

# Maidstone Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

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**Unique reference number** EY302109  
**Inspection date** 09/02/2011  
**Inspector** Susan Scott

**Setting address** Oldborough Manor Community School, Boughton Lane,  
Maidstone, Kent, ME15 9QF  
**Telephone number** 01622747434  
**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*.

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

Maidstone Day Nursery is situated on the grounds of the New Line Learning Academy, it is one of over a hundred child care facilities run by Asquith Court Nurseries Ltd. It originally opened in 1997, taken over by the current owners in 2004. The nursery operates from several rooms in two purpose built buildings. It is situated on the site of a large secondary school on the outskirts of Maidstone, Kent. A maximum of 90 children may attend the nursery at any one time. The nursery is open each weekday from 07:30 to 18:30 for 51 weeks of the year. All children have access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

The nursery is registered on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary part of the Childcare Register. They are registered to care for 95 children under eight years, all of these may be in the early years age range and 32 of these may be under two years at any one time. There are currently 125 children aged from three months to under five years on roll. Of these, 43 children receive funding for nursery education. The nursery currently supports a number of children with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and children who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery employs 18 staff. Sixteen staff hold current Early years qualifications of level 2 and above and two staff are working towards a recognised child care qualification.

## The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children feel safe because there are very good systems in place to safeguard their welfare and to ensure they feel secure and happy in the nursery. Children experience very good opportunities to experience a variety of activities and to learn English in an environment which is sensitive to their individual needs. Staff now complete regular observations and assessments which they use to plan for children's interests and preferences, enabling them to make good progress in their development. Children benefit from regular, interesting outdoor activities and trips on the campus. Staff promote children's welfare through very good safeguards and attention to promoting their health. Effective evaluation enables procedures to be regularly reviewed and checked. Children's experiences are very positive and these are supported through excellent partnerships with parents and carers.

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

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

- use systematic observations and assessments of children's achievements,

interests and learning styles in all areas of learning to plan challenging, relevant and motivating play experiences for each child indoors and out, across all areas of learning and development

- provide dual language books to raise awareness of different scripts and to match the languages spoken by families at the setting.

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

Staff have a very good awareness of safeguarding issues and get to know the children that they care for very well. This helps them recognise any changes in behaviour and take action to protect them. Staff use and provide clear and accessible procedures which support parental confidence in the provision. Children are safeguarded by a good range of safety measures, vigilant staff, risk assessments and procedures. These are regularly reviewed and any necessary action taken to ensure children are safe and secure. For example, staff recognise signs of children being unwell and take action to ensure they are safeguarded by informing parents and administering medication if required. There has been a minor change to the address since the last inspection which is not reflected in the registration certificate on display and the manager is taking action to address this. Staff attend a wide range of training which enables them to gather and use a variety of information and expertise so that they can support children and their families. There is a varied and attractive range of good quality resources and equipment available for children and babies. The environment is well maintained, light and spacious, offering children varied play experiences inside and outside.

The staff and parents are able to contribute to the self-evaluation through systems that note and use the feedback from children and parents to identify improvements they can make. Changes are monitored so that adjustments can be made to the quality of the provision. Staff have taken positive action to address any issues raised by parents and users of the nursery through the use of annual questionnaires and regular feedback. For example, there have been workshops organised to offer parents and carers opportunities to meet new staff and discuss the methods used for teaching children. Staff use the knowledge and support they gain to bring about improvements. For example, advice from specialist teachers and therapists are incorporated into the plans to support children's development. This means that children's individual needs and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities are fully included in the activities. Children with English as an additional language are welcomed into the setting and are able to access a variety of resources reflecting different cultures, languages and needs which supports the welcome they receive. Staff promote children's experiences of varied lifestyles by providing resources that reflect different cultures but there are limited resources reflecting the current linguistic diversity of children attending.

Parents confirm that children benefit from the close links with the nursery and home visits enhance the settling-in and planning for individual children. The partnership between parents and the nursery is excellent. The staff ensure that parents and carers are well informed through regular newsletters, informative notice boards and contact books, for example. Parents and carers are welcomed

warmly into the setting and are encouraged to participate in nursery life through opportunities to stay and settle children for as long as they are needed. Each child has a learning journey book which both staff and parents contribute to, providing information about children's progress. These are now completed on a weekly basis and enable parents to access information about their children's progress. Parents and carers are offered regular opportunities to discuss their child's progress and to give feedback to the nursery. Many photographs and displays show the children at play and are enjoyed by parents, carers and the children.

