

Mr Noah's Nursery School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	127394
Inspection date	14/05/2010
Inspector	Stacey Sangster

Setting address	Congregational Church, Iden Green, Benenden, Cranbrook, Kent, TN17 4HA
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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

Mr Noah's Nursery School opened in 1995. It operates from rooms in the congregational church premises in the small village of Iden Green near Benenden.

Mr. Noah's Nursery School describes itself as a self-consciously Christian provision and teaches children based upon Froebelian Philosophy. The nursery serves the local area and surrounding villages and is managed by a committee as part of the ministry of the Iden Green Congregational Church.

The nursery can care for up to 20 children under eight years at any one time and accepts children from the age of two years. There are currently 27 children in the early years age range on roll and children attend on a part-time or full-time basis. The setting is registered on the Early Years Register, the compulsory part of the Childcare Register and the voluntary part of the Childcare Register.

The nursery opens five days a week; it is closed for two weeks at Christmas and Easter and for the month of August. Sessions run from 9am to 12 noon and 1pm to 4pm with an optional lunch club from 12 noon until 1pm.

Eight staff work with the children and of these four have early years qualifications. Three staff are qualified to National Vocational Qualification at level 3 and above. One member of staff has Early Years Professional Status. The setting receives support from the local authority.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

The setting meets children's needs very well. Leadership is exceptionally strong and drives the setting forward, enhancing the service to children and continually improving the delivery of education and care. The key strengths of the setting are how well they make use of their resources and the impact the setting has on the extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles. The setting has secure arrangements in place to evaluate the provision and is efficient at addressing areas they identify for improvement by building on their already good practices. The setting demonstrates a good capacity to maintain continuous improvement.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- follow the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) guidance in relation to the portability of CRB checks and ensure that all checks are recorded and handled in accordance with the CRB's Code of Practice and Explanatory Guide
- streamline the arrangements for the recording of observational assessment used to meet young children's individual needs to avoid duplication.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children's safety and developing their awareness of safety issues is a priority in this setting. The children are given excellent opportunities to appropriately self manage risk with good quality adult support. Sufficient staff are first aid trained to ensure that children receive swift attention in the event of an injury from a suitably trained person, forethought has been given to how staff outside would call for assistance if needed and a bell has been fitted outside which alerts staff inside that they are needed. All staff are carefully vetted and complete checks via the CRB, although the setting has accepted one CRB check carried out by another childcare setting. Accepting checks carried out by other providers is not in line with the CRB guidance as not all information can be shared if this is done. Newly appointed staff awaiting CRB checks are never permitted unsupervised access to children. Staff have access to a clear and detailed Safeguarding Children policy and all are clear about their role and responsibility in relation to child protection and reporting concerns. Risk assessments are thorough and recorded appropriately. Children are kept safe in this setting by the well thought out arrangements in place and the commitment to swiftly updating safeguarding and safety issues as they arise.

Leaders in the setting have a clear sense of purpose and share an ambition for excellence. The registered person is committed to ongoing training and is highly qualified having completed the Early Years Professional Status qualification. He is the director of the setting, supporting the two room leaders. His role is to lead the childcare team and he has a hands on approach and is onsite daily. The team work hard to ensure that they keep abreast of, and implement, new ideas. They constantly seek better ways of working and achieve steady continual improvements. The registered person proactively seeks out examples of good practice by visiting other well known and highly regarded childcare centres across the UK, enthusiastically returning with new ideas or equipment. Changes identified to enhance the setting are appropriately focused. Some unnecessary duplication has occurred during the ongoing work to update the observation records used to inform the planning.

Resources are of very high quality. All new equipment and resources are examined at staff meetings, discussed and incorporated into the planning before they are introduced to the children. Staff for example eagerly await the meeting planned to discuss the new 'fire pit', they talk about their ideas for different ways of using it and of the excitement that they anticipate children will experience when they first introduce it to them. Resources are always arranged and set out attractively and with care, reflecting the setting's ethos that the items used should be treasured, carefully looked after and treated with respect. This culture of care and respect towards the environment in which the children play, extends to all areas of the setting as well as the wider world. Resources are plentiful, very well maintained and of exceptional quality.

