

The Fledgelings Preschool

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	203782
Inspection date	24/05/2010
Inspector	Anne Daly
Setting address	Fledgelings Pre-School, Tile Kiln Church, Robin Way, Chelmsford, Essex, CM2 8AU
Telephone number	01245 269691
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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 Fledgelings Pre-school is managed by the Elders of the Tile Kiln Church in Chelmsford. It opened in 1965 and was registered in the name of the Elders in 1998. It operates from three rooms within the Church situated on the Tile Kiln Estate. A maximum of 38 children may attend the pre-school at any one time, which opens on five days a week during school term times. Session times are, Mondays to Fridays from 9.00am to 12.00pm and Mondays to Thursdays from 12.30pm to 3.00pm. All children are able to share an enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 78 children aged from two years to four years on roll, with children aged three and four years receiving funding for early education. This provision is registered by Ofsted on the Early Years Register and on both the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. Children come from the local community and surrounding areas and attend for a variety of sessions. The pre-school currently supports a small number of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and also children who have English as an additional language.

The pre-school employs 13 staff, of whom 11 hold appropriate early years qualifications, including one holding a Diploma in Primary Teaching. There are two staff currently working towards higher recognised early years qualifications. The setting receives support from the local authority.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children's welfare is enthusiastically promoted by a well qualified, caring and experienced staff team through providing a child orientated environment in which to play and learn. Staff have an accomplished understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage to enable them to support children's individual needs. Self evaluation systems are in place to ensure that staff identify priorities for development and action them to maintain continuous improvements to support children's progress. The majority of partnerships at all levels help to provide clear continuity of care for all children, including those with additional needs. Children's welfare is predominately being safeguarded by accurate records and effective policies and procedures.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- develop children's awareness of languages and writing systems other than English and of other communication systems, such as signing
- develop further the current system for liaising with other Early Years Foundation Stage providers to exchange information supporting children's learning and development

- ensure that the setting's water containers enable children to take a drink whenever required.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children are being successfully safeguarded through staff's knowledge of appropriate protection legislation. There are robust recruitment procedures to ensure that all staff are suitable to work in the pre-school. Relevant background checks are undertaken and all staff ensure that any unvetted person is never left alone with children. Children are protected from harm through effective risk assessments identifying potential dangers on the premises and outings, including clear recording of such risk assessments. Their safety is enhanced by a security camera monitoring the Church entrance and by all visitors being carefully screened and being asked to sign in and out of the visitors book. Staffing levels exceed the minimum requirements for undertaking management and domestic tasks to ensure that children's safety and welfare is paramount at all times.

The manager and her staff team are focused on the promotion of children's welfare and on helping them to make good progress in their learning and development. The pre-school is inclusive and employs a special educational needs coordinator, who has established good links with external agencies to ensure that each child with learning difficulties or disabilities receives the required support. Staff work as a team to involve parents, carers and others in each child's progress by exchanging information supporting children's learning and development. However, partnerships with other providers delivering the Early Years Foundation Stage are not fully developed to ensure progression in some children's learning. Staff promote children's developing awareness and understanding of people's differences by providing opportunities for them to explore and celebrate their own and other cultures and beliefs. Staff effectively involve children in the local and wider communities, for example, by raising money on Red Nose Day and by being involved in the local community's 'big tidy up'.

Well maintained and confidentially stored written records are promoting children's welfare in line with requirements. Staff seek further training regarding administering medication and have individual procedures for children who suffer allergic reactions. They have completed paediatric first aid training to enable them to care appropriately for children in the event of accidents or illnesses. Required ratios are well met and registers are maintained for children and staff to ensure that everyone can be safely accounted for at all times.

The majority of staff hold recognised early years qualifications, but all remain fully committed to further develop their knowledge by attending additional training to ensure further improvements to children's learning environment. The pre-school operates from a two storey building, but staff deployment effectively responds to the flow and movement of children between the two levels and outdoors. Confident children move around the premises with their key person, spending part of each session in varied environments supporting their learning and development. Effective deployment of resources in the different rooms enables children to see

and to choose from what is available.

The manager and her staff team have taken positive steps to improve the outcomes for children by appropriately addressing recommendations from the last inspection. Self evaluation identifies the setting's strengths and weaknesses to enable the manager and staff to support continuous improvements for the benefit of children. Since the last inspection, the outdoor play space has been enlarged, including the laying of a safety surface. Consequently, those in charge of the setting are able to demonstrate how they have made improvements to the provision to support children's achievements and safety.

Strong emphasis on partnership with parents and effective systems ensure that they are fully informed. They receive an informative pre-school prospectus and a welcome pack prior to their children being received into the setting. Staff consistently help parents and carers to support their children's learning, for example, by providing 'blue communication books' including children's weekly learning and targeted next steps. All children have a bag to take home books to look at and to read with their parents, while more able children take home letters to sound and simple flash cards of words. Parents are keen to express how well staff support their children's learning and development, including secure links with the local primary school assisting children's transition into full-time education.

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

Staff's good knowledge and understanding of the early learning goals enables them to plan and deliver interesting activities based on the six areas of learning. Confident, happy children thoroughly enjoy their time playing in an exciting safe and secure environment with staff and their peers. They are making good progress towards their early learning goals through staff's continuous routine approach to observations and assessments to enable them to inform the planning for individual children's next steps of learning.

The enabling environment provides children with wide ranging, worthwhile activities to support and help them to make sense of the world around them. They can confidently describe how newly hatched butterflies were caterpillars before turning into chrysalis and then a butterfly. Good quality interaction with staff and well organised routines help children to become secure and confident when moving around the setting. Everyday activities and clear boundaries enable them to feel safe, for example, by knowing that only adults must open the gate at the top of the stairs. When baking fairy cakes, children confidently talk about the dangers of the hot oven and how adults must wear gloves before placing the tin in the oven.

Children engage in a varied range of indoor and outdoor activities to help their understanding of the importance of keeping healthy and the activities contributing to good health. Jugs of fresh drinking water are available in each room, although, the positioning of the jugs does not encourage children to independently pour their own drinks to avoid dehydration.

Children are able to take the initiative when working well independently as well as co-operating with each other. They behave well, demonstrating kindness towards others, taking turns and sharing resources. Throughout their time in the pre-school, many worthwhile mathematical activities enable them to explore numbers and shapes. They are developing their communication and literacy skills by talking about their ideas, joining in role play activities, sharing books and enjoying mark making. Children thoroughly enjoy linking language with physical movements in actions, songs and rhymes, although, systems are not fully in place to develop their awareness of languages and writing systems other than English and of other communication systems, such as, signing, to help them to become aware of different children's home backgrounds.

There is ample space for groups of children to work together in the large upstairs room, while the quiet downstairs Rainbow Room enables them to be active learners and to have individual or small group activities. They are given ample time and encouragement to develop their language, literacy, writing skills and mathematical concepts, while the outdoor area enables them to undertake activities in different ways and on different scales than when indoors.

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	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	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
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The provider confirms that the requirements of the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are:	Met
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