

The West Somerset Nursery Group

Inspection report for early years provision

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142817

Inspection date

07/10/2011

Inspector

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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

West Somerset Nursery registered in 1998. It is run by a voluntary committee. The nursery operates from a single-storey building in Minehead, Somerset. There is a baby room with sleeping and changing facilities within the room and access to its own outside play area. There are two large playrooms for children aged two to eight years of age. One of these is specifically for messy play and the other has direct access to the fully enclosed outside area. The large hallway doubles as a separate dining area at snack and mealtimes for children over two. There are toilet facilities directly off this area.

The nursery is registered on the Early Years Register and both the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. It is registered to provide care for a maximum of 39 children in the early years age group, and to provide out of school care for a maximum of eight children under eight years of age. This is in addition to their separate out of school registration which operates from a nearby setting. There are currently 62 children on roll in the early years age range and four children on roll in the out of school provision. The setting is in receipt of funding for the provision of free early education sessions to children aged two, three and four years old. The nursery is open from 8am to 6pm Monday to Friday all year round.

The manager has a Level 4 Early Years qualification and her assistant manager/deputy holds a Level 3. Three seniors, have a Level 3 qualification. In addition, there are three other Level 3 qualified staff one of whom is studying for her Foundation Degree in Early Years, one Level 2, one training towards Level 2 and one apprentice. They are supported by a lunch time assistant who is unqualified. There is also an administrator and cleaner.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is inadequate.

The nursery is not meeting children's needs due to several breaches of specific legal requirements. These relate to the failure to record details of how it ensures that adults are suitable to come into contact with children, risk assessments and implementation of the medication policy. All of these have a negative impact on children's health and safety. The nursery has not made continuous improvement since its last inspection due to the limited knowledge of the Early Years Foundation Stage of some staff. This impacts on the nursery's leadership, management and organisation.

Overall, the early years provision requires significant improvement. The registered person is given a Notice to Improve that sets out actions to be carried out.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To comply with the requirements of the EYFS the registered person must take the following action by the specified date:

- implement an effective policy on administering medicines (Safeguarding and promoting children's welfare) 10/10/2011
- ensure records are kept of the information used to assess suitability to demonstrate to Ofsted that checks have been done. Such records must include the unique reference numbers of Criminal Record Bureau Disclosures obtained and the date on which they were obtained (Suitable people) 14/10/2011
- take all reasonable steps to ensure that hazards to children are kept to a minimum (Suitable premises, environment and equipment). 10/10/2011

To improve the early years provision the registered person should:

- support children's progress towards the early learning goals in all six areas of learning through improved staff deployment and interaction and through improved organisation of resources
- give children encouragement to discover and use new words and mathematical ideas, concepts and language during their play
- provide a programme of continuing professional development, with particular regard to improving staff's knowledge of all aspects of the Early Years Foundation Stage framework in order to further improve outcomes for children.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Safeguarding is inadequate due to several breaches of specific legal requirements. These relate to the setting's policy on administering medication, risk assessment and not having evidence of all committee members' suitability. There are many bottles of non-prescription medicines and creams with only children's Christian names scribbled on the boxes. Some of the medications are out-of-date and there are no systems to check whether they are still suitable to be used. They are stored on the premises for many of the children and this does not comply with the nursery's own written policy. This compromises children's health. Risk assessments are not robust enough to cover everything children come into contact with. For example, due to poor supervision and assessment of risk a young child is able to pull a heavy, full-size keyboard off a low unit. This puts children at direct risk. Children's safety is compromised due to a lack of staff supervision at times inside and outside and due to staff's confusion over ratios and the layout of the rooms.

The manager does not keep records of the information used to assess the suitability of committee members. She does not have a record of the unique reference numbers of Criminal Records Bureau disclosures, which is a legal requirement. She does, however, have suitability letters to demonstrate that checks have been done and the committee do not have unsupervised contact with children so the impact on children's care is low.

Generally, there is a range of appropriate toys and resources inside and outside to meet children's individual needs. There is an appropriate balance of planned, adult-led activities and child-initiated play. However, staff are not always deployed well to meet the needs of the children. For example, even though the outside area is fully enclosed and easy to supervise, staff stand at the playground gate for security purposes rather than engaging with the children's play. This does not support children's learning or meet their individual needs effectively. There are duplicated activities in the two rooms used by the two to five year olds, which does not entice children into the messy play room. This shows poor organisation of resources.

Since the last inspection there have been many staff changes and the Early Years Foundation Stage has been introduced. These have led to a lack of continuous improvement. Some staff are very knowledgeable about the Early Years Foundation Stage but other key staff lack confidence in both the learning and development requirements and the welfare requirements. The staff have not completed a self-evaluation and are clearly unaware of some of the weaknesses of the setting and how they impact on outcomes for children. The manager made some immediate changes to documentation at the inspection once weaknesses were identified. This shows some commitment to improvement.

Equality and diversity is appropriately promoted most of the time as one of the key members of staff responsible for the role of special educational needs co-ordinator is very experienced and dedicated. She is a good role model to less qualified staff and helps to improve the way in which staff care for children. However, some staff make inappropriate comments to children, which means that their individual needs are not met successfully. The setting works in partnership with parents and with some other professionals. There are clear and accessible channels for parents and staff to communicate about general issues and their child's general development. Current observation and assessment systems do not always show clearly how children are progressing towards the early learning goals in relation to their starting points. However, these are already in the process of being improved, following input and support from the Local Authority.

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

Generally, children feel safe due to established routines and clear boundaries about where they play safely. They learn how to be safe when playing through reminders, such as the need to sit down at the top of the slide. However, the various safeguarding issues impact on children's ability to feel safe.

Children are beginning to learn about health through their personal hygiene routines, such as washing their hands before eating and after using the toilet to prevent cross infection. However, they are not encouraged to wash their sticky hands after eating fruit at snack time and before they carry on playing with the toys, which does not encourage them to care for the resources. Children enjoy playing outside and developing their physical skills with balls, climbing apparatus and wheeled toys.

Most children are beginning to show a sense of belonging to the setting and are forming positive relationships. They are generally happy and engaged in age-appropriate play activities although sometimes their self-esteem is knocked by staff's comments about not remembering their names. Children's behaviour is satisfactory. However, they do not experience good, positive role-modelling by all staff. Some staff are loud and shout and answer other staff's questions which were meant for the children to answer.

Children achieve appropriately in most aspects of their learning due to an appropriate range of activities and experiences. However, they are not always sufficiently challenged by all staff to make progress during their spontaneous play. For example, children love to experiment with shaving foam and water but when they request another bowl as the solution is overflowing there are no discussions about volume, capacity, measure or size. Children make choices in their learning and show an interest in their world around them but do not always have their vocabulary developed by all staff while developing these skills 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

How well does the setting meet the needs of the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?	4
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	4

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	4
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	4
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	3
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding	4
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	4
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

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	4
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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	4
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	4
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
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The provider confirms that the requirements of the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are:	Met
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