

Treetops Pre-School Group

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspection date	18/05/2011
Inspector	Beryl Witheridge
Setting address	16 Swaisland Road, Dartford, Kent, DA1 3DA
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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

Treetops Pre-School Group is situated to the west side of Dartford and opened in 2000. It operates from purpose built premises set within the owner's garden. Children have access to two rooms with an outside play area. The group incorporates many Montessori methods of teaching in their practice.

A maximum of 20 children may attend the pre-school at any one time. The pre-school is open each weekday, 9.00am to 11.30am, 9.15am to 11.45am and afternoon sessions of 12.15pm to 2.45pm and 12.30pm to 3.00pm term time only. They operate a staggered opening system in accordance with planning regulations.

There are currently 68 children aged from two to under five years on roll. They are not registered to accept children funded for early education. The pre-school currently supports a number of children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and also supports a number of children who speak English as an additional language.

The pre-school employs eight members of staff. Of these, five hold appropriate early years qualifications and four are working towards a higher qualification.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is outstanding.

The pre-school is extremely effective in recognising the uniqueness of each and every child attending. Through their knowledge of the children they are catering for all their individual needs. Children are cared for in safe and secure surroundings but more attention to emergency evacuation procedures will further improve this. The policies and procedures are well understood and are thoroughly implemented by the enthusiastic and dedicated staff. The thorough self evaluation of the pre-school has identified areas for improvement and any training needs identified are already being implemented. This shows that the provision is fully able to maintain continuous improvement.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- practise the emergency evacuation routine regularly so that all children know how to protect themselves in an emergency

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The policy for safeguarding is comprehensive and thorough. This is supported with further documentation from the local authority and clearly shows what to do if there is a concern regarding a child. Staff know and understand the procedures to follow if they have a concern. They fully recognise their role and responsibility towards the children in their care. The vetting procedures for new staff are robust and rigorous to ensure that any person caring for the children is suitable to do so. The risk assessments are thorough, dated and signed which helps to identify and minimise any hazards throughout the pre-school ensuring children's safety. Children practise an emergency evacuation procedure once each term but it is not carried out often enough to ensure that all children have been included and would know what to do should an emergency arise. Sustainability is implemented with a garden area for children to dig, plant and harvest their own fruit and vegetables.

Staff throughout the pre-school are very committed towards improvement and have a variety of opportunities to develop priorities and plans for the future such as team meetings and the use of the self-evaluation form. Ongoing training is taken up both within the pre-school and through external agencies. The twice yearly appraisal systems identify strengths and weaknesses which fully support individual staff in their professional roles. Their knowledge and understanding ensures children's welfare, learning and developmental needs are very effectively met. A meticulous and wide ranging self-evaluation system is deeply embedded in the ethos and aims of the provision. The opinions of the owner, management, staff, parents and children are considered when looking reflectively at the pre-school, the future developments and improvements. Action plans for improvements are in place and some training is already being implemented to ensure the needs of the children are being fully identified and addressed. Policies and procedure are extensive and effective; they are applied by knowledgeable, caring, staff. Each room provides children with a warm, welcoming environment where toys and play materials are enticingly arranged, easily accessible and strongly support children's independence, their individual enjoyment and achievement. Equality and diversity are fully embedded in the pre-school's philosophy and are fundamental to children's care and learning. Clear and flexible assessments of individual achievements are carried forward from information given by parents. Key persons use their observations and assessments of activities to identify next steps in the learning and development for each child; they plan for each one accordingly to ensure their individual and unique needs are being addressed and accommodated. Linguistic diversity is respected and highly valued by staff who learn significant words from parents to ensure that the children are fully included in all aspects of the pre-school life. Children are learning to respect each other for who they are. The pre-school has excellent links with other providers of the Early Years Foundation Stage; they exchange information and keep each other informed of any learning and developmental triumphs or concerns. The close links with local schools ensures that children have a gentle and easy transition when they move on. The partnership with parents, carers and others is outstanding. Newsletters, notice boards and displays inform parents of children's daily experiences. Parents are given a termly review of their child's progress; they then speak to the key

person for their child and are able to have a meaningful input into their child's future learning. The children's records are always available for them to see at any time. Parents cannot praise the pre-school enough; they recommend it to all their friends and family and described it as 'marvellous' and 'brilliant'.

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

Children are happy, safe and secure within the pre-school. They are welcomed warmly by the staff as they arrive. They eagerly anticipate the arrival of their friends as they see them come through the door. Children arrive happy and eager to participate in the activities set up for them but they are also able to make decisions for themselves about activities they would like to take part in. Children show a great degree of independence in all aspects of the pre-school but feel able to approach staff for help or comfort when they require it. They achieve very well through the wide range of carefully planned, appropriate and interesting activities. They role play in a well equipped home area, they love pretending to make cakes and have a cake stand which they use to balance cakes on and then offer to the other children and staff. They also have a travel agents, with real holiday brochures, which they pore through, they discuss their favourite destinations and then pretend to book their holiday using the computers to type in names, destinations and prices. They negotiate their roles and play incredibly well together. Children are totally engrossed in their play. They take account of each others needs and abilities.

Children enjoy story time, they listen intently, answer questions easily and are able to predict the story. One child decides to read a story to the whole group; he does very well with very little input from staff and engages the attention of the other children. He uses descriptive language, counts the characters in the story confidently and is praised for his efforts by staff which boosts his confidence and self esteem. Children are learning many skills for the future. Children readily enjoy group time for singing and action rhymes. They sing loudly and join in with tremendous enthusiasm. Physical activities are encouraged both indoors and out. Children have access in the garden to a wide range of well made, good quality resources such as the cars, the scooters and the wooden motorbike. They have a 'twigwam' which is a living structure providing them with opportunities to develop their imaginations in a different environment and giving them a space to retreat and be quiet. They show great skill when involved in the water play, measuring and pouring. Children share and take turns easily. Children are happy to free flow around the room choosing and selecting activities for themselves; they are confident and outgoing. Children's development records show they are making very good progress towards the early learning goals. Observations are carried out on the children to enable staff to ascertain the levels of children's abilities over the six areas of learning. Staff are able to assess children's achievements and identify their next steps to help them move forward.

Children are offered nutritious options for their snack, with a choice of fruit, vegetables and crackers, and drinks of milk, smoothies, juice and water. The older

children help to prepare snacks; they cut the fruit carefully with support from staff, using real knives. Children begin to understand about the effects of physical exercise such as ensuring they take regular drinks of water, especially when they are playing outside on a hot day. Children are aware of the provision's personal hygiene procedures and rigorously practice them, mostly independently. There are few children who still need to have their nappy changed; the procedures in place ensure that they are safeguarded and their privacy protected.

Children also have an excellent understanding of the behaviour expected from them. Their behaviour is of the highest standard and staff rarely if ever have to speak to them; when they do any issue is dealt with in a calm, quiet positive way. Staff are exceptional role models to the children. They work very well as a team, their individual skills complementing each other. Children are provided with positive messages and examples. Children cooperate well with staff and get on exceedingly well with their peers. An inclusive and welcoming service is provided.

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
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The provider confirms that the requirements of the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are:	Met
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