

The Cherries Pre-School Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspector

Sue Hall

Setting address

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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

The Cherries Pre-school group opened in 2011 and is situated in the village of Newington, Kent. From 1983 the group was based in the village hall. It now operates from three rooms plus toilets / shower facilities, an office and laundry / staffroom in purpose-built accommodation that was previously the adjoining school's nursery. There is also direct access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area. The group is managed by a committee and children attend from the age of two. There are currently 30 children on roll and a maximum of 26 children may attend at any one time and for a variety of sessions. The pre-school is open on Monday to Thursday from 9am to 3.45pm and on Friday from 9am to 12.45pm for 39 weeks of the year. Between 12 noon and 12.45pm each day there is a lunch club. The provision is registered on the Early Years Register. The setting supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and welcomes those who speak English as an additional language although there are none currently on roll. The pre-school employs seven adults and contingency staff as required. All staff including the managers hold appropriate early years qualifications to at least NVQ Level 3. The group receives support and advice from the local authority.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

The quality of provision is good. The children participate in a range of activities and experiences indoors and outside that supports their learning and personal development well. Parents and carers say their children particularly enjoy the outdoor area which they use in all weathers although resources are limited. Most children behave well and all are fully included in activities, many of which they choose for themselves. The managers and staff have a clear and generally accurate idea of the groups' effectiveness and areas for improvement, although opportunities are missed to develop children's communication skills. There is good capacity to maintain continuous improvement.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- extend the staff focus upon improving children's communication skills particularly when speaking and also in early reading and writing activities
- improve the outdoor learning environment to ensure it is more stimulating and provides greater challenges.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

In the short time that the group has worked in the new premises staff have ensured a smooth transition and that the children are safeguarded at all times. Following the recent move staff organised a number of checks including, for example, several fire drills so that all children who attend the different sessions became familiar with what they have to do in an emergency. Site security is carefully considered and there are well established routines for the security of external and internal entrances that ensure children are kept safe and cannot access other areas. Staff and volunteers are carefully checked for their suitability to work with young children. All adults have good awareness of child protection regulations and requirements. The wide range of appropriate policies and procedures are carefully and regularly reviewed. Staff conduct regular risk assessments and ensure resources are plentiful, clean and in good condition. Staff are well qualified in working with children of this age. They keep up-to-date with changes to promote children's learning and development and attend additional training activities to further increase their skills. With more children now attending from the age of two staff ensure that activities contain an appropriate level of challenge for those of different ages and abilities. Planning is securely based on the areas of learning and allows staff to plan for the next steps. Self-evaluation procedures are well considered with recent reviews largely matching the findings of the inspection. Following the recommendations of an earlier inspection the staff have improved the recording of accidents, the treatment received and the manner in which parents are informed. Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities are identified early and staff liaise with parents and carers and involve outside agencies as appropriate. There are good links with other agencies and particularly with the host school. The extensive programme of visits prior to transfer coupled with a developing range of skills helps prepare children for their future. The partnerships with parents and carers are good. All of those spoken to during the inspection were very pleased with the quality of care provided and feel staff are particularly responsive to the individual needs of their families. They feel well informed through a regular supply of information and noted how much their children enjoy attending.

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

Children make good progress in all areas of their learning and personal development. They grow in confidence and develop their self-esteem well. The records that staff keep of the progress made, in the form of 'My unique story' are good. They illustrate the careful assessments that are made of what the children can do and help identify where additional support may be needed. Most children settle well and are willing and happy learners because they can choose freely from a variety of activities on offer to them. There are good relationships between staff and children who if they are uncertain or unhappy are comforted well by staff who

show warmth in their dealings with the children.

Children particularly like playing outside and often make a bee-line for this area when they arrive. They enjoy very active play including using trikes, scooters and self-propelled vehicles that encourage their physical skills. The development of a healthy lifestyle is supported well by healthy snacks and drinks as seen in their enjoyment of wholemeal bread, soft cheese and slices of cucumber. They are also encouraged to try foods that are new to them such as crab sticks. While children enjoy the outdoor area it is not particularly stimulating. There is no permanent play apparatus and whilst staff use other equipment on a regular basis this does not promote imaginative play, turn taking and discussion or provide challenges as well as it might.

Most children are well behaved and clearly feel safe. A few have only limited awareness of others and how their own behavior impacts on the safety of their friends. Staff manage children's behaviour well and defuse minor squabbles by diverting their attention to other activities. Resources and themes including a current focus on 'Holidays and the Seaside' are based on children's interests. Their ideas are welcomed and pursued which helps them make a positive contribution to the setting. Financial resources are targeted carefully towards developing new areas with staff recently involved for example in yoga training. The setting promotes equal opportunities well. The children have the opportunity to learn more about their own culture and history including a celebration and memory session in the old setting and a procession to the new base. Children also celebrate other festivals and use a range of resources that promote positive images of diversity.

When children start at the pre-school several have lower level speaking and listening skills than is expected for their age. While the staff sometimes encourage children to develop a wider vocabulary, at times opportunities are missed to encourage the children to speak at greater length and to use a more mature and descriptive vocabulary. Similarly while there is display of children's work and materials of educational interest around the areas there are not many examples of the written word through the use of captions and labels or significantly featuring children's early attempts at reading and writing. Children enjoy using computers and are able to change the colour when filling in a picture outline. Overall all areas of learning and development are promoted well and prepare children well for the future.

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

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| 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

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| 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 | 2 |
| 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

| | |
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| 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

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| Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage | 2 |
| The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning | 2 |
| 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 | 2 |

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