

# Minster Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Inspection date</b>	07/09/2011
<b>Inspector</b>	Jane Wakelen

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<b>Type of setting</b>	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

Minster Nursery Group opened in 1963. It was re-registered in 2011 due to a change of premises and is now known as Minster Playgroup. It is committee run and operates from a self-contained unit on the premises of Minster Primary School in Sheppey, Kent. There are separate kitchen and toilet facilities. Children have access to a secure outdoor play area. There is disabled access to the premises. The playgroup is open each weekday from 9am to 12pm and on a Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday from 9am to 3pm. A breakfast club is in place which opens at 8am each weekday. The playgroup operates for 38 weeks of the year.

The provision is registered on the Early Years Register and both the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. A maximum of 50 children may attend the playgroup at any one time. There are currently 70 children aged from two years to under five years on roll. Children aged three and four years receive funding for nursery education. The setting currently supports children with special educational needs and children who speak English as an additional language.

There are eleven members of staff, including the manager. Of these, ten members of staff hold appropriate early years qualifications, with one member of staff working towards an early years qualification.

## The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Overall children are safe, secure and make good progress in their learning and development, because staff have a good knowledge of the Early Years Foundation Stage. Children flourish in the welcoming environment, which is richly furnished with an excellent range of resources and equipment. The partnership with parents is excellent, with parents actively contributing their views and suggestions to influence the decision making within the setting. The management team, together with the staff, are extremely enthusiastic and motivated to ensure good improvement, through well established monitoring and self evaluation procedures.

## What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- further develop the observation and assessment process to ensure children's next steps extend their learning and provide challenging opportunities
- extend opportunities for children to develop their numeracy and literacy skills through practical activities in all areas.

## **The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision**

Children are safeguarded well because all staff have a secure knowledge of keeping children safe. They attend training on a regular basis and implement the well-written policy effectively. Safe arrival and departure procedures are established to ensure children leave with the correct adult and prevent unwanted visitors being able to enter the premises. This is fully supported by a security password system that is operated in emergency situations. The management team place high emphasis on protecting children and implement a rigorous vetting procedure when recruiting new staff to ensure their suitability. This is maintained by the annual appraisal system and half-year review. Effective risk assessments are in place and carried out on a yearly and weekly basis to ensure the children are able to play in a safe, secure environment.

The premises is bright, welcoming and purpose-built to provide a stimulating place for children to play and learn. The excellent range of resources and equipment enables children to freely select equipment and make choices from the different zones within the setting. This provides children with the range of resources to fully cover all six areas of learning. The provision is monitored and evaluated on a daily basis by staff to ensure children's individual needs are being met. Throughout the setting, positive images of disability and different cultures are reflected within the resources, such as books, small world play and the good range of posters displayed on the walls. Staff actively promote equality and diversity and openly tackle any discrimination. All the staff have a thorough knowledge of their key children's backgrounds and needs. This information is used to enable staff to implement activities or specific programmes to meet children's individual needs. Good partnership with outside agencies and other professionals is utilised well to develop Individual Educational Plans for specific children where necessary.

The setting has highly positive relationships with all parents and carers. Staff possess excellent skills, which make the families and children feel welcomed into the setting and this supports the settling-in process. Parents are invited to stay with their children to help them settle and complete forms with their key person to provide personal information regarding children's likes, dislikes and activities they like doing. This ensures activities can be provided to engage children's interests and encourage them to gain a sense of belonging, whilst building their confidence. Parents are encouraged to share their views through questionnaires and daily verbal communication and are welcomed onto the committee. The management team then use this information from the parents to influence how the setting operates and to adapt the services it offers. All parents spoken to felt staff were extremely welcoming and were kept very well informed about their child's development and achievements. One parent commented 'I feel my child is exceptionally well cared for and is making excellent progress'.

The setting has recently moved into new premises and has worked tirelessly to achieve the well developed provision in place. The management team, including

the committee, are extremely well motivated and enthusiastic about the setting. They communicate high expectations to the staff, who reflect the commitment to providing good quality care for all the children attending. Regular monitoring of the provision, regular staff meetings and self-evaluation ensure the good, continuous improvement promotes strong outcomes for children.

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

Overall, children are keen to attend the setting and make good relationships with their key person. They settle well and move around the setting confidently exploring and investigating their environment. Children make good progress in their learning and development because staff are competent and provide a stimulating environment, conducive to learning. Staff make regular observations on all children and support these with photographs when completing their individual records. Each observation is linked to the guidance for the Early Years Foundation Stage and a record made to ensure all areas are given equal consideration. The 'unique story' is used to support this record, involving parents within the assessment process to keep them fully involved and informed. However, staff do not always use children's next steps effectively to fully extend their learning or to provide challenging activities to cover all six areas.

Children have access to an excellent range of resources which are all stored at child-height, enabling children to self-select. They show excellent concentration as they sit at the computers, showing skill using the mouse and navigating around the programmes. Children work alongside each other showing good co-operative skills. They display awe and delight as they handle the stick insects and snails and ask questions, such as 'where do they live', showing interest in living things. The construction toys, train track and dinosaurs are all popular choices, further supporting children's knowledge and understanding of the world in which they live. Books are used effectively in many areas to support children's understanding, such as naming different dinosaurs. Children show good concentration listening to stories in the book corner, which is welcoming and provides a cosy area to relax. Some children are beginning to recognise some letters and sounds, although labels around the room are too small to encourage children to look at them. Children's progress in communicating, literacy and skills relating to information and communication technology is developing well, supporting their skills for the future.

Children are able to learn about living a healthy lifestyle as they access healthy options at snack time. They learn about food which is good for them, as they enjoy promoting their independence, spreading butter on their toast and pouring their milk or water. Snacks vary on a daily basis and any allergies or dietary needs are taken into account by staff, who promote snack time as a social occasion. Children enjoy helping to wash the plates and cups in the child-height sink, further promoting their self-esteem as they show good responsibility to the task.

Children demonstrate a feeling of security and sense of belonging as they move around the setting. They approach staff to meet their individual needs and enjoy a cuddle and reassurance if they are feeling a little anxious. Children build strong relationships with their key person and develop good relationships with their peers. Older children confidently remind younger or new children about safety issues, such as not climbing on the low cupboard and not to run indoors. Children show a secure understanding of the rules of the setting and take responsibility for tasks such as tidying the toys away at the end of the session.

Children are valued and respected by the staff, who know the children and their backgrounds well. Staff offer lots of praise and encouragement to children to promote good behaviour, offering explanations about what was good. For example, staff tell children 'good sitting' or 'good listening' helping children understand what behaviour is expected. Children play well independently and co-operatively, accepting each others differences. They have good opportunities to learn about different festivals, cultures and religions through planned activities. Food tasting, arts, crafts and visits by people in the community, including parents, further supports their understanding about diversity and their local community.

## 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

<b>How well does the setting meet the needs of the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?</b>	2
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	2

### The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	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	1

### 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

<b>Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	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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## **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