

Dolphins Pre School

Inspection report for early years provision

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23/03/2011

Inspector

Lisa Toole

Setting address

The Pavilion, Nevill Playing Fields, Off Eridge Road, Hove,
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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

Dolphins Pre School opened in 1987, but had been operating previously as Neville Nursery since 1960. It is located in a sports pavilion next to the Nevill recreation ground in Hove, Sussex. Children use the large main reception room and also have access to an enclosed outdoor play area and garden.

A maximum of 30 children may attend the pre-school at any one time and it is registered on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. The pre-school is open each weekday from 9.15am to 2.30pm with morning sessions from 9.15am to 11.45am; extended morning session from 9.15am to 1.15pm; afternoon session from 12 noon to 2.30pm or all day 9.15am to 2.30pm. The pre-school is open for 38 weeks of the year.

The pre-school provides care for children aged from two to five years. There are currently 72 children on roll. Of these, 48 children receive funding for the provision of free early education.

Children come from a wide catchment area. The pre-school currently supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and children with English as an additional language.

The pre-school employs 13 members of staff. Of these, nine hold appropriate early years qualifications; one member of staff holds Early Years Professional Status and another is in training to obtain Early Years Professional Status.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is outstanding.

The needs of all of the children are very successfully met within the pre-school. This is due to a superb team of staff, exceptional leadership and management and their exemplary care of the children. Children enjoy a truly enabling environment, where equality and diversity strongly threads through all aspects of the provision and where they are dynamic and active agents in their own learning and development. Rigorous self-evaluation, including critical analysis of parents' completed questionnaires are helping to drive their continuous improvement as they identify key priorities for development. Targeted improvements, such as building renovations and the addition of new toileting facilities, all contribute to the improving outcomes for children. The pre-school's capacity for further improvement is outstanding. Their partnerships with parents and in the wider context are exceptionally good, which has a very positive impact on the children. Relationships with other childcare settings that the children attend are strong; this is an area for the pre-school to continue to enhance.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- extending partnership working with other childcare settings that children attend.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Highly effective safeguarding procedures underpin all aspects of the organisation of the pre-school. This results in the children flourishing in all aspects of their development. The children's safety is given the highest priority through daily procedures, such as robust risk assessment of all aspects of the provision, and very good security of the premises and the general organisation of space, resources and activities. Staff have a very secure understanding of their role and responsibilities, including regarding child protection, in order to safeguard every child. All aspects of documentation and record keeping are extremely comprehensive. They are meticulously maintained and regularly reviewed as part of their ongoing procedures to keep children safe.

Systematic review and critical self-evaluation drive the group's ongoing improvement, with all staff demonstrating a very strong ambition to providing the highest quality provision that they can. The staff are skilled practitioners, who demonstrate a highly professional attitude while providing children with a caring, friendly and purposeful learning environment. The pre-school also drives its own improvement by undertaking quality assurance with the local authority; they act on any suggestions made, such as introducing the kindness tree and 'Nina' the personal doll to support children's emotional well-being and the promotion of good behaviour.

The partnerships with parents are highly successful. Parents, without exception, express great confidence in the staff, commenting how they particularly like the maturity and experience of the staff team and feel actively involved in their children's life at pre-school. All parents and extended family members are warmly welcomed into the group, because they actively promote inclusion for everyone, while taking full account of their ethnicity, the languages they speak and any disability they may have. Parents and grandparents are invited to spend sessions as a helper in the group, to find out more about how their children are cared for. They are provided with a wealth of information, in written procedures, the 'Splash' newsletter, on notice boards and through their website. This helps them keep informed about how their children are being cared for, what they are learning about and any special events taking place. Partnerships with local childminders and primary schools are particularly strong, which helps children with transitions on a day-to-day basis as well as when they leave to go to school. Regular exchanges of information support the individual child extremely well and ensure they receive the

best care possible. The pre-school strives to extend their working relationships with other childcare settings children attend and are keen to develop this further, taking account of busy demands during the working day. Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and with English as an additional language are given exceptionally good support, through partnership working and the dedication of staff at the group.

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

Children are successfully progressing towards the early learning goals of the Early Years Foundation Stage and their levels of achievement are excellent. They enjoy an extensive range of challenging, fun and stimulating activities both in and outdoors, and play with excellent resources appropriate to their age and stages of development. The use of free-flow between the indoor and outdoor learning environment is extremely successful; this is reflected in how busy, happy and engaged the children are. The pre-school environment is bright, colourful and child-friendly, with staff organising it to maximise play and learning opportunities for the children. Children are able to feel a strong sense of belonging because they have their own trays, self-register on arrival and have their creative efforts displayed around the room.

The planning is systematically based around children's current interests and developmental needs, supporting the uniqueness of each child very successfully. Senior staff oversee the organisation of children's learning through exceptionally good planning and by using systems for cross-checking that they are considering each individual child's specific needs. Observation and assessment are skilfully done, and staff provide children with extremely beneficial support and guidance, so they gain confidence in their own capabilities. The children's critical thinking and problem solving skills are enhanced through excellent use of open-ended questioning. This also supports their developing communication and language skills, key to their future development. Children relish opportunities to explore nature, through digging to search for bugs, planting seeds to grow their own produce for snack time and by using magnifying glasses to investigate what a snail looks like close-up. Many celebrations of other religions and cultural events support children as they learn about diversity in the social world around them. This also enables them to learn about respect and making a positive contribution to a society in which everyone is valued. The children's behaviour is extremely positive; they are able to form harmonious relationships with each other and adults, as well as learning how to negotiate, take turns and care for their younger peers through the mentoring system. Children's creativity is very well supported because they are given the time, space and resources to express their own ideas and imagination through art and craft, dance, music and role play.

Children get plenty of fresh air and exercise each day, learning how to take risks as they use climbing apparatus, and the small tree in the garden. This helps them develop resilience, physical agility and confidence in themselves and their own capabilities. Sensory activities such as playing with wet cornflour, water and dried

lentils help them with hand-eye coordination and developing mark making skills. The children learn about the importance of good hygiene practices, through clear guidance and good role modelling by adults. The children sit at tables to eat their snacks and lunch. They enjoy a healthy range of snacks and continual access to fresh drinking water, as well as bringing their own packed lunch. They demonstrate very good table manners because adults provide positive role models, initiate conversations and reinforce excellent behaviour through praise. This helps children to develop the necessary personal and social skills to support their future economic well-being.

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?	1
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	1

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

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

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

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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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