

Caring Kindergartens

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number 256754
Inspection date 21/04/2011
Inspector Lynne Talbot

Setting address Minerva Business Park, Lynch Wood, PETERBOROUGH, PE2
6FT

Telephone number 01733 361111

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).

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

Caring Kindergartens was registered in 1996 and is one of five provisions within the group. The provision operates from a purpose built building on the Minerva Park in Lynchwood, Peterborough and serves the local and wider area. The building is accessible to all children, with a staircase to the first floor playrooms for older children. Children have access to a secure outdoor play area.

The provision is open each weekday all year round with the exception of Bank Holidays and one week between Christmas and New Year. Sessions are from 8am to 6pm. Children are able to attend for a variety of sessions. A maximum of 112 children may attend the provision at any one time. The provision is registered on the Early Years Register. There are currently 160 children on roll, all of whom are within the Early Years Foundation Stage. The provision provides funded early education for three- and four-year-olds.

Some children attend other settings such as the early years unit of the local primary school or childminders. The provision supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and children who speak English as an additional language. The provision employs 24 permanent members of childcare staff with one kitchen based cook. There is also a manager and deputy manager. Of these, 22 hold appropriate early years qualifications at Level 2, Level 3 or above. Two staff members are qualified at Level 4.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is outstanding.

Planning for the Early Years Foundation Stage builds from every child's individual interest and stage of development supported by responsive planning. This ensures that children receive imaginative experiences that foster rapid progress in their learning and development. The staff group create a highly welcoming environment, using significantly focussed safeguarding procedures and robust risk assessments. They ensure that they have cohesive knowledge of each child's needs to ensure that every child is totally included. Partnerships with parents and carers, together with those with all other agencies, are key strengths showing dedication to meeting all children's needs. The managers communicate very clear ambition and drive to secure purposeful continued development involving staff within in-depth self-evaluation.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- developing opportunities and routines to support children's understanding of

how exercise, eating, sleeping and hygiene promote good health; this refers to the practice employed when preparing for lunch and the hygiene of the aprons worn

- developing further a challenging environment where children's play is supported and extended; building opportunities that allow children some control of their learning so they develop the confidence to make decisions based on thinking things through in a logical way.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Comprehensive policies and procedures for safeguarding are implemented robustly to ensure that children are fully protected. Managers ensure that staff are kept completely up to date with current procedures through displays and reviews, and by providing copies of all relevant forms and details. They introduce new measures gleaned through training and reviewing investigations and outcomes from national case reviews such as introducing new procedures for mobile telephones. The vigilant approach, daily routines and staff professionalism ensures that safeguarding procedures work at all times. Close monitoring of visitors, internal release systems for doors and video screen security systems support the overall security. Senior managers ensure that all persons are required to undertake the appropriate checks to safeguard children. Children are safeguarded by the extensive recruitment and vetting procedures, including the meticulous induction of new staff. A monthly review followed by a final review once probation has been completed for new staff, regular supervision and appraisal systems all form part of the excellent reflective practice that takes place. The managers are exceptionally successful in inspiring the staff team to work towards sustaining ambitious targets. All staff pursue continued professional development and this is recorded in six-monthly training plans. Staff value is recognised and further commitment inspired by the use of reward systems, which include performance related bonuses and employee of the month awards. Risk assessments for the premises and outings undertaken are scrutinised to ensure their efficiency. Self-evaluation at all levels reflects rigorous monitoring and analysis to bring about sustained improvement. Exemplary reflective practice takes place. This starts with the director inviting feedback as a result of any letters issued to parents. Forms and prepaid envelopes are freely available as well as comments books ensuring that all parents are involved thereby supporting inclusion. Parent and management meetings, together with input from outside agencies, all feed into agreed action plans and are a proactive way to ensure that agreed agendas are met. Development plans for the whole provision are made incorporating priority areas from the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Children's individual learning styles are fully respected. One example of training for individuals is that attended on 'engaging boys'. This focussed staff attention on extending activities and looking at the individual physical differences that play a part in learning. The provision works across two floors with the pre-school provision in the self-contained unit on the first floor. The provision demonstrates its commitment to inclusion and incorporates the Ferre Laevers approach to assessing every child's wellbeing and sense of belonging every three months. This

ensures that children are consistently considered as individuals. The environment is highly conducive to learning, extremely safe and well cared for, with a largely quality range of play provision used to achieve the planned goals. The staff team are extremely well deployed throughout the day. The outdoor areas are managed well to ensure that the outdoor environment is accessed as widely as possible for the full range of learning opportunities that it offers. Partnerships with parents and others are exemplary and key strengths. The inclusive systems of communication used to engage parents and carers ensure that there are productive partnerships resulting in strong levels of engagement. For example, annual parent meetings are supplemented by individual meetings every four months to review development progress and to enable parents to contribute. 'Wow' boards are displayed and widely used. Parents can note any significant event to enable the provision to build on those links with the family. Rainbow folders for extended activities in the home build on activities that take place in pre-school. The provision offers highly successful open days twice each year as well as grandparent days to recognise the importance of the extended family in a child's life. One innovation used has been the development of a welcome book to send to families who cannot visit the setting prior to attending or for other personal reasons. One such example has been for a family in Denmark and was highly successful.

