

Community Under 5's

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspection date

07/03/2011

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

Community Under 5's pre-school is located in the community centre in Westgate-on-Sea, Kent. They have use of one large hall, toilets, kitchen, and an enclosed outside play area. The pre-school is located close to the local amenities including shops and the beach. There is a toilet for disabled people, and a ramp from the car park into the building.

The pre-school is registered to care for 26 children aged 2 to 5 years. There are 35 children in the early years age range attending the group. The setting is also registered on the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register to care for children aged over 5 years. The pre-school have experience of working with children who have special needs and/or learning difficulties.

The pre-school operates each weekday during term times. On Monday and Friday they are open from 9am to 12pm and 12.30pm to 3.30pm. On Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday they are open from 9am to 12 pm.

There are six staff who work with the children, and a manager. Of these, six have early years qualifications to at least NVQ level 2, and one is working towards a qualification. The group receives support from the Local Authority.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is satisfactory.

Children make generally satisfactory progress, their welfare is effectively promoted, and they are safe and secure. They are valued, enjoy their play, and their contributions are appreciated by warm and caring adults. Children are confident to explore and learn independently, and generally behave well. The environment, including the outside area, is spacious and welcoming, and fairly well resourced, and children access toys in most areas enthusiastically. Partnerships with parents are very strong, information is shared well, and they are encouraged to extend their children's learning at home. The setting makes steady progress, and is now starting to use a formal system of self evaluation to ensure the monitoring of the provision is robust, and improvements are well targeted to improve outcomes for children.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- build on the use of observations of children's achievements, interests and learning styles in all areas of learning, and observations of their levels of wellbeing and involvement, to ensure that each child's identified next steps

- are incorporated in planning
- share relevant information with all the settings that children attend, to promote effective continuity of care and progress in their learning
- monitor and evaluate the continuous provision to ensure all areas of learning are provided for, and that all children are accessing all resources
- develop the environment so that it is rich in signs, symbols, notices, numbers and displays of children's work
- monitor the provision of activities and resources to ensure they promote learning in the areas of problem solving, reasoning and numeracy, and communication, language and literacy

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The pre-school is generally effectively organised. Children's welfare is promoted to a satisfactory standard. Staff have sufficient knowledge of safeguarding procedures to enable them to protect children, and know where to access information to guide them to take the correct action. All staff have been vetted, and their checks are kept according to the Criminal Records Bureau code of practice. There are suitable procedures regarding the use of mobile phones, which protect children. Risk assessments are very thorough, helping to keep children safe indoors and out, and during various activities. For example, water play is risk assessed, with attention to detail, such as changing children out of cold damp clothes.

Staff put a great deal of effort into setting the environment out daily, and resources offer children opportunities to learn across all areas of learning. The role play area is especially well resourced, used and enjoyed, and children use their imaginations well. The outside area has been developed to make it interesting and stimulating for children, with wind chimes and informative posters. Therefore children make the most of chances to move inside and outside freely. The book and reading area and mark making tables are less attractive, and as a result are not consistently used to maximum effect. Children are making less use of resources which encourage problem solving, and communication and literacy, which results in less opportunities to learn and develop in these areas. The environment is not rich in labeling, signs, symbols, notices, numbers and displays of children's work, which limits their opportunities to see that the written word has meaning.

Staff are positive about the use of self-evaluation, and a process of using it as an ongoing tool to maintain development is evolving, but not yet fully effective. Improvements to the outside area have added to children's enjoyment, and changes to the planning of children's activities have improved the provision for individual children's learning. Targets of the future are well aimed to improve outcomes for children, such as labelling the environment and continuing to enhance the outdoor provision. Staff get to know the children well, and use observations to plan for their individual learning, although these are not consistently used to inform future planning. Systems are developing to enable staff to check that all children develop well in all areas, but these are not yet fully effective.

Partnership with parents is very good, which results in them being well informed about the setting and their children's progress. They meet with key staff regularly, and feel well supported by staff. Children have 'homework books' which are a fun way of keeping parents informed about activities, and encouraging them to extend their children's learning at home.

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

Children generally make satisfactory progress across the areas of learning, enjoy their play, and take part in a suitable balance of child initiated open ended activities and some adult lead activities. Staff deploy themselves well, supporting and extending play, and knowing when to intervene. Children have regular access to simple computer games, and are keen to play the one with the space ship, matching colours and using the mouse adeptly. Access to some challenging equipment in the garden enables children to develop physical skill, describing their feet going round and round when they have been pedalling a bike. They use their imaginations very well. In the home area they iron clothes and lag tables, chatting and working together. Children join adults in making play dough, discussing the 'fluffy' feel of the flour, and talking about ball and sausage shapes. Children are often independent, playing a very active part in preparing snacks, cutting and pouring. They attempt to put on aprons and rollup their sleeves. However, sometimes adults miss chances to let children attempt things on their own, such as when they wipe children's noses for them. Children benefit from open ended activities, such as making an aeroplane with the construction blocks. However, children are not consistently challenged in their play, for example, sometimes only simple inset puzzles are available.

Children feel safe within the setting, entering happily and confidently in the morning and finding their photograph to self register. They feel a sense of belonging when staff greet them and their parents warmly, and they rush to find their friends. They are confident to approach adults to help with their personal care. They have positive relationships with adults and their peers, for example, chatting in the home area about the iron being left on all night. Children are starting to think about their personal safety as staff remind them why they should take care when climbing.

Frequent praise by staff builds children's self esteem, and encourages them to take part and try. Children using computer games are praised as they progress, and beam with pleasure as they succeed. When children build, paint or create an impressive piece of work, staff help them to take a photograph of their work which they are keen to take home, which builds their self esteem and confidence. Children who have special needs and/or disabilities are supported by knowledgeable staff who work in partnership with other agencies in the children's best interests. The pre-school has yet to establish links with other providers such as pre-schools who also look after the children, in order to ensure consistency of care.

Children engage in physical activity daily, such as 'wake up time' and they enthusiastically dance and wiggle to songs such as 'down in the jungle', pretending to be monkeys and elephants. Staff draw attention to being out of breath, so children learn about the effect of exercise on their bodies. However, in order to participate, children need to leave their chosen activities shortly after arriving at the setting.

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?	3
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	3

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	3
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding	3
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	3
The effectiveness of partnerships	3
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	3
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Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	3
The extent to which children feel safe	2
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	3
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	2
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	3

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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