

Boundary Road Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

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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*.

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Description of the setting

Boundary Road Pre-School opened in 1997 and operates from one room in a scout hut in the town of Chatham, Kent. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area. The pre-school is situated in a residential area. It is open each weekday from 9.15am to 12.15pm for 37 weeks of the year.

The pre-school is registered on the Early Years Register. A maximum of 20 children may attend the pre-school at any one time. There are currently 24 children aged from two years to under five years on roll. The nursery supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and children who speak English as an additional language. The pre-school provides free early education for three and four-year-olds with some assisted two year olds.

The pre-school employs five staff, including the manager, all of whom hold appropriate early years qualifications. The manager has recently obtained a BA Honours Degree in Early Childhood Studies.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is satisfactory.

Children are actively helped to keep safe and secure in the setting. Engagement with parents is good; through partnership working staff learn about children's backgrounds, meet children's individual needs and provide consistency of care. Good use is made of the indoor and outdoor play spaces and children enjoy the activities they are offered. However, the system of observation, assessment and planning is not effective in helping all children to make sufficient progress in their learning and development and as a result some children are not suitably challenged. The staff and management team demonstrates a commitment to continuous improvement. Some self-evaluation takes place but this has not been used fully to improve outcomes for children.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- improve strategies to support children's understanding about working as part of a group, taking turns and sharing fairly
- implement an effective system of self-evaluation to further identify the strengths and areas of the provision to develop to secure improved outcomes for children
- improve the system of observation and assessment to identify next steps in children's learning and development to inform future planning.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Safeguarding is given high priority within the setting. All staff have attended safeguarding training and demonstrate a good knowledge of the procedures to follow should they have any concerns about any children in their care. Rigorous risk assessments are carried out and identified risks are minimised to provide a safe play environment. Staff are all vigilant in their supervision of the children. All staff have Criminal Records Bureau checks carried out to ensure their suitability to work with children. This process is continued through annual appraisals to ensure staff's ongoing suitability. There are safe systems in place for the arrival and departure of the children; a password system further promotes security. Policies and procedures for the safe and efficient management of the provision are well maintained and implemented. These are made available to parents to keep them informed about the roles and responsibilities of staff.

Children use a good range of resources that have been pre-selected by the staff to cover all six areas of learning. These are placed around the room in areas, enabling children to make informed choices. Children are able to ask for additional resources, which staff happily supply, allowing children to follow their interests. They can move freely between the indoor and outdoor play spaces and are encouraged to transport resources to either space, as they wish. However, some children are not fully challenged by some activities due to the lack of effective planning in place.

Staff have a good understanding of children's individual needs and backgrounds and actively promote equality and diversity. Children use resources which reflect positive images of different cultures and some disabilities and staff actively help them to learn to value the differences of others. Staff support children with English as an additional language and develop books for children to value their home language, by naming numbers, colours, and the children's pictures in Polish, for example. Different festivals are celebrated throughout the year, including Christmas, Diwali and Chinese New Year. Children have good opportunities to taste different foods, create traditional crafts and greetings cards and look at traditional clothes relating to the different cultures.

Partnership with parents is a key strength. Each child is allocated a key person who liaises with parents to gather relevant information about the child's individual needs and interests, recording information on a personal profile form. They use this knowledge to plan activities and offer resources that children may be interested in and this supports the settling-in process and helps the child gain a sense of belonging. Staff talk to the parents each day and parents know that they are welcome to talk to staff at any time. Together they provide continuity of care and a good two-way flow of information takes place. There is also a notice board with lots of useful information about the setting, local community events and details about support agencies. The setting has strong links with outside agencies and local schools fully supporting the transition from pre-school to school. This sharing of information enables schools to prepare for their new entrants, therefore,

supporting children's needs.

The leadership and management of the nursery has recently been affected by long term sickness of the manager, impacting on self-evaluation and drive for improvement. In her absence staff have successfully organised the day-to-day running of the pre-school but have not given due consideration to evaluating the provision and identifying aspects for improvement. The manager has now returned and systems are being implemented to improve outcomes for children. The management team is motivated in taking the setting forward and have started to write well-targeted action plans to address some of the areas to develop.

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

Children are settled and good relationships are being established between the children and the staff. Children gain a sense of belonging because staff provide good support to children, raising their self-esteem through praise and valuing each child as an individual. Older children are becoming aware of the rules of the setting, but some younger children find sharing and turn taking difficult, resulting in incidents of unacceptable behaviour. Staff have not established consistent strategies to help these children to understand what is expected of them.

Children move around the setting freely, both indoors and outdoors engaging in activities of their choosing. Staff plan a suitable range of play and learning experiences. They know their key children well and use their recollection of children's interests and abilities to support them during their play. They produce well-written observations of children's activities but do not analyse them to assess children's progress towards the early learning goals across all six areas of children's learning. As a result the activities planned do not always effectively build on what children know and can do to help them to move onto the next step in their learning and ensure they are suitably challenged.

Children eagerly find the dressing-up clothes and use their imagination as they pretend to be superheroes or knights in armour or take on roles based on their own first-hand experiences. Children's creative skills are further developed by using different materials, glue sticks, scissors and mark-making implements available at the 'self-help table' to create using their own ideas.

Children generally make satisfactory progress in communication, language and literacy, numeracy and skills relating to information and communication technology, developing skills for their future. Staff sit with the children extending their language skills. Some children choose to listen to stories with staff, showing good concentration. They ask questions about the story and often join in on familiar parts. Children are given opportunities to recognise their name when they self-register and at snack time when they look for their places, but have limited opportunities to see labels, signs or numbers around the room. Numeracy skills are being developed satisfactorily, with several children showing an interest in numbers. However, mathematical ideas are not used effectively in practical

situations to give meaning to the use of numbers and problem solving. Children use some mathematical language such as talking about 'the big paper' and 'the small car'. Children use electronic toys following instructions, learning cause and effect as they push different levers and buttons and watch what happens.

Children have opportunities to develop their physical skills using large play equipment indoors and outdoors. Outdoor play is promoted well. A group of children show excitement as they dig in the gravel pit, finding treasure. Other children choose to paint or draw. A Forest School is being established which has provided good skills and learning for the older children. This has enabled them to learn life skills, such as how to light a fire safely and use real tools carefully. They learn what berries must not be eaten and observe the wildlife, showing interest in how living things live and grow. Children display a strong sense of security, approaching staff to have their needs met or for reassurance. Staff allow children to take risks, but in a controlled way. For example, using the slide in different ways, but learning how to do this in the safest way.

Children have good opportunities to learn about the benefits of a healthy lifestyle. They have plenty of daily exercise and fresh air and a varied choice of healthy snack options. Children are encouraged to be fully independent and understand why they must wash their hands before they eat. They also wash their cups and plates up when they have finished. Policies and procedures for hygiene and regarding sickness ensure that children are protected where possible from cross-infection.

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	2
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	2
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	2

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
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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	2
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	3

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