

Ickle Pickles Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspector

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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

Ickle Pickles Nursery opened in 2006 and operates from four rooms in a purpose-built building. It is situated in the village of Iwade, near Sittingbourne. The nursery is open each weekday from 7.15am to 6.30pm for 51 weeks of the year. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area. Overnight care is not provided.

The group is registered to provide care for 50 children under eight years and all of these may be in the early years age group, 18 of these may be under two years. This provision is registered on the Early Years Register and on both the voluntary and compulsory parts of the Childcare Register. There are currently 94 children in the early years age group on roll. Children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are welcomed, as are children who speak English as an additional language. Twenty-three staff work with the children and 19 of these have early years qualifications.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

The uniqueness of each child is recognised by staff who provide good support for individuals, ensuring that all children make progress in their learning and development. Children feel safe because there are good systems in place to safeguard their welfare and to value their contributions. They benefit from easy access to a wide range of interesting and very appropriate resources and plans which take account of their interests. Children's welfare is successfully promoted through well understood procedures and proactive systems for evaluation. Children's good progress is underpinned by excellent systems to involve and communicate with parents.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- provide dual language books to raise awareness of different scripts and to match the languages spoken by families at the setting
- ensure the risk assessment covers everything with which a child may come in contact such as, the sleep mats with exposed foam
- ensure there is sufficient storage so that specialist provision, such as the disabled toilet, is available for use if required.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Staff have a good understanding of safeguarding as they regularly attend training and have established clear procedures for dealing with allegations. The staff are aware of how and when to record information. This provides good safeguards for the welfare of children. The induction system for new staff ensures staff are aware of safe practice. There is clear information provided for staff and parents on how to raise complaints or concerns and staff are well informed on how to respond to and record these. The staff carry out daily checks and there is a record of risk assessments and systems in place to minimise identified hazards successfully. However, the damaged sleep mats have not been added to the risk assessments although staff minimise the hazard by ensuring that if these are used they are covered by sheets and sleeping children are well supervised. More low beds are currently being purchased to eliminate this risk.

Play resources are age-appropriate and in good condition, allowing children to experience play and learning which is adapted to suit their ages and stages of development. There is a good range of resources catering for the interests and needs of the children who attend. For instance, there are plenty of low chairs and double and triple buggies to take babies out. Play resources are easily accessible to children, cleaned and checked regularly to ensure they are in good condition and safe to use. There are only a few resources showing different written languages although staff are enthusiastically planning to enrich and support children's learning by developing more activities reflecting diversity. Children can easily access a variety of play and learning which is well supported by staff who ensure their individual needs are met.

The manager and staff have completed a self-evaluation and identified improvements they intend to make, for example, to the garden area to encourage children's exploration of natural environments. Changes made to all the varied play areas are monitored so that adjustments can be made to build upon the quality of the provision. Good awareness of the needs of children and a shared vision for the development of the setting enables all staff to work together as a team. Recent staff changes and their participation in a variety of training has invigorated practice and enthusiasm to improve provision is evident in the changes made so far. Several improvements have been identified that will effectively target the experiences of children. For instance, the plans for the outdoor play area and the baby room will promote children's independence and choice further.

A good two-way flow of information ensures staff regularly make parents aware of children's achievements and discuss any concerns they may have. Information is shared with parents when children first begin at the nursery, when their individual requirements and development are securely noted, to enable staff to effectively support and include all children. Parents benefit from frequent opportunities to access written and verbal information about their children's progress and achievements. The staff have very positive relationships with parents which

enables them to work together to meet the needs of individual children. Parental contributions are valued, for example, there is competition to encourage parental contributions to provide for heuristic play at present. There are systems to encourage children and parents to contribute information and expertise and this supports children's enthusiasm for their play and learning. For example, children are encouraged to share information and it is clear their contributions and ideas are listened to and valued as staff effectively support and include them. There are good opportunities for children to visit the neighbouring school which enables smooth transitions for children who are moving on.

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

Children enjoy a varied and interesting range of play activities to support their progress towards the early learning goals. There is a clear and well understood system for making frequent records of children's achievements and experiences. Occasionally, a record has missing dates although this is a recent and minor issue due to the camera not functioning. The assessments are used to plan for the next steps in children's learning and are used flexibly to take account of children's responses and interests. The staff offer good opportunities for children to progress by identifying activities that can be used to plan for individual progress and incorporating these into plans. Key staff know their key children well and identify their learning styles and welfare needs with great confidence.

Staff successfully support children's independence, and promote opportunities for babies and children to make their own choices. For instance, babies can decide to crawl onto their own mattresses, or indicate they want to use these to have a sleep when they choose. Older children have independent access to the toilets after informing staff they need to visit these.

Staff ensure children are able to fully participate and enjoy their play by ensuring activities are developmentally appropriate and accessible to all children and babies. Children play happily in this safe environment as they feel secure and can enjoy opportunities to visit siblings in other rooms; this promotes their confidence and self-esteem. There are good measures in place to ensure children are kept safe as the premises and routines provide a very suitable environment for children. However, the disabled toilet is currently used as a store which precludes its proper use for those who may visit and have disabilities.

Children enjoy their time at the setting as staff recognise their skills and praise their achievements, displaying some of their work and encouraging their contributions. Children's relationships with each other reflect the good role models of the staff who value the children and treat them with respect. Children's behaviour is good as they are sensitively reminded to be kind and gentle by staff if the need arises.

Children develop an awareness of their own health by enjoying opportunities to

discuss the foods they eat and they learn the benefits of a healthy diet. Their dietary needs and preferences are noted and used by staff preparing and serving food to ensure their health and safety. Staff use a system of colour coded plates and sign for the meals the chef has cooked so that everyone is aware of special dietary needs when they deliver meals to the children. The nursery is kept clean, and hygienic practices are used by staff who change nappies and clean resources regularly. In the pre-school the carpet is scheduled for replacement.

Babies and children benefit from frequent opportunities to experience the outdoor environment, including local outings, as well as using the outdoor play area. The outside play area is an aspect of provision which is going to be developed to further children's learning as well as their physical development. Children use a range of apparatus such as bikes, balancing equipment and balls that encourage vigorous physical activity. Most babies and children experience the local environment by going out in buggies for trips with staff. Children learn how to use knives and scissors, through practical activities which enable them to think through safety issues. For example, staff encourage children to draw pictures of how to do this safely and what they must not do so that this activity supports discussion and the displayed pictures act as reminders.

Children enjoy using the resources for imaginative role play, including dressing up clothes and hats which enable them to pretend they are firemen or policewomen. Staff extend children's understanding by providing cooking activities, encouraging children to weigh and measure ingredients. Children enjoy sharing and using books which build upon their understanding of reading and they develop their vocabulary as well as other skills when staff read to them. Staff use very appropriate methods for supporting the development of writing skills by enabling children to experience a variety of practical reading and writing. For example, children are encouraged to name their own work and to locate their own work tray labelled with their name to place this in.

Children have recorded their experiences in a variety of ways and there are very popular laminated books with photographs of staff as well as the babies which babies and children like to refer to and share with staff. The older children freely select musical instruments and enjoy dancing to the rhythms they make while observing themselves in the mirror. Children enjoy exploring a variety of natural objects and investigating the newly established science and nature resources such as mirror balls. The older children learn how to use the computer and the cassette player which promotes their independence and confidence.

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

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	1
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	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	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

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