

The Meadows Daycare Centre

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspection date	21/03/2010
Inspector	Isobel Randall
Setting address	Farriers Gate, New Road, Chatteris, Cambridgeshire, PE16 6QP
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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*.

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

The Meadows Daycare Nursery, After-School and Holiday Club offers a variety of children's facilities. It opened in 1998. The nursery is open on Monday to Friday from 9.00am until 11.30am, 11.30am to 12.30pm and 12.30pm to 3.00pm. There is an after-school club from 3.00pm to 6.00pm. These groups are open term time only. The Meadows Holiday Club is a full day care group operating during school holidays from 8.00am until 6.00pm. All of the facilities are based in the Meadows Community Centre, a purpose designed building within the grounds of Glebelands CP School in Chatteris, Cambridgeshire. The group is registered on the Early Years Register and on the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register for 44 children attending each of the nursery and lunch club from ages three to four, the after-school club and holiday playgroup from ages three to 12. There are 11 employees, eight of whom work with the children. Of these, the manager is a teacher, and all others hold a qualification in early years provision, of whom five are qualified to Level 3. Areas available to the group include two large playrooms that can form one room when divider doors are opened, along with a kitchen and toilet facilities. There is additional office, storage and toilet space for adult use. There is a fully enclosed outside play area to the side and a new enclosed play area to the front. Groups have access at agreed times to the secure school playground. The setting receives support from the Cambridgeshire Care and Education Partnership and is approved to take children in receipt of government nursery funding. At present 54 children are on roll for the nursery and lunch group, of whom 49 are in receipt of funding. There are 250 children enrolled for occasional attendance at the after-school club, of whom 35 are in the early years age group. The nursery supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and children whose home language is not English. Disabled access is available to all areas. The nursery links with the school on the same site to share staff training and to ease children's transition into the school's foundation stage.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

The staff at Meadows Daycare provide effectively for all of the children in their care. The learning and welfare needs of the early years children are met well. Leaders and staff strive constantly to improve by examining their practice and planning changes in light of regular monitoring and training. The setting cares exceptionally well for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and also for those whose home language is not English, so that they make good progress in an inclusive environment. The setting has a good capacity to continuously improve.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- ensure that parents have opportunities to contribute to assessment records by encouraging them to share the children's achievements at home with staff
- involve children more systematically in the planning of activities.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children's safety is well supported by the vigilance of managers and staff. Staff are trained in child protection procedures under the leadership of a named child protection officer. All adults are suitable to work with children. Daily checks ensure that the site is safe and secure before the start of the nursery sessions, and risk assessments are carried out before visits although not for all activities in the setting. Staff are deployed so that children are always well supervised. Almost all hold a qualification in first aid for children. Regular fire drills help children to become familiar with procedures. Children's arrival and departure is noted along with the time of any that is earlier or later than others, while the staff ensure that only approved adults collect them. Good links with parents help children to settle down well. Parents are informed about their right to complain, but there are no unresolved issues in the complaints book and most comments praise the provision. Staff inform parents each term about their children's progress and invite written responses in addition to discussion with their key workers. Such responses demonstrate that parents are very pleased with the care for their children and with the progress that they are making. Although the staff try to inform parents clearly about their children's daily experiences, by using photographs and explanations linked to the early years framework, this is general rather than specific to the individual child. There is no regular arrangement for information from home about specific experiences to be shared with the nursery, so that it is difficult for staff to build on children's achievements at home. The setting makes an outstanding contribution to the development of children whose home language is not English. While being provided with strong support in speaking English, they are encouraged to take pride in their home culture. Parents contribute to the life of the nursery by sharing the customs and way of life of their home countries with the children. Others who have specific skills share them with the children. For example, a grandmother showed the children how to knit for a performance that they were giving to parents. Staff work closely with other organisations and agencies to provide excellent support for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities, using their advice in planning to meet the children's learning needs. They collaborate very closely with the adjoining school so that all children become familiar with the school foundation stage. The head teacher is a member of the committee, and early years staff from both organisations share training. Children from each area visit each other weekly, with the result that children are highly confident when entering the reception year in school. Adults work together well, sharing responsibility for areas of the children's education and welfare. The setting is well resourced. Indoor resources are effectively selected and used to help children to enjoy their experiences in each area of the setting. Although the children are not involved in choosing the theme for the session, they are free to choose resources for their own play. The room used by the after-school club has a wide range of activities suitable for older children, while the nursery is well provided with toys, books and materials that enrich the children's experiences.

Self-evaluation is a collaborative process. Leaders and staff are all involved in planning for the development of the setting through regular meetings in which they follow the local authority's evaluation format. The staff and committee are concerned about the development of the outdoor area, as there is a recent tendency for one of the play areas to flood since the land around the school has been built up. They have identified and addressed the need to enlarge the safe outdoor play area, so that children can now enjoy climbing activities on a safe surface in addition to their previous good range of riding, running and ball games. Although there are still gaps in the extent to which parents inform staff about the children's progress at home, recommendations from the previous inspection have otherwise all been addressed. Leaders and managers have therefore demonstrated good capacity to improve.

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

Children love coming to the nursery and after-school club, making good progress overall in the positive and stimulating atmosphere. Parents report that children look forward to nursery days, and are disappointed when they cannot come. As a result they engage happily in the wide range of activities, collaborating well with each other while they experience colour, texture and sounds. They have excellent opportunities to develop their basic skills and ability to get on with each other. Children playing a card game with their key worker happily take turns to pick a card, showing delight when it matches their board but accepting mismatches cheerfully. Others exploring water know that they must take care not to splash on the floor, and put on an apron without prompting. Children threading letters together sound the letters as they do so, while those painting fruit proudly label their pictures with the name of the fruit. The children recognise their written names, using them throughout the session for registration and when moving to new parts of the regular procedures. They enjoy playing with the computer. Higher attaining children can complete a chart recording what they have done during the day. They feel very safe in the setting, knowing whom to approach when they are unhappy, and are friendly towards visitors. Their contribution is good in that they register themselves and help to clear up as a matter of course, sometimes helping to set out and wash up after their snack. Although they are able to choose from resources laid out for them, children do not contribute to the selection of topics or planning of activities. Nevertheless they enjoy their play greatly and make excellent progress in their social behaviour and basic skills. They know how to play safely and like taking exercise. They are aware of the need to wash their hands after messy play or going to the toilet, and before snack. Despite the efforts of the staff, the lunches that children bring themselves are not always healthy, with several bringing chocolate and fizzy drinks, although many bring sandwiches and fruit.

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	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	2

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	1
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

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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