

Ditton Church Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

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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*.

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Description of the setting

Ditton Church Pre School opened in January 2001. It operates from two rooms at Ditton Church Centre in Ditton, on the outskirts of Maidstone. The group opens five days a week during school term. Sessions are from 9.00am to 12 noon, Monday to Friday and from 12.30pm to 15.30pm on a Monday, Tuesday and Thursday.

The setting is registered on the Early Years Register and no more than 30 children in the early years age group may attend. There are currently 62 children on roll, and the setting receives nursery education funding for children commencing at age three years. The setting is able to care for children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, and also children who speak English as a additional language. The staff team have a range of early years qualifications, up to level three and above.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

The pre school is well organised, and individual children's development is successfully promoted by a trained and experienced staff team. Children have access to a highly organised and stimulating play environment, with a particularly well resourced outdoor play area. The quality of the setting's planning and support for children's learning is exemplary. Staff also work effectively with parents and other carers, and make good use of self-evaluation to maintain improvement. The setting is currently developing its system of assessing children's achievement.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- develop and revise further, the existing assessment arrangements, to provide a wider focus on children's next steps in learning

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The pre school is a long established setting, and the overall good quality of the staff team's delivery of a well organised programme of play and learning, shows effective and consistent leadership. The management of safeguarding within the setting is also well organised, with recent updates to staff child protection training, and a clearly organised range of guidance documents and procedures in place. A range of improvement initiatives have been undertaken recently, with the expansion of the children's reading area, and staff training on the promotion of

letters and sounds learning. Additional work is also ongoing, on revising the setting's observation and assessment processes.

The setting's use of self-evaluation is well established, and good and consistent reflective practice is consistently applied. The staff take part in a local area reflective practice initiative, and work closely with their early years advisor to consistently review and revise aspects of the play provision. The setting has also successfully completed the Ofsted self-evaluation document, which is up-to-date and includes all the setting's current and outlined areas for improvement.

The setting's presentation of resources is a strong and outstanding feature. Many prominent learning elements are presented. For example, there is a well resourced mark making area, with lots of paper pens and stickers, and opportunities for children to develop their writing, cutting and sticking skills. The play environment also has a music and sounds area, and a good range of visual displays. A particularly beneficial aspect of the organisation of resources, is the inclusion of a range of torches and light based items within the play space. Also, the inclusion of texture based materials and a good range of diversity representative play figures and small world materials. This close attention to detail within play environment has a highly beneficial impact on children and successfully enriches their learning. The setting's outdoor play area, however is the most prominent element, and children have access to an exceptionally rich and stimulating outdoor area; with a highly diverse and well prepared range of play and learning opportunities. Children have a range of play houses, a large messy play area, and children enjoy a lot of tactile and sensory learning; as well using a large grass area for games and physical play.

Inclusion and diversity is consistently promoted. The setting has a well organised key person system, and staff also have a high awareness of the need to organise and support individual children's progress. and help them through their learning stages. The setting also has a positive and well organised multi-cultural approach, and the staff team work well together to promote the understanding of inclusion, through diversity based projects and learning and sharing play together.

The setting has close links and partnerships with other settings. Staff use a contact book to record how and when contact is made with the other carers the pre school children attend. The setting also has particularly close and supportive relationship with its local feeder school; located next door. The staff and children visit at set times and the junior school staff work with the pre school, to organise the 'rising fives' learning sessions that are provided in the afternoons. Parents are consistently well included and involved with the setting, and a well managed parent helper rota, is in place. The setting benefits greatly from the work of the parents group, who help with fundraising, and the maintenance of the garden and play resources; reflecting strong local support and a good community ethos. The staff also make consistent use of their key person system to support and advise parents, through the use of parental questionnaires; and written progress reviews of children's achievement.

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

The setting organises excellent planning for learning. Staff key persons are allocated a specific learning area, which they pursue with the children for a set period. This ensures all of the six areas are fully covered within the programme. Key persons also use their observations of children to effectively plan individually focused tasks for children, to support their advancement and developing needs. The staff also use a floor plan to change and vary activities, and introduce new play themes and learning initiatives. The intensive use of key staff, and strong focus on individual children, ensures the setting's planning is a highly organised and strong element of practice; and is outstanding in its support for children's enjoying and achieving.

Staff show excellent support for children's learning, through their teaching and close working with the children. Staff provide a wide range of learning opportunities, with frequent one-to-one contact and well organised group play and learning tasks. For example, at set times during each session, children have circle-time, or an organised story reading with staff. Staff also successfully encourage children's own invented play; and many active and exciting child led activities are enabled, through staff skill with observing and questioning. The setting has a highly organised and well presented assessment system. Frequent notes are made on individual children's progress across all the six areas of learning, and each child has a detailed development folder where information and observations are recorded. Staff also carry out regular assessments of each child, that are then presented to parents for comment. Currently staff are considering the introduction of a more streamlined, and focused system to identify children's next steps in their learning; and this is the setting's main area for improvement.

The setting strongly support children's healthy development. Close care is taken by staff to be aware of children's allergies and personal care plans, and a well organised snack time is provided. This is well used by staff and children to provide a well focused rest break, and reflective period; during the busy play session. Periodic play and learning projects are also provided that support healthy eating, and learning about hygiene. The setting's excellent play garden offers a wide range of opportunities to promote children's physical development. Children greatly enjoy playing and being active, and are encouraged to be outside every day. Staff are also proactive and highly supportive in encouraging children's confidence and developing physical skills; with many games that involve balance, climbing and catching.

Children are consistently encouraged to feel safe and secure at the setting. A clear range of supportive guidance is provided for parents and children when commencing, and starting on their early learning journey. The setting also has a well organised set of safety procedures and range of risk assessments in place; which support all types of events, outings and children's activities. Good and consistent support is also provided for children's personal and social development. For example, daily 'small group' sessions are organised where children learn to listen and say their news. Throughout all the play activities, staff are also vigilant

in helping children to cooperate and share with others.

Due to the setting's excellent planning, play environment and presentation of resources, children's skills for future learning are fully promoted. Communication, language and literacy is placed foremost within the play programme, with staff providing strong support for reading and writing. For example, children have many opportunities for mark making and choosing books, and their awareness of sounds and confidence with words, when sharing their ideas, is well supported. Problem solving, reasoning and numeracy is consistently maintained and explored, through frequent counting and learning about shapes and sizes. Children also enjoy using a wide range of assembly and technology based play items. Evidence of children's creative development is abundant within the setting, with many improvised games initiated by the children. Particularly in the cosy corners and 'den' making areas and in the clear spaces where children can be expressive; as they pretend to be animals and monsters. A considerable amount of learning activities support children's knowledge and understanding of the world. For example children experience the properties of cornflower mixed with water, and spend a lot of time exploring textures. Staff also help children to learn about nature, and children grow their own food in the setting's planting area.

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	1
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
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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	1
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	1

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