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

There is a system for recording what children are interested in and how they achieve. The system lapsed for a short time and there is currently a focus on ensuring observational assessments are used to prioritise and plan for the next steps in children's learning. All records are being referenced to the Practice Guidance for the Early Years Foundation Stage and staff are tracking children's learning across all six areas of the curriculum again. Key persons use their observational assessments in children's learning records to plan their next steps and enable their progress. Children are learning about size and quantity by exploring play with different sized tubs and will explore pasta, mirrors and water, according to the displayed plans.

Parents contribute information about their children and this unique knowledge is incorporated into plans. For instance, children who are feeling insecure when they first attend are able to sit close to the door, or keep their coats on and staff encourage them to build their confidence through gradual and skilful integration into the routines.

The staff offer good opportunities for children to progress by discussing all the activities and ideas that children select for their own play. Staff make it clear that children's contributions and ideas are listened to and valued. This promotes their confidence to select resources for themselves and to share these. They assist staff in tidying up and gradually learn to take responsibilities. For instance, when one toddler drops a dummy, another picks it up and offers it back. Children are encouraged to learn how to keep themselves safe, through discussions about their safety, especially when they go outside. For example, staff encourage children to discuss how and why they should behave when walking around the school site and going to visit the farm.

Children benefit from excellent procedures to protect their health at all times, independently using the toilets and washing their hands. Staff take very good measures to protect children's health if they become unwell or have an accident at the nursery. Children benefit from safe food preparation and learn about exercise and food to support their understanding of healthy lifestyles. Older children are able to describe how their bodies respond to exercise and relaxation, showing a very good understanding. Children are encouraged to become aware of their personal needs, and can help themselves to, or pour their own drinks. They all enjoy a variety of regular physical play, including using apparatus to climb and

develop their coordination. They regularly access outside areas, including the large garden where they propel themselves using cars and bikes. Younger children and babies enjoy vigorous play inside as well, using the play tunnel and throwing and chasing sponge balls.

Children are able to make choices about their play, using a selection of attractive and varied toys. This enhances their independence and they become confident in organising their own play and learning. For example, several of the pre-school children like to name their own work. The organisation of the sessions is good overall, with a varied balance of individual choices, small and whole group activities. Children also enjoy frequent and regular opportunities for active or quiet play and learning and staff read stories, sing songs and encourage children to express their ideas.

Children settle quickly and happily when they first attend. They enjoy the self-chosen activities and this promotes their independence. All children have opportunities to enjoy fresh air and outdoor play in their own age groups. They also enjoy a range of outdoor and indoor apparatus such as, steps to climb and slides to use which develop their co-ordination and confidence. The plans also ensure there are regular opportunities for all children to build upon their fine motor skills, using construction, painting, and manipulating malleable materials. For example, children in the nursery room enjoy using rollers to squash, spread and make patterns on dough.

Play resources are age-appropriate and attractive, encouraging children to experience play and learning which is adapted to suit their ages and stages of development. There is an interesting range of resources that meets the needs of every child and caters for the interests of the children who attend. For instance, there is a variety of dressing up clothes and dolls which children like to use for imaginative role play. Staff are aware of children's preferred types of play and children with additional needs are well-supported and their achievements recognised. This effectively boosts their self esteem and encourages further development. Staff make good suggestions to extend children's understanding of shape and colour by asking children questions about the craft activities they are involved in.

All children enjoy sharing books and having stories read to them by adults who support their developing literacy skills by discussing the pictures and events depicted in the books. A good emphasis is placed upon developing the early communication skills of babies; for example, offering new vocabulary to them and building on their understanding of language. Babies and toddlers enjoy experimenting with sounds they can make using various toys. Staff promote children's progress in their speaking and listening skills which results in older children who are confident writers; this supports a smooth transition to school.

Children enjoy taking home toys such as, a holiday bear who is invited to share the children's experiences at home or when going away. Parents are then encouraged to record what they have been doing and provide photographs which are collected in an album which the children can take time to explore and discuss with their friends. Children go on walks around the grounds and visit the farm, learning

about the pigs, goats and sheep, and they enjoy collecting a variety of natural items to use. They have used the leaves collected recently to make collages which encourages them to explore and develop their observational skills. Children register themselves by selecting their name labels which they stick on a board to mark their attendance. This practice, along with their peg photos gives them a strong sense of belonging and community.



## 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	1
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	2
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

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

<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	1
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	1
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