

Tadpoles Pre-School Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspector	Sara Garrity
Setting address	Sports Pavilion, St Mildreds Road, Ramsgate, Kent, CT12 4DE
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Type of setting	Childcare - Non-Domestic

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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

Tadpoles Pre-School is a privately owned pre-school and opened in 1995. It operates from the sports pavilion in Minster, Kent and has the sole use of a fenced off area of the recreation ground. Other community groups use the hall when the pre-school is not operating, therefore equipment is stored away daily. The pre-school serves the local rural community and is located next to the local primary school. It is registered on the Early Years Register and both the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register for a total of 20 children. There are currently 26 children on roll aged from two years to four years. It is funded to provide free early education to children aged two, three and four years. The pre-school supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those learning English as an additional language. It is open Monday to Friday from 9am to 12pm, for 38 weeks of the year. It also offers an afternoon session on Tuesdays from 1pm to 15.30pm, during the spring and summer terms. The pre-school employs six staff. Of these, one holds a Degree in Early Years and Education, five hold a relevant National Vocational Qualification at level 2 or 3, with one working towards a childcare qualification.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

The pre-school offers an extremely well-planned and stimulating environment, which reflects the interests of all the children attending. Staff support children very well overall, so most needs are met effectively and they make at least good progress in their learning. Children behave well and have strong friendships with one another and trusting relationships with adults. Staff constantly review practice generally doing so accurately, and demonstrate a good ability to maintain continuous improvement. Extremely strong partnerships with parents are evident. The pre-school has developed excellent links with outside agencies, local schools, as well as the wider community to provide the best possible outcomes for children.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- review the use of the 'key person' system at the start of sessions to provide a better balance between meeting the needs of parents wishing to talk with staff and those of children, so that children receive the reassurance and support they need if feeling anxious, unsettled or unsure
- extend the risk assessment to cover anything with which a child may come into contact, with specific reference to the kitchen area.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children are safeguarded well overall as staff implement stipulated policies and most procedures effectively. Staff have received safeguarding and paediatric first aid training and are aware of how to protect the children in their care well. The risk assessment is carried out effectively overall, but does not include all areas with which the children come into contact. There is no system to demonstrate to Ofsted that staff have informed parents of any medicines administered to children. Despite the weakness in written documentation, all staff are well aware of the potential hazards in the pre-school environment and minimise these effectively. Robust appointment procedures mean that all staff are cleared as being suitable to work with young children.

All staff are very dedicated to improving outcomes for children. They update their knowledge and expertise through acquiring new qualifications, and undertaking further training. Staff are encouraged to take on additional responsibilities in the pre-school and are actively involved in the self evaluation process. Clear and concise action plans are in place, which identify strengths and areas for improvement, well overall. Realistic and achievable plans have led to the pre-school reviewing its learning environment. Staff have made changes to the role-play area for example, introducing new dressing up clothes as well as a variety of other resources. This has resulted in a renewed interest in this area. Staff use observation effectively to record children's learning and development. Observations are used very well to inform planning, which helps to support all children in making good progress. They also record the children's well-being and involvement, enabling them to monitor how well the environment and activities are meeting the individual needs of the children. The start of sessions is busy as parents share information with their children's key persons. Most children cope well with this period and settle quickly, but some find this time unsettling and their particular requirements are not fully met,

Exceptionally well thought out resources and equipment stimulate children's imaginations and feelings of curiosity, as these are used most effectively to support learning. Children enjoy a wealth of opportunities to develop their skills in all areas of learning and development. Staff nurture and extend the children's enthusiasm to learn and explore the world around them. The staff have an extensive knowledge of the children and their families. Resources and activities reflect the backgrounds of the children as well as enabling them to learn about other cultures. All children make at least good progress, and demonstrate outstandingly good behaviour; older children support and help to look after younger friends.

The pre-school values the help and support it receives from outside agencies. Highly effective lines of communications are in place to support all children and families in the pre-school who require additional help. Staff support children very well when moving on to school, with reception teachers visiting the pre-school and children going on reciprocal visits. Parents and carers are extremely satisfied with the way in which their children are cared for and the progress they make. Parents' views and opinions are regularly sought through one to one discussions, regular meetings, and annual questionnaires. Parents feel part of the pre-school and are invited on outings as well as encouraged to come into sessions to help or bring

along items of interest from home, such as a tractor and chickens.

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

The children demonstrate exceptional capabilities in working both independently and with others. They chatter away to friends and themselves throughout the session, singing songs as they play, displaying high levels of well-being and contentment. Children are encouraged to look after their environment by helping adults to tidy up and put equipment away responsibly. Adults are supportive of all children, praising, and encouraging them throughout the session. Staff observe children and allow them time to work things out for themselves, they know the children well and know when to step in and help. Children are encouraged to become actively involved in their learning by predicting outcomes: for example, children collect items to place in the water tray, predict if these will float or sink. Staff support the children very well, extending their learning by exploring whether things are heavy or light. Children's views are important to the pre-school and staff spend time including these in the planning. This is achieved through staff sitting with the children and discussing different activities they could plan for the following week.

The staff are extremely adept at incorporating literacy and numeracy in all planned and spontaneous events. For example, a sorting activity based on children's next stages of development enables connections between the number of objects and number symbols. While other children are introduced to numbers by counting steps as they climb to reach the slide. There are extensive opportunities for children to practice early writing both inside and out in the garden, with children exploring textures and making patterns in cornflour with their fingers. While inside, children make party invitations using different coloured paper and pencils. They also use a large sheet of paper on the wall to encourage the boys to embrace early writing on a larger scale. All activities support communication, language and literacy, as well as social skills with children interacting very well with each other to extend learning. Adults are positive role models, such as when washing their hands with the children before sitting down to eat. Snack time is a social experience where children are encouraged to make healthy choices about what they are going to eat. Children's independence is nurtured with all children having the opportunity to pour their own drinks. Adults sit with the children, catching up on the day's events. After the children have finished their snacks, they are responsible for taking plates and cups through to the kitchen for washing. The children are extremely competent and confident learners who enjoy the extensive challenges and experiences offered.

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	1
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	1
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

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	2
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

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