The provision is highly committed to working in partnership with others and plays a proactive role in establishing effective working relationships. Detailed information is passed between the provisions. A comprehensive transfer profile is completed for every child within which parents make written contributions and children's views are recorded, gathered through discussion with them. Where children attend more than one setting, a shared file is developed showing ongoing aims and objectives for each setting, together with links to the areas of learning, evaluation and next steps which fosters full consistency of approach and care for children. The provision work closely with several other professional agencies where support for children is required. Pupil inclusion risk assessments are completed and the provision work closely to any programmes set. The managers and staff make the most of events and festivals to broaden children's awareness of each other's home culture. For instance, equipped areas hold key words and packs, festivals areas are set up with dressing-up clothes, parents are asked for key words to share including French, Danish and Polish, and some dual language books are held. Themed days such as the 'culture sharing family day' are held. Parent comments received following this day include 'what a great opportunity to get a better understanding of my child's day at nursery', and 'thank you, we cannot recommend Caring Kindergarten highly enough'. Also 'what a wonderful idea-demonstrating such diversity is appropriate to the geographical area'. Consequently the outcome in children's achievement and the well-being for all children is exceptionally high.

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

Children are offered well-planned activities that help them to make rapid progress in their learning and development. Planning evaluation trackers by the managers are a highly successful method of making sure that all learning opportunities are

followed through. However, on occasion some staff fail to build on those opportunities for learning and occasionally limit children's learning by not allowing them some control of their learning within activities. Assessment through intricate recorded observation is clear and the information gained is used proactively to identify next steps and goals. Progression is fully detailed and closely monitored. Children's current interests and observed development feed the daily planning which continues to adapt. Consequently children make significant gains in their learning. All children are physically active. They link their developing knowledge across all areas of play when outdoors. For example, younger children make a tent from a tarpaulin across a climbing cube and the fence with staff helping them to explore light and dark, facilitating discovery play. Children are seen to explore outdoor musical experiences with all manner of wooden and metal objects. Children extend their play supported by staff. For instance, when deciding to make a den in the garden older children are urged to extend this. They draw a list of objects they may need, making calculated choices for design, drawing up lists and hunting for them before ticking them off on their lists. Staff extend children's interest such as searching for insects, leading to making a wormery and then a bug house. Later this was shared with parents to extend phonics and letter sounds. Children explore geometric shapes arrangements and environment shapes, learning to link problem solving, reasoning and numeracy in everyday activities. All children explore the natural world through free digging, planting herbs and some vegetables, and watering the garden. They confidently use the terms full and empty, beginning to explore mathematical concepts.

Children demonstrate good levels of understanding of personal safety. All children respond to familiar boundaries and move between areas such as the playrooms, art room and dining area and garden safely. Staff work with children and support them to voice their feelings. For example, they learn to say 'stop' or 'no' from a young age, if someone is doing something they do not like; giving the child a voice and an understanding about how different things make them feel, is giving them the ability to protect themselves. Staff involve older children in risk assessing aspects of the premises to reinforce safety awareness. For instance, once the main assessment has made sure the garden is safe, staff 'hide' objects that should not be present and invite the children to help them to check for safety hazards. This helps children develop a mature response to taking responsibility for their own and others safety. Children are extremely competent in communicating their thoughts. They talk about what they are doing, linking developing knowledge. For example, an interest in pirates led to staff making 'treasure bags' with coins which children love to count and match to the number cards. Role play areas in all rooms offer scope for imaginative play. Staff introduce actual life experiences such as travel agents to enable children to explore what they see around them. All children, including babies, show a strong sense of security and belonging within the nursery. Babies and younger children explore their surroundings, seek attention from staff, and show delight as they laugh and giggle together. Children recognise that they and others have feelings and respect each other. 'Calm cards' are used throughout the provision, with children seeking or being offered a card signifying that they need time to themselves or thinking time. The provision also uses a 'pledge tree' on occasions successfully. This has been used with children to enable them to consider how they themselves will behave and to say what they will do in advance. Links to home are considerable and include a travelling Trunky (the provisions

mascot), a weekend bear and a business bear. This can be taken to parents' business with a photograph record made to help children to feel a link with their parents during the day. Care for others is a theme that runs throughout the nursery and extends into the community. Children take part in fundraising for their chosen charity, enjoy joining in events for national charity days and gather hampers to pass to charities. Children's behaviour is very good and they show an excellent awareness of responsibility both in the nursery and extending as part of their community.

All children have ample opportunities to begin mark making in a variety of forms. Younger children explore an excellent range of heuristic play where they explore textures and materials, develop concentration skills and dexterity. Babies and younger children use tactile materials, discovery corners using black, white and red colours, and discovery bottles for sounds stimulate children's concentration and interest in what is around them. Older children extend mark making, an awareness of number and size, and counting across all areas reading signs for snacks, attendance and counting the stairs as they climb them. Activities to support the development of letters and sounds are adapted to meet every child's level of interest. Children are extremely competent in using modern technology that begins with lullaby light shows and bee-bots leading to computers. Babies and younger children explore high quality mechanical toys. The provision actively promotes healthy practice, through their hygiene routines, exercise through outside play, and rest and sleep times. This all runs alongside the menu which has achieved the GOLD heartbeat award in the Northampton district. This involves being assessed each year and altering the menu to meet new research and developments, providing the most up-to-date nutritional needs for young children. Exemplary safety measures are in place to meet each dietary need. However, daily routines for hygiene do not always maintain those high standards set, in particular when children are outdoors immediately prior to preparing for lunch and putting their aprons on. This means that the measures in place do not effectively promote hygiene and children do not always gain the necessary understanding of the reason for clean hands and clean aprons when enjoying their meal. Children show high levels of independence, curiosity, imagination and concentration in this dynamic setting. They respond to challenges with great enthusiasm showing the attitudes necessary to support them through future learning situations.

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	2
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
--	---

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	2
The extent to which children feel safe	1
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	1
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	1

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

