

The Rainbow - St. Stephen's Nursery School

Inspection report for early years provision

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Type of setting	Childcare on non-domestic premises

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Introduction

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Description of the setting

The Rainbow - St Stephen's Nursery School opened in 1997. It operates from a large room in St Stephen's church hall, Shottermill, Haslemere, Surrey. The nursery school serves the local community.

The nursery school is registered on the Early Years Register to care for a maximum of 28 children aged from two years to the end of the early years age range. Currently there are 62 children on roll aged two to four years. The nursery school has a number of children with special educational needs and /or disabilities. The setting provides early education funding for three and four- year-old's.

The nursery school is open five days a week during term times. Session times are from 9.15 am to 3.15 pm on a Monday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday. On Tuesdays it is open from 9.00 am to 11.45 am. The nursery school is privately owned by the parochial church council of St Stephen's. They employ eight staff and seven volunteers to work with the children. The manager and one member of staff have Qualified Teacher Status and five members of staff are qualified in Early Years. The nursery school receives support from the local authority.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is outstanding.

Children thrive at this exceptionally well planned, rich and stimulating nursery school. They relish their time at the setting and, overall, children make significant gains in their learning and development. The staff consistently put children at the heart of all that they do. They have an extremely good knowledge of each child's background and needs and ensure that their setting is fully inclusive and welcoming to all children. Those in charge at the nursery school, together with the staff, continuously plan for improvement which in turn generates excellent results.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- expanding on children's outdoor play and learning.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The excellent leadership skills and strong aspirations of the manager plays a key role in ensuring that staff practice is of high quality. This in turn ensures the best

possible outcomes for children, with a strong focus on safeguarding. A rigorous recruitment and vetting system is in place which ensures all adults who work at the setting are checked for their suitability and ensures the successful induction of new staff. All staff have regular training on safeguarding and there is a comprehensive awareness of child protection issues among the adults at the nursery school. Children's safety is a very high priority; all staff are safety conscious and are vigilant. They carry out excellent safety systems such as recording on a chalk board the adults, children and visitors at the setting daily. The adults ensure children are well supervised at all times by operating very high staff to child ratios. The nursery school carries out daily safety and cleaning checks and thorough risk assessments which include outings, such as a bus ride to the museum in Hazelmere.

Staff are very well qualified, competent and enthusiastic practitioners. They take part in 'in house' training offered to them by management and attend external training with the view to learning and implementing more good practices. This greatly benefits the children at the nursery. Self-evaluation is very rigorous and ongoing; it includes self-evaluation questionnaires completed by the children and the parents. Action plans with well-identified points for improvement are continuously worked upon by staff and management. Since the last inspection the setting has undertaken an Early Childhood Environment Rating scale audit with the local authority. As a result they have purchased many more resources and re-vamped the layout and curriculum areas for child-initiated play. The impact of these changes has brought about a highly, rich and stimulating environment for children to freely access. Learning zones are carefully planned with emphasis on quality and detail such as the cosy and attractive book corner which includes a puppet theatre and props for the story goldilocks and the three bears. Adults make excellent use of the immediate and local environment to enhance children's learning experiences. For example, they regularly access the church, the local woods and take trips to Hazelmere to see the urban environment. The nursery school makes good use of the outdoors in all weathers; there is an undercover area which can be used for outside focused learning activities, and challenging climbing apparatus to develop children's skills. Growing projects are currently undertaken in pots and tubs as there is not a separate allotment and wheeled toys are not currently used by the setting.

