

Pumpkin Patch

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number EY234878
Inspection date 19/04/2011
Inspector Christopher Mackinnon

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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

Pumpkin Patch Day Nursery was registered in 2003 and is located in a large detached house in the New Church Road area of Brighton and Hove. Children use all parts of the house, and an enclosed rear garden is available for outdoor play and learning. The setting is open weekdays from 8.00am to 6.00pm and is one of two day care settings under the same ownership, in the Brighton and Hove area.

The setting is registered on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register a maximum of 45 children may attend at any one time. There are currently 85 children on roll, and the setting receives nursery education funding for children aged 3 years and older. The setting supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and children who learn English as an additional language. There is a staff team of 17 and most have level three early years qualifications, with 4 staff members currently training to degree level.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is outstanding.

The setting is highly organised, and provides excellent support for individual children's development. Children benefit greatly from an attractive and highly stimulating learning environment, and have access to an excellent range of play materials and resources. A well prepared outdoor play area also adds to the high quality of children's learning experiences. The planning of activities and assessment of children's progress and achievement is exemplary, and staff maintain highly effective links with parents. Self-evaluation is consistently used to promote improvement, and the setting is considering the further development of its partnerships with other settings.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- consider the further development of partnerships with other carers and day care settings

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The setting is an established day care nursery, that provides a highly consistent and effectively organised programme of play and learning. Staff are successfully guided by a strong and highly effective management team, which has the benefit

of sharing practice with a partner setting, also located in the Brighton and Hove area. The overall level of staff training is significantly high, and is increasing, with several staff working towards completing the early years foundation degree. A highly successful aspect of the setting's leadership and management, is the continuous use of initiatives to drive improvement and develop the quality of the care provided; with notable examples in the recent enrichment of the outdoor play area, and increased links with parents. Safeguarding procedures are effectively organised within the setting. The premises have clearly organised safety and security procedures in place, and staff key persons ensure individual children's care and welfare needs are consistently promoted.

The setting has several strengths within its provision, particularly the presentation of a highly attractive and well prepared play and learning environment, which is judged as outstanding. The owners have given much consideration to the layout of the building, so that children's interests and learning achievement can be promoted. For example, care is provided on two floors, with children aged under two years located upstairs, in a bright and well appointed care and learning suite. Children aged two years and older have the downstairs play areas, where the play environment provides many opportunities for free-flow activities; and excellent encouragement for child led play and learning. The range of play resources and learning materials is also highly stimulating, and thoughtfully planned. A wide range of separately focused areas are provided where children can choose and access materials easily, which successfully promote their learning. This includes measuring and counting, using the computer and reading books. A significant feature of the presentation of resources, is the excellently prepared outdoor learning area, which offers an rich range of learning experiences, particularly opportunities for children to explore tactile, sensory and physical play; with many problem solving challenges also included outdoors. Children also learn about the seasons and the weather, and enjoy using the setting's weather recording station, which they have set up with staff.

The staff team are highly consistent in their support for inclusion and diversity. Staff key persons take the lead with ensuring individual children are closely and effectively supported; and are enabled to make progress across their learning gaps. Specific monthly meetings are organised to promote individual development, and each child's ways forward with learning, are consistently built into the planned activities. Children gain a highly consistent understanding of equality and diversity. Many festivals are celebrated and resources are well used to promote children's awareness. Many excellent visual displays used, and children are helped to make links with other countries and cultures; by learning about different types of houses around the world, for example. The setting demonstrates a highly organised approach to improvement, and staff are highly consistent in supporting reflective practice. Often the prepared play plans are revised to accommodate the children's own interests, and staff respond highly effectively when children take the initiative and develop their own play ideas. Systems to support practice appraisal and self-evaluation are well established and highly effective within the provision, and staff show considerable skill in their ability to identify and carry out development and improvement plans.

The setting takes considerable care to build positive partnerships with parents, which successfully contributes to the quality of children's welfare and continued learning. Staff key persons provide frequent opportunities to meet with parents and discuss their children's progress. Information from home is also effectively gathered, and an excellent family links project has resulted in a highly inclusive 'families' photograph display feature; which encourages parent's engagement with the learning programme. The setting makes effective links with other nearby settings, and staff are aware that their children also attend other care settings. Some clear links have been established, with local contact initiatives and planned transitions with local schools. However, the widening of partnerships with other settings is ongoing within the provision, and is an area for further development.

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

The setting has a planning system that is highly organised and is fully comprehensive. It is based on the detailed observations made on individual children by their key persons, and is effectively used to prepare a wide range of activities for one month ahead. Information on children's interests and home events are also included. Staff then create an overall 'play environment' plan for each of the specific learning rooms within the building, and highly consistent planning is also completed for the children aged under two years, and for the garden outdoor learning area. For example, there is a current focus on exploring numbers outdoors, and staff have been busy with the children placing numbers on lots of items and in places to provide opportunities for counting. Staff are highly successful teachers and ask a lot of good questions when working with the children. They use their skills and experience in a highly consistent way to promote children's speech and strong sense of inquiry. For example, helping children to draw the growing stages of tadpoles, and exploring sizes and sets of items. Observation and assessment is successfully used to promote children's learning. Each child has an observation folder, where staff note achievements and identify possible ways forward with their learning. Each child also has a highly organised and well presented 'learning profile' record book, that includes a highly organised tracking system that effectively covers all the six areas of learning. Many excellent photographs of children engaged in their learning are also included; and key persons and parents make good use of these folders to follow children's progress.

Many well organised systems are in provided to ensure children feel safe and secure within the setting. An excellent and full range of risk assessments are in place, and staff work well to ensure children feel welcome and able to settle. Staff consistently strive to establish good relationships with children, and encourage a sense of safety. The setting's play environment has many cosy corners and soft areas, where small groups of children can play and learn together, which is good for encouraging their personal and social development. Staff also work in a highly effective way to support children's sharing and turn taking, and lots of praise and confidence building is provided. For example, children are frequently asked what they want to do, so they can have choices. Children are also encouraged to tidy up and help with cleaning tables before snack time.

The staff and management team successfully promote children's healthy development. Excellent systems are maintained so that staff know about individual children's care needs, allergies and intolerances. Staff also have close links with outside agencies, to ensure children's healthy development is monitored. The setting has frequent food learning projects, and the setting has its own kitchen, where healthy meals are prepared on site, providing a range of healthy menu choices for parents and children. To help with children's healthy development, a highly consistent and full range of physical activities are provided; with daily opportunities for outdoor play. An extensive variety of physical games and challenges are provided, and children enjoy learning to balance, climb and use the outdoors for expressive role play games.

The excellent range and richness of the activities provided, successfully ensures children's skills for future learning are promoted. Children have a high level of child led play, which promotes their communication, language and literacy. They talk confidently and use speech highly effectively when organising their play; making up games and creating stories together. Many opportunities are also provided within the play environment for children to look at books with staff, and develop their awareness of the printed word. Activities that promote problem solving, reasoning and numeracy are also prominent within the provision, with access to a computer providing many matching and memory learning opportunities. Staff also have focussed learning with groups of children, where they explore sizes, sets and have special projects linked to measuring, such as reading the temperature. Children's creative development is strongly encouraged, and children greatly enjoy the setting's extensive role play shop, where they make lists, learn about prices and use real paper bags. Throughout the play programme, children have many opportunities to develop their knowledge and understanding of the world. Many aspects of the children's play is based on their experiences. For example, a recent and excellent travel based learning project, enabled children to paint and construct items to make a large visual display of all the different forms of transport they use.

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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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