

Pennies at Newnham Court

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspector

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Setting address

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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

Pennies at Newnham Court is one of two nurseries owned and operated by the same private provider. It is based in Weaving, near Maidstone and opened in 2005. It comprises a day nursery and out of school provision consisting of a before and after school club and holiday play scheme. The nursery operates from a two storey, purpose built premises with seven group rooms, most of which can be opened out to allow children of similar ages to mix. There is also a room set aside for use by the children who attend the out of school provision. All children have access to fully enclosed outdoor play areas. The nursery and out of school provision are open each week day from 7.30am to 6.30pm all year round.

The nursery is registered on the Early Years Register and both the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. A maximum of 140 children, under eight years, may attend the nursery at any one time. There are currently 239 children aged from three months to under eight years on roll; of these, 208 are in the early years age group, including 80 who are under two years.

The setting is able to support children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language. In addition to the two joint heads of nursery, there are 39 staff who work with the children; of whom 37 hold recognised childcare qualifications. The remaining two staff are working towards a qualification. The permanent staff team is supported by nine bank staff. There are also a number of office and catering staff based at the nursery, all of whom are fully vetted.

The nursery receives support from the local authority.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children play and learn in well organised, inviting and completely child-centred environment. An extremely high focus is placed on promoting children's safety and well-being and, as a result, their care needs are very well met and they are developing a good level of independence. Excellent arrangements are in place to work in partnership with parents, carers and other professionals and rigorous self-evaluation enables staff to target improvements specifically to reflect the needs of the children and their families. There are some minor restrictions to the efficiency of the systems in place to support assessment and planning. However, overall the dynamic, efficient and very caring staff team support children to make good progress in all areas of their development.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- review the systems in place to support staff to assess and monitor children to more clearly show their rate of progress to ensure that sufficient challenge is offered across all areas of learning
- investigate ways in which to identify and address gaps in children's learning and developmental achievement across the nursery.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children are protected by the thoughtful and highly effective arrangements in place to promote their safety. Robust recruitment procedures ensure that they are cared for by adults whose backgrounds and suitability have been rigorously checked. Risk assessments are undertaken to identify potential hazards and these are very reflective of the individual needs of the children attending. One member of staff takes lead responsibility for child protection and has attended training to support her in this role. Clear and detailed written policies outline the process to be followed in case of any concerns about the children or to respond to any allegations against staff. The careful organisation of the environment and the relaxed but vigilant supervision by staff ensures that children are able to play safely while experiencing a very good level of independence.

The management team and staff work extremely effectively together and share a clear aim to provide the best possible service to children and their families. They are generally extremely successful in this ambition, creating a wonderfully inviting and positive environment and supporting children to make good progress in all areas. Staff use sensitive observations of the children to plan activities which are aimed at promoting their development and which they are confident they will enjoy. Improvements have recently been made to the systems for assessment and planning but have yet to be extended to clearly indicate the rate at which each child is progressing. Staff therefore lack support in monitoring that children are being equally well challenged across all areas of learning and development. However, this is largely compensated for by the high quality of adult input and the impressive range of activities on offer. Similarly, while the managers meet regularly with the staff in each room to discuss children's progress there is no system to provide an overview of the nursery as a whole and specifically of different groups of children. This does not support staff to identify and close gaps in children's achievements. However, this has been recognised as an area for improvement and the heads of nursery are liaising with the local authority to investigate a solution.

A strong commitment to self-evaluation and ongoing staff training ensures that practices are constantly adapting to reflect current requirements. The nursery works very effectively with a range of professionals involved in the lives of the children attending, including health professionals and other early years providers. Children also benefit from the outstanding arrangements in place to create links between the nursery and their homes. Parents are extremely well informed about the day to day life of the nursery and of their child's individual progress. They

receive information through the website, notice boards, letters and discussions with staff. Their views are actively sought, for example through questionnaires, and there is also a parents' forum. Parents and carers receive a very warm welcome when they arrive to deliver or collect their child and are very supportive of the activities organised, for example charity fundraising events.

Children have access to a fantastic range of toys and resources all of which are well maintained and attractively presented. Babies and toddlers in particular are provided with a good mix of modern toys and more traditional toys made of natural materials. Each group room provides a safe, comfortable haven for the children based there and is organised to meet their needs. As a result, each child in the very large nursery receives the security and individual attention of a much smaller setting.

Strong focus is placed on providing an inclusive environment. The entire premises is accessible to wheelchair users and one member of staff specialises in coordinating the care of children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Effective arrangements are in place to work with children and families for whom English is an additional language. The staff use basic sign language as well as learning some key words in the child's home language. Resources and activities are provided to encourage children to develop an understanding and respect for diversity.

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

Children have great fun in the nursery and demonstrate a good sense of security as they confidently select the activities they want to take part in and approach staff for attention and support. Babies enjoy the cuddles and warm smiles they receive from familiar adults and older children chat happily with their friends and with the staff. Children are exceptionally well behaved and move safely and sensibly around the nursery and clearly understand the boundaries and routines. They are developing very good social skills and are particularly well supported to learn about the importance of making a positive contribution to society. They take part in activities to raise money for a number of local charities including making up boxes of toys for disadvantaged children, dressing up for Comic Relief and Children in Need and sponsored 'toddle waddles'.

Children take part in a very broad and imaginative range of activities aimed at promoting all areas of their development. The outdoor area is particularly inspiring, enabling children to develop their physical skills while benefitting from the fresh air. They also enjoy creative activities such as role play games or producing expressive and individual artwork. Activities such as looking at the seasons help to extend children's knowledge and understanding of the world. All children have access to an extremely large selection of toys to develop their problem solving and reasoning skills. The youngest children investigate cause and effect toys and explore a range of different materials and textures. Older children enjoy playing with a variety of construction toys and concentrate well as they build towers or

investigate shapes and colours. All children enjoy listening to stories read by staff and are given good encouragement to develop their literacy and numeracy skills. Older children have access to computers to help to prepare them for their transition to schools.

Children learn about the importance of personal hygiene and healthy living. They enjoy nutritious snacks and meals, all prepared on the premises and planned to reflect their individual dietary requirements. Drinks are also constantly available. Hygiene standards within the nursery are extremely high and children routinely wash their hands after using the toilet and before sitting down to eat. They are also developing good self-care and toileting skills.

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	2
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	1
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding	1
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	1
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	1
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