to blow their noses and dispose of them appropriately. Children choose healthy options from a variety of savoury snacks, fruit and vegetables and drink water or milk. Children's dietary requirements and food allergies are considered. All children are encouraged to participate in daily energetic physical activities. The outdoors are well resourced and provides opportunities for climbing, balancing, steering, running and sliding.

Relationships are very good so children are particularly well behaved. Children are encouraged to develop a sense of responsibility by preparing the fruit, giving out and collecting cups and plates at snack time and tidying up equipment. Older children help the younger ones to settle in. They take turns, share and show concern for other's feelings. They contribute to the wider community by raising money, for example, on 'Red Nose Day'.

Children work together well across a breadth of well-resourced activities, for example during puppet theatre shows, role play activities and when using computers. By the time they leave they are well-prepared for their future learning.

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	1
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	1
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	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
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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	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	2

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