

# Sandcastles

Inspection report for early years provision

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**Unique reference number**

106024

**Inspection date**

10/02/2011

**Inspector**

Julie Neal

**Setting address**

Castle Primary School, Barrington Street, Tiverton, Devon,  
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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**

Sandcastles in Tiverton, Devon registered in 1992. The setting moved into new premises in January 2010, still on the Castle School site. There is a room available for children under three years which can be split to accommodate babies, and a main playroom for children over three years. There is also a kitchen, staff room and reception/office area with entrance hall and toilet facilities. Children have access to secure outdoor play areas. The setting may provide care for a maximum 46 children under eight years at any one time, all of whom may be in the early years age range. There are currently 88 children on roll in the early years age group, attending at different times. The setting also provides care for children aged over five years to 11 years of age. This provision is registered on the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. The setting provides funded early years education for three- and four-year olds. The setting is open from 8am to 6pm, Monday to Friday, all year. The setting offers before and after school care from 8am to 9am and from 3.30pm to 6pm for children attending Castle School. A play scheme operates during school holidays, which is open to all children in the community. There are 16 members of staff working with children, 15 of whom hold relevant early years qualifications.

## **The overall effectiveness of the early years provision**

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children's individual needs are met well overall. They benefit from an inclusive environment where staff generally work closely with parents to ensure children's individual requirements are recognised and supported. Extremely good systems of planning, and of monitoring individual development, result in children of all ages making excellent progress in each area of learning. Self-evaluation within the setting is effective and results in well-targeted action plans that promote overall good quality outcomes for children.

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

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

- improve children's understanding of how to keep themselves safe by practising regularly the emergency evacuation procedure
- review how examples of languages other than English are used within the setting, so that these reflect the home languages of children.

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

Good leadership and management results in an enthusiastic and committed staff team. Staff have a good understanding of the requirements of the Early Years

Foundation Stage. The setting has very good experience of working with safeguarding agencies to protect children whose circumstances may make them vulnerable. Recruitment procedures are effective in ensuring that staff are suitable to work with children. Thorough processes of induction provide staff with a good understanding of their roles and responsibilities in safeguarding children and promoting their well-being. Effective risk assessments are reviewed regularly. Daily health and safety checks are very thorough and ensure that children enjoy a safe and hygienic environment.

Staff deployment is excellent. High adult to child ratios are sustained, so children benefit from very good levels of staff support. Resources, both indoors and outdoors are used exceedingly well overall to provide stimulating environments which motivate children's curiosity. Children enjoy a generally inclusive environment where their individual needs are supported very well. Those who have specific learning and development needs benefit from the good relationships staff develop with parents and other professionals involved in supporting individual children. Information is shared well to ensure that plans for individual development are well focused and involve input from all who support each child. Parents are provided with good quality information about all aspects of the setting and their children's care, learning and development. They are encouraged to spend time with key workers to review their children's learning and development records. Parents complete a regular update of their child's interests at home, which staff include when planning activities that promote individual progress. Parents are provided with key policies and procedures that support their children's well-being, and these are available in languages other than English. Overall, the setting supports well children who learn English as an additional language. Staff gain sufficient understanding of simple words and phrases in children's home languages, for instance to reassure them that mummy will be back soon. However, there are no examples of children's home languages in their base rooms to show that these are valued equally with English.

Managers promote successfully a culture of reflective practice, involving all staff. Parents' and children's views are sought in a variety of ways. Self-evaluation is an ongoing process, informing action plans that identify how improvements can be made to promote and sustain good quality outcomes for children. This results in improvements to how many resources are presented and staff check that anything of interest to children is displayed at their level.

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

Children's welfare is promoted well overall. Good health and safety routines contribute to keeping children safe, secure and protected from the risk of illness and cross infection. Health promotion with children is good. Children learn well about the importance of personal hygiene, such as washing their hands and cleaning their teeth. Children bring packed lunches, and parents support the setting's healthy eating policy. Snack times are used well; for example, younger children sit together, so snack time becomes a social activity. Older children enjoy the independence provided by the café-style snack time, however, choosing when

they eat and who they wish to sit with. They help to prepare fruit and clear their plates and cups away when they have finished. Children take part in a variety of activities to develop coordination and control of their bodies.

Children progress well overall in learning how to behave in safe ways. They use safely suitable tools and equipment, such as scissors and knives. They show awareness of each other's personal space when riding bikes and cars. Children practise emergency evacuation procedures but not sufficiently often for all children to know what to do in such situations.

Children make excellent progress overall towards the early learning and development goals, relative to their individual starting points. Staff make extremely effective use of their observations of children. They identify their current stages of development, planning future activities that promote individual learning extremely well. Children's progress towards the early learning goals is monitored carefully. Children enjoy an effective balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities. They make extremely good use of the extended learning environment, moving freely between indoors and outside as they play.

Children are eager and enthusiastic learners. They are keen to explore and investigate activities and resources. Many are extremely confident communicators. This is because staff interact very well with children, making excellent use of questions and discussions to encourage children to share their thoughts and ideas. Children who have problems with aspects of speech and language benefit from excellent activities in small groups that are most effective in developing their skills. Children use everyday technology very confidently. Very young children use a variety of interactive toys. Older children use CD players and tape machines and know how to rewind and fast forward to find the music they want to hear. They are extremely competent in their use of computers. They make very good use of different programmes that promote learning in different areas.

Children are very well behaved and show high levels of self-esteem in their interactions with each other and with adults. They use their own initiative very well and enjoy taking responsibility. For instance, children see that toy cars are wet from rain and fetch paper towels to dry these so that no-one sits on a damp seat.

## 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	1
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	2

### 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	1
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	1
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	1

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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