Very robust systems are in place to ensure that the partnership with parents and others is of the highest quality. An extremely strong emphasis on communication with parents over the last year means that each key person gets to know each child as the unique individual that they are. Parents willingly speak of the very strong and positive relationships they have forged with all the staff at the setting and of the strong benefits their children reap from this. This is particularly evident with children identified as having a special educational need; staff have worked tirelessly with outside agencies, the parents and the children to offer a highly supportive and inclusive environment for all concerned. An active, social and fundraising committee made up of parent's means that parents not only have a fun, social time during evenings such as a 'pamper night', they make positive contributions to the nursery school funds. Parents are very well informed about all aspects of their own children's achievements. They are offered precise ways and tailored guidance about how they can support children's learning across different

areas, such as coming in to bath a baby when the role play baby clinic is open or involving their child in their learning targets at home. The adults at the nursery school fully support every child so that no group or individual is disadvantaged; equality of opportunity is at the forefront of the adults practice. The nursery school effectively helps children to learn about and understand the society in which they live.

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

Children flourish in this highly nurturing and stimulating nursery school. They have access to a very enabling and exciting environment which engages all children fully in their learning and play. Exciting and unusual activities are laid out which motivate and inspire children to explore and learn. For example, the semi-precious stones and magnifying glasses on a mirrored large tray draws children in to look and investigate. The staff are very attentive practitioners and are alert to the learning and care needs of all the children; they expertly weave care and learning matters together and as a whole team are very skilled at interacting purposefully with children. They offer them excellent challenge and consistently ask open-ended questions to encourage critical thinking and verbal expression. For example, a group of boys are highly engaged outdoors in building, first an aeroplane and then a car out of large wooden bricks, working collaboratively and harmoniously together. The child-initiated imaginative activity leads on to building a car, taking it apart and then stepping stones to balance on. Later children then repeat the imaginary game indoors with chairs; the practitioner is careful to introduce other areas of learning into the play, such as mark making. She encourages them to make tickets and to problem solve during the memory 'Kim's game', whilst they are travelling on the imaginary plane. Their ideas and thoughts are acted upon extremely well by the adults during their play. Staff plan adult-led, focused activities extremely well. The adult reads a story book about a child planting a sunflower seed before they go on to do the planting activity themselves. They listen to the story intently and respond extremely well to the practitioners questions about what seeds need to grow. For example, one child says 'if they don't get water they won't grow'. They consistently ask the practitioner what the speech bubbles say in the book, because they know print has meaning and talking and speech is highly valued by staff. Children with special educational needs receive excellent one to one support from a practitioner who is highly in tune with their needs. They access many areas of the play curriculum, have their individual education plan implemented daily and feel calm and included by the excellent visual communication aids which the practitioner uses and has pinned on her clothing. All key workers track children's progress to the early learning goals extremely well and have three identified learning targets for each individual child which is worked on and achieved each half term.

Children display an excellent awareness of safety issues and recognise and understand how to keep themselves safe. For example, they talk about wearing a hat in the role play construction area to protect your head and know that when the hazard cone is on the floor by the water, the floor is slippery. Children's good

health and well-being is promoted extremely well. Staff keep excellent records on children with care plans and those on short-term medication. They adhere to children's medical needs very well and have robust systems which minimises cross-infection and which encourages regular hand washing amongst the children. For example, an attractive photographic poster depicting a good hand washing process is on display outside the children's toilets. Children enjoy regular nutritious snacks and drinks at a time of their choosing from the self-service snack bar. Some physical activities are innovative which have an extremely high impact on encouraging children to lead a healthy lifestyle. For example, once a week an external sports coach comes in to teach children specific ball and small equipment skills. Throughout the morning all children demonstrate they are confident, well-settled and have developed excellent relationships with the adults. They work exceptionally well with others and independently access all areas of the nursery. For example, they take turns and have fun singing and seeing themselves on the screen during a karaoke song of wind the bobbin up. Their behaviour is exemplary. For example, when the member of staff rings a bell and holds up her arm they all stop what they are doing, hold up their arm and listen intently to what she has to say, following instructions. Excellent partnership working means that inclusion of every child is high on the nursery agenda. Staff increase children's knowledge of different communities through fun learning activities such as making a dragon at Chinese new year, writing in Chinese and dressing up in traditional costumes.

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

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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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