The setting is aware of the requirement to form partnerships with other providers who may jointly care for children and as such share the responsibility of providing

the Early Years Foundation Stage to them. The setting works well with parents, engaging them on many levels and providing good quality information about the care and learning provided to their children. Parents are encouraged to work in partnership with the setting and a well established system is in place to share information about children's individual care and education. The information is shared in a range of formats, including verbally, in writing, via photographs and examples of things the children have made or completed. All families and their children are welcome in this setting. Staff are skilled at identifying the individual needs of children and recognise that all children are unique with different personalities, styles of learning and care needs. The setting supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and are able to access additional support for children and families where necessary.

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

Children make good progress in all six areas of learning. The key workers get to know the children in their group well and the setting is small enough that all staff demonstrate a good knowledge of the individual needs and progress of every child in the group. Staff observe what the children enjoy and what motivates them. They record observations and detail which area of learning this links to. Progress is tracked using this system but the records lack evaluation of how well children are making progress. Staff however are very aware of the children's individual strengths and weaknesses and as such the lack of this in the record does not impact on what is planned to support their next steps. All six areas of learning are given equal consideration in planning. The planning is informed by the observations of the staff in relation to what skills children are developing and which they need to acquire next.

Children's welfare is effectively supported by the setting. Opportunities for children to develop healthy lifestyles are outstanding. Children engage in a wide variety of activities which support their knowledge and understanding of what they need to do to lead healthy lives and engage in these with enthusiasm and vigour. Children talk animatedly about the vegetables and fruits that they are growing in the garden. They know how to tend the plants, and look forward to harvesting and tasting them. Outdoor play is embraced fully by the children who are encouraged to take the classroom outside. They show high levels of understanding that being in the fresh air is good for them. They demonstrate an excellent grasp of hygiene routines and chat to each other about the need to wash the germs off their hands before they eat their snacks. Children talk about healthy foods and know which foods they need to avoid or eat in moderation. They make links between the foods they eat and fitness and talk about growing 'big and strong'. Children take part in physical activities with great enthusiasm and demonstrate high levels of energy and vitality. The setting has recently acquired use of a woodland area known as 'The Forest School'. Children are eager to use the woodland as often as possible and photographs within the setting show it being enjoyed in all weathers by beaming children and staff.

Children have exceptional opportunities to develop an awareness of safety and of

risk assessing for themselves. Practical measures taken to minimise or remove risk are carefully weighed against the benefits of children making choices, taking responsibility and managing their own safety. Staff carefully monitor this to assess its effectiveness and are able to sight many examples of where not removing all hazards or risk has supported children's development and not posed any problems to the children. Examples of some of these included leaving nettles to grow in the garden, explaining to children that they sting; providing children with china tea sets in the home corner and explaining the care needed not to break them and the consequences of sharp edges if they do break. Staff report that children manage such things well and report no injuries to children as a result of allowing them contact with some elements of risk.

Children display a strong sense of belonging in the nursery and exhibit behaviours which indicate that they feel safe in the setting. They approach visitors confidently and show pride in their nursery. They can point out on displays which work is theirs or which parts they have contributed to and are keen to explain what is happening now and what will happen later, showing a good understanding of the routines and confidence in what to expect. Warm and caring friendships between children are evident and all children behave with kindness towards each other. The atmosphere is calm and gentle. Children are spoken to softly by staff and there is tenderness demonstrated in the interactions both between children and staff and children and their peers.

Children's personal and social skills are nurtured. They are encouraged to be respectful of each other views and beliefs. The setting teaches children about relationships and expected codes of behaviour through the use of bible stories and parables. They encourage children to share values which they refer to as the 3 'Ls': Loving one another; gentle Living and Learning together. Diversity is positively reflected within posters, stories, books and resources. Children's behaviour in this setting is calm, kind and they immerse themselves fully in exploring, investigating and questioning their environment.

Children develop skills which will support them in the future and help them to become valued members of the community. They are becoming confident speakers, with the social skills needed to engage effectively with others and get on well with their peers. They understand how to negotiate and understand what are the expected and acceptable codes of behaviour. Their skills in relation to information technology, communication language and literacy along with numeracy are at levels which suggest that they have a good basic grasp of that which is needed to build future academic success. Most importantly the children at Mr. Noah's Nursery develop a love of learning and are inquisitive, self-motivated and interested in everything around them.

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	1
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	1
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

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	2
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	1
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