

Smileys Creche

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspection date 20/06/2011
Inspector Christine Williams

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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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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

Smiley's Creche is privately owned and one of three nurseries run by Smiley's Creche Limited. It opened in 2003 and operates from three rooms within single storey premises in the grounds of the Alexandra Hospital, Redditch. Children have access to an enclosed outdoor play area. The setting mainly cares for the children of hospital staff and primary care team. It is open each weekday from 7am to 6pm for 52 weeks of the year.

The nursery is registered on the Early Years Register. A maximum of 50 children may attend the nursery at any one time. There are currently 90 children aged from six months to under five years on roll, some in part-time places. The setting also makes provision for children older than the early years age group which is registered on the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. The nursery has suitable procedures to support children with special educational needs/ and or disabilities and children with English as an additional language.

There are 18 members of staff, most of whom hold appropriate early years qualifications to at least NVQ Level 2 or 3. Two members of staff are qualified to degree Level. The setting provides funded early education to three-and four-year-olds and receives support from the local authority.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is satisfactory.

This is an improving setting where many new ways of working have recently been introduced to help raise the overall quality. All areas of children's welfare and learning and development are at least satisfactory and good in some areas. Safeguarding and promoting children's health are particular strengths and children make sound progress, settle quickly and show they feel confident to explore. There is a close relationship with parents and partnerships with some outside professionals. The nursery's new manager is motivated and focuses successfully on priorities. Self-evaluation has been used well to target areas for immediate improvement; although there is more to do to ensure continuous progress will be made in the future.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- improve the effectiveness of children's learning assessments by analysing and identifying the next steps and sharing these with their parents
- improve partnership working to ensure there are effective links with professionals from other agencies

- improve the effectiveness of self-evaluation through a regular cycle of plan, action and review and monitoring by the senior leadership team.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Safeguarding procedures are effective and are an area of strength within the nursery. Staff have a thorough knowledge and understanding of how to protect children and know how to act professionally if they have any concerns about a child. They are all appropriately checked and have recently received up-to-date safeguarding training. Good strategies, such as risk assessments and safety checks, ensure children are kept safe at all times and there are effective security arrangements.

Those in charge have a strong sense of purpose about what they want to achieve. The new manager has been instrumental in making a wide range of changes and driving forward improvements in quality. Clear improvements are evident and outcomes for children are strengthening. Many new ways of working have recently been introduced throughout the nursery and these are starting to have a positive effect. For example, safeguarding and promoting children's health are particular strengths and are the result of the nursery successfully targeting its actions. Self-evaluation has been used well to pinpoint the nursery's strengths and weakness and plan immediate priorities. Action plans show improvements to training, resources and practice and, although some weaknesses still remain, these are being systematically tackled. However, the capacity to do more in the future is hampered by a lack of robust monitoring of any changes that have been made. Accountability, professional supervision and day-to-day management arrangements are clear and understood by the whole staffing team and all required documentation is in place and of good quality.

There are strengths in the nursery's welcoming and safe environment and the warmth and friendliness of all staff. Partnerships with local schools and the other settings children attend are strengthening, and this particularly supports children during their transition to school. However, the nursery's links with health professionals and other agencies are tentative and there is more to be done to ensure these are fully effective. Staff work hard to develop close relationships with children's families. For example, they talk to parents daily, share their child's progress with them and provide lots of information through newsletters and displays. Parents' views are sought informally and formally through questionnaires and these highlight the care, friendship and practical help offered by staff.

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

Children develop positive attitudes and are interested and motivated to learn. They have opportunities to explore and learn new things and make steady progress in all areas of their learning. Interesting experiences stimulate children's curiosity,

and they benefit from colourful and well resourced care rooms and frequent access to outside play. Children are able to play freely, make choices and enjoy close attention. Interesting materials such as shaving foam, tyres and cardboard tubes are used with enthusiasm, and there are quiet areas for looking at books, and busy areas such as the 'home' corner. Staff frequently observe and assess children so they know what they enjoy doing and the progress they are making. However, they are not yet confident in identifying and planning how to move children forward so that they can reach their full potential.

Children show they feel happy and settled within the nursery. They make close bonds with their key person and make friends with other children from different backgrounds. Children are given lots of praise and encouragement and reward charts are used to encourage positive behaviour. For example, they learn to respect their toys and be kind to each other. Children's language skills are developing generally well and they enjoy looking at picture books and learning songs and rhymes. Three-and four-year-olds are beginning to link sounds to letters through a simple phonic system and there are opportunities to make marks with pens, chalks, paint and sand. Problem solving skills are learnt as children build and put things together, and they count during most activities. There is regular use of simple computer games and the youngest children use a range of push button and interactive toys that make them aware of simple technology. Children develop their imagination as they dress up or imitate everyday experiences, such as making the tea. They often make up their own games; pretending they are super heroes.

Children's health is promoted well. Children develop healthy habits, such as cleaning their teeth and washing their hands, and they eat healthily and enjoy being active. Hot meals are provided at lunch time, and this is complemented with plenty of fresh fruit and regular drinks of milk and water. Outside areas have recently been improved to include growing and exploring areas and children learn to move their bodies in different ways as they climb, peddle, slide and balance. Children's safety is well considered and they show they are confident in exploring their surroundings because they feel happy and secure. Staff are skilled in providing safe support to babies and toddlers when they are learning early walking skills and three-and four-year-olds show they know how to be careful when climbing and using push along toys.

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?	3
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	3

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	2
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding	2
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	3
The effectiveness of partnerships	3
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	3

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	3
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	3
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	3
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	3

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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