

# The Caterpillar Club

Inspection report for early years provision

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**Unique reference number** 144322  
**Inspection date** 20/09/2010  
**Inspector** Jennifer Cutler

**Setting address** Ferndown First School, Church Road, Ferndown, Dorset,  
BH22 9ET

**Telephone number** 01202 893272

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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

The Caterpillar Club Pre-School opened in January 1997. It is registered on the Early Years Register. The pre-school operates from a classroom in the grounds of Ferndown First School and has a large enclosed outdoor area. The pre-school serves families from the local area. There are currently 41 children on roll. This is expected to increase in January 2011. There are presently 27 funded three and four-year-olds. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The pre-school supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and children for whom English is an additional language. The pre-school opens each weekday from 8.45am to 11.45am Monday to Friday and 12.15pm to 3.15pm on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday. There are eight part-time staff who work directly with the children. Seven staff hold an appropriate early-years qualification and one member of staff is working towards NVQ Level 2. The pre-school also employs an administrator and a cleaner. It receives support from an advisory teacher from the local authority.

## The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

The quality of the provision at the Caterpillar Pre-School is good. The manager organises her staff well and children are welcomed into a safe and caring environment where there are lots of activities to engage their interests. The links with parents and carers are very successful and children progress well because they feel secure. Parents and carers receive plenty of information about how the pre-school runs and how their children are getting on. They are actively involved in what their children are learning. The manager has a good understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage. Self-evaluation is in the early stages of development; although the manager knows what the setting needs to do next. There is good capacity to improve .

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

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

- work on the self-evaluation so that it becomes a useful tool for further development of the pre-school
- develop the curriculum and subsequent activities so that they are linked to obvious themes and calendar events which make children's knowledge and understanding meaningful
- develop the staff's knowledge, understanding and skills to ensure that every opportunity is taken to seize upon the children's suggestions and enthusiasm for learning and role play
- develop alternative ways of organising snack time so that children can avoid the disappointment of having to wait too long or having to be reminded to join the group.

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

The safety of the children is obviously a high priority for the staff and this is reflected in the routine health and safety checks and vigilant safeguarding procedures. Policies and procedures are securely in place and parents and carers have easy access to all documentation. Risk assessments are carried out and there are routine and regular checks of the classroom, the equipment and the outside area. Procedures comply with current legislation. Staff and children work in a safe and secure environment. Resources are good, clean, well organised and inviting for the children. All these factors have a good effect upon children's learning and the progress they make.

Children make good progress towards the early learning goals because the manager has a good understanding of how young children learn. She leads her staff well. All adults have appropriate and relevant qualifications and work to improve their skills by following further training courses. There has been good progress on the recommendations from the last report. The pre-school is well supported by an experienced and knowledgeable chair of committee.

The pre-school encourages children to be confident and independent, share equipment, and work and play together well. There is a great emphasis on outdoor play which enables the children to be healthy and become involved in plenty of active situations. Children with special educational needs are identified early and the manager makes referrals, liaises with parents and carers, and involves outside agencies when appropriate. This enhances children's learning and development.

The manager and staff hold regular staff meetings to discuss evaluation strategies. Everyone is involved and parents' and carers' opinions are considered through such means as questionnaires. However, evaluation work is in the early stages and is not completed fully in a way that helps the pre-school to make clear plans for the future.

Links with parents and carers are good. Information is on display outside the classroom for easy access. As well as through regular newsletters, information about the curriculum and news of fundraising events. Parents and carers are helped to find information about other agencies which might help them. They are encouraged to be actively involved in what their children learn and to send in objects to illustrate, for example the 'letter of the week', such as a toy ambulance or an apple when the children are learning the sound of the letter 'a'. The manager is always available to chat to parents and carers.

Parents and carers, and grandparents are very positive about the pre-school and how it helps and responds to the needs of the individual child. Children's care is further enhanced as the pre-school is well supported by the local authority.

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

Children in the pre-school make good progress in all areas of learning. They are safe and secure, and willing learners because they can choose freely from a variety of activities on offer to them. For example, at the beginning of the sessions, they come into the classroom and immediately become involved in working on the computer and learn about fire safety. The children are very articulate and know what dangers are posed by leaving a pan of boiling water on the cooker and they understand why the teddy must not be left by the open fire. During circle time, they show that they know what to do if there is a fire practice in the school. Children learn about what foods they need to eat to keep healthy and are very excited when they know that cheese and apple are on the menu for snack time. 'I love cheese and apple!' was one child's happy and excited response. They need reminding but know that they should wash their hands before eating. They enjoy the social occasion of snack time, help themselves to chopped apple and pour out their milk independently. However, some children are disappointed that there are not enough places set at snack time and they need to wait. Others need to be reminded to join in.

Children are well behaved and learn to sit quietly whilst others are talking or showing the articles they have brought to illustrate the letter and sound of the week. They learn that 'ambulance' and 'apple' begin with the 'a' sound and generally show that they are becoming aware of letters of the alphabet and the sounds that they make. Children learn about the times of the day and say the days of the week. They say 'good morning' to all the adults and without prompting, add 'bonjour'. They count how many children are present and successfully try to copy the adult's example and write the number '18' on the display board. As a result, children are developing good skills for the future.

Children have lots of opportunities to play outside in the well-equipped and stimulating outside area. They move freely indoors and outdoors throughout the day. Resources are well maintained and a variety of surfaces allow children to sit comfortably and play with construction toys, or ride around on bikes and trolleys on a tarmaced area. An inviting garden area lets children sit quietly and read books if they want to. Staff supervise the outside activities well, but their interaction with the children is not always proactive enough. This means that staff do not always seize upon the ideas initiated by children. For example, creating a fire station and acting out fire fighting or following a child's lead that 'Fireman Sam is going on an adventure'. Consequently, there are some lost opportunities to help children make even better progress.

Planning is securely based on the areas of learning, and good assessments of children's achievements allow staff to plan for the next steps. However, activities planned are not always closely connected to obvious and familiar themes or calendar events which make learning meaningful and link curriculum themes to children's life experiences. Children make a positive contribution to their community by fund raising for their own club and by raising funds for others. Their

good progress and enjoyment at pre-school stand them in good stead for transition to the next stage of their education.

## 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>The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage</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	3
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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