

West St Leonard's Early Years Centre

Inspection report for early years provision

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| Unique reference number | 511231 |
| Inspection date | 08/11/2010 |
| Inspector | Julie Sackett |
| Setting address | West St. Leonards CP School, Harley Shute Road, St. Leonards-on-Sea, East Sussex, TN38 8BX |
| Telephone number | 01424 465669 |
| Email | |
| 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

West St Leonard's Early Years Centre is a sessional group that is run by a management committee and has charitable status. It is set within West St Leonards County Primary School and has been operating since 1998. It operates from a self contained part of the school building next to a Reception class. The group has two play rooms, a toilet area, and an office. Children have access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area. A maximum of 24 children may attend at any one time. The group opens five days a week during school term times. Monday, Wednesday, and Friday: 9.00am to 12.00pm, 12.00pm to 3.00pm or 9.00am to 3.00pm, Tuesday and Thursday: 8.45am to 11.45am or 12.45pm to 3.45pm. There are currently 52 children from two to under five years registered and 20 on roll. Of these 49 children receive funding for nursery education. The centre is on the Early Years register. Children come from a wide catchment area. The setting currently supports a number of children with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and also supports a number of children who speak English as an additional language. The setting employs eight members of staff, seven of whom have National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) at level 3, whilst the manager has NVQ at level 4 and is working towards a Foundation Degree.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is outstanding.

Overall the quality of the provision is outstanding. Strong relationships and an extremely positive ethos ensure that children are happy, secure and excited about learning. Safeguarding is given the highest priority and the centre is strongly inclusive so that children quickly settle and grow in confidence. Capacity to improve is excellent because the manager and her staff work extremely well together as a team to build on existing strengths.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To further improve the high quality early years provision the registered person should consider:

- to build on existing strong links with the infant school to deepen staff understanding of children's development and progression so that they can even more accurately meet their learning needs.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Safeguarding is given the highest priority at the centre so that children are very secure and this contributes strongly to their rapid growth in confidence. Policies and procedures are in place and regularly updated and very effectively put into practice. These policies are readily available and shared with parents and carers.

Robust suitability procedures are followed to ensure that staff are appropriately qualified and suitable to work with children. Child protection procedures are clear and up-to-date and risk assessments are thorough. The manager and her team work really well together to maintain the highest of standards and to drive improvement. There are successful procedures in place to evaluate the quality of the provision and to identify areas for future improvement. The manager has a clear vision with a highly reflective approach to current practice so that she and her team are constantly looking at how they can develop the setting. At staff meetings, everyone is encouraged to contribute their thoughts, ideas and suggestions to help develop plans for improvement. The setting has a very positive attitude to contributions made by parents and carers so that their views are also incorporated. The centre gives a high priority to involving the children in choices and decisions so that they have excellent opportunities to share their views and be involved. Every member of staff wants the children to be happy, confident, safe and making progress in their development.

This is an extremely inclusive setting where all children and adults are fully respected. They enjoy each other's company, laugh together and work hard. Adults' positive attitudes to children's differences mean that every child's needs are met, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. The manager has a system of planning that arises from knowing the needs and interests of the children and ensures that all areas of the Early Years Curriculum are included. The key worker system works very well and observations are used to great effect in planning the next steps in children's learning and development. 'Learning Journeys' are used to very good effect in building a picture of children's learning and progress and are regularly shared with parents and carers. Relatively recent initiatives to offer parents and carers the opportunity to contribute to this process already show signs of success in helping them to play an active part in supporting the children's development.

The centre has outstanding links with parents and carers whose confidence in the setting and appreciation for the staff's commitment is evident, for example, in the many positive written comments received from parents and carers. There is an outstanding relationship with other providers, particularly the feeder primary school that many of the children will attend. Children visit the school daily, in addition to 'special events' such as the Christmas performance. This means the children become familiar and confident with school staff as well as the building. All this will help children to have an easy transition into their next phase of education. The centre has identified the development of these existing strong links to deepen staff understanding of children's development and progression so that they can even more accurately meet their learning needs.

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

Children's rapid growth in self-esteem and confidence is due in part to the strength of the warm and caring relationships between adults and children. The setting is most welcoming and this, coupled with the skilful way that adults interact with the children, means that all the children settle quickly. Children's awareness of how to

lead a healthy lifestyle is supported extremely well. They enjoy using the fruit bar during the morning and are helped to play an active role in washing and chopping the fruit. This is very successful in developing children's understanding of risks and how to keep safe. The children sit at tables to eat their lunch. They demonstrate excellent table manners because adults provide positive role models, initiate conversations and reinforce the children's exemplary behaviour through praise. This helps children to develop the necessary personal and social skills to successfully support their future economic well-being.

Children thoroughly enjoy both the adult-led activities and those they choose for themselves. Adult interaction is sensitive and positive and is highly successful in encouraging children to participate in conversations. For example, during 'circle time' an adult asked the children what they should do with the box of objects. One child responded 'pass it around and around and give it to your friend', illustrating the strong progress made in the development of speaking and listening skills and socialising skills, in addition to the highly caring relationships fostered by adults.

Curriculum planning is strong with interesting and stimulating activities planned to meet the needs and interests of all groups of children and reflecting all six areas of learning. The curriculum is enlivened by a wide range of regular trips and outings, such as 'wellie walks' in the woods and trips to the beach. These successfully support the outstanding progress made by the children, particularly in speaking, listening and literacy skills. The centre places a high priority on developing children's awareness of different backgrounds and beliefs, for example, in the celebration of Christmas and in a range of stimulating activities related to Divali and Eid. As a result, it is very successful in helping children to develop respect and understanding. Children have access to a large, carefully supervised and well-organised outdoor area where activities such as sand and water play support the development of social and physical skills very well. Children demonstrate excellent independence skills and know how to use the activities safely and responsibly. Assessments of the children by their key persons are based on regular observations. 'Learning Journeys' are regularly used by key persons to monitor children's progress with clear identification of the next steps to maintain the pace of learning. These focus on children's achievements and demonstrate the children's excellent progress. Parents and carers are regarded as valued partners in their children's learning and their confidence in the nursery is reflected in the many positive comments included in the questionnaire sent out by the nursery.

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

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| How well does the setting meet the needs of the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage? | 1 |
| The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement | 1 |

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

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| The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage | 1 |
| 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 | 1 |
| The effectiveness of safeguarding | 1 |
| The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement | 1 |
| The effectiveness of partnerships | 1 |
| The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers | 1 |

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

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| The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage | 1 |
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Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

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| Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage | 1 |
| 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 | 1 |
| The extent to which children make a positive contribution | 1 |
| The extent to which children develop skills for the future | 1 |

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