

St Hilary's Nursery School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number 127588
Inspection date 05/04/2011
Inspector Beryl Witheridge

Setting address Senacre Community Hall, Titchfield Road, Senacre,
Maidstone, Kent, ME15 8FX

Telephone number 01622 750361

Email

Type of setting Childcare on non-domestic premises

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2011

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.

Please see our website for more information about each childcare provider. We publish inspection reports, conditions of registration and details of complaints we receive where we or the provider take action to meet the requirements of registration.

Description of the setting

St Hillary's Nursery School opened in 1982 and operates from one room in a skills centre. It is situated in the town of Maidstone, Kent. A maximum of 35 children may attend the nursery school at any one time. The nursery school is open each weekday from 8.30am to 11.30am and 12 noon to 3pm for 39 weeks of the year. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 50 children aged from two to under five years on roll. Children aged two, three and four years receive funding for nursery education. This provision is registered on the Early Years Register and both the voluntary and compulsory parts of the Childcare Register. Children come from a local catchment area. The nursery school currently supports a number of children with special educational needs, and also supports a number of children who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery school employs six staff; of these all staff, including the manager, hold an appropriate early years qualification. There is one member of staff upgrading her qualification.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

The group identifies the unique needs of each child and supports their welfare and learning effectively. Children explore within safe boundaries and enjoy being with staff and one another. Some of the daily routines such as snack time do not always encourage their independence. The partnerships between the setting, parents and other providers are well established and help to ensure that the care and learning needs of the children are consistently met. Written policies and procedures are shared with parents but these are not always up to date. The group's capacity to maintain ongoing improvement is good. The strengths and weaknesses of the provision are beginning to emerge and priorities for development are in place. Ongoing aims to develop good quality provision helps to promote effective outcomes for the children.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- update any written policies and procedures to reflect the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage and not the National Standards and ensure that these are explained to all parents
- improve the organisation of everyday routines such as snack time to minimise the time children spend waiting and provide more opportunities to extend

their independence.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children are safeguarded effectively through the written safeguarding policies and procedures that ensure their welfare is promoted. Staff have attended child protection training; they understand the signs and symptoms of abuse and know what to do should they have any concerns. A list of emergency contact numbers is easily accessible. These measures help to ensure that children's welfare remains the group's priority. Systems for recruitment and vetting are rigorous to ensure that all adults working with the children are suitable, but there is very little staff turnover within the group. Good use of a clearly written and well recorded risk assessment which includes actions taken to put things right ensures that children are safe at all times. There are written policies and procedures in place for all aspects of the group but these are not all up to date and some still bear reference to the National Standards and not all have been updated to reflect the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Everyone involved in the running of the group is committed towards ongoing improvement of the group. The recommendations set at the last inspection have been addressed. The group has recently moved into new premises which are solely for their own use and this has enabled them to make improvements and plan for future ones. The resources which are freely available to the children offer good choice and variety. The effective staff deployment, and their ability to work well together as a team, helps to ensure good quality provision for the children. Equality and diversity is totally embedded into every day practice. The learning and development needs of each child are recognised and addressed. Children's understanding of diversity is well promoted through the range of toys, resources and experiences provided. The learning environment is equally accessible to all children. This helps to ensure that all children are fully included in all opportunities and experiences.

The use of self-evaluation is beginning to address all areas of the group's provision. The group's strengths and areas for improvement are clearly identified and tackled. Children and parents contribute to the process and their views are taken on board at all times. Future targets for improvement are realistic in order to ensure effective benefits for the children, such as the planned improvements to the outdoor play space.

There are good partnerships in place with other settings and local schools. Staff meet with the reception teachers to discuss children's transition to the school and this improves the understanding of the group and the school as to the needs of the children. This helps to ensure children's individual abilities and needs are known at an early stage in order to promote effective transitions into school. They also work very closely with other agencies such as health visitors, speech, therapists and occupational therapists who support staff, parents and children to ensure children receive the best care appropriate to their individual needs.

The partnership with parents is good. Parents are provided with ongoing information about their children's experiences and progress. They have an open day each term when they meet with their child's key person and discuss their child's development as well as an open door policy. They take an active part in identifying future learning and share in their child's, 'My Unique Journey', developmental records. Overall this helps to provide every child with continuity of care and learning. Parents are also kept up to date with events through regular newsletters and good use of the notice boards in the entrance hall. Parents spoken to are extremely happy with the care provided for their children and would recommend the group to other parents.

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

Children receive a warm and caring welcome from the staff as they arrive. Adults support the children well. Children know they can approach staff at any time, for help and support such as a child needing support when trying to fit the tyres onto wheels while playing with the construction.

Children are able to freely access a good range of toys, resources and experiences that cover all areas of learning. They demonstrate curiosity and interest as they move around and independently select their activities. They show the ability to work as a group when they are playing in the garden; several boys negotiate their roles and ideas as they follow the path they have made through the bushes. There are also good examples of parallel play with younger children.

Effective planning for the play environment includes all the areas of learning and staff meet regularly to ensure that children's next steps and interests are included. Children's learning is extended as they play and all experiences build on their current abilities and interests. Children's starting points are clearly recorded and clear observational assessment includes some photographs and samples of children's achievements to demonstrate their good progress.

Children feel safe in the setting and demonstrate this through their eager attitudes towards learning and the staff who care for them. Very good adult support helps children to develop a good awareness of personal safety. Regular fire drills are carried out and well recorded to ensure that all children know how to protect themselves in an emergency.

Children's good health and well-being is actively encouraged. They enjoy regular physical exercise and enjoy free flow play between the hall and the garden; as well as having opportunities to rest and look at a book or play quietly. Children are involved in health and hygiene routines and know when and why they need to wash their hands. They receive visits from the 'Tooth Fairy' who shows them, with the use of puppets, how to clean their teeth correctly. Children eat healthily and parents are included in providing healthy options for snacks. However, at snack time children are not given a choice of foods and do not select their own utensils; they all sit together for snack time, which can lead to long periods of waiting.

Children are very well-behaved and learn the expected behaviour boundaries. On the day of the inspection the children were also having their photographs taken but they were not at all put out and they played beautifully without any issues at all. They are independent and responsible with turn taking and sharing. Staff are extremely good role models for the children. Children are praised for their efforts and staff help to extend children's confidence by proudly displaying their work on the walls. Children respond well to plenty of praise and encouragement and adopt good manners. Their welfare and self-esteem is well promoted.

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?	2
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	2

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	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	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
--	---

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	2
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	2
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	2

Any complaints about the inspection or report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

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