

Dorchester Opportunity Group

Inspection report for early years provision

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| Unique reference number | 139334 |
| Inspection date | 20/10/2011 |
| Inspector | Marie Thompson |

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| Setting address | Prince of Wales Pre-School Centre, Maiden Castle Road, Dorchester, Dorset, DT1 2HH |
| Telephone number | 01305 751707 |
| Email | office@dorchesteroppgroup.fsnet.co.uk |
| 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

Dorchester Opportunity Group has been established since 1993, and operates from rooms within the purpose built Prince of Wales Pre-School centre in the county town of Dorchester. Children have use of a main playroom, the school hall, a soft play room, the hydrotherapy pool, a sensory play room, and library. There is an enclosed, safety surfaced playground for outdoor play. The setting caters for children with a wide variety of special educational needs and/or disabilities. The setting has the Quality for All accreditation through the Pre-School Learning Alliance and the Investors in People award. They work closely with other professional agencies involved in the children's care, such as Portage, speech therapists, physiotherapists and psychologists. The setting supports parents and families by offering respite, transport and an outreach service. Children attend from South and West Dorset within an approximately 20 mile radius of Dorchester and admission is through a referral system. The setting is managed by a committee consisting of trustees, parents and staff and a maximum of 20 children may attend at any one time. There are currently 15 children aged from two to five years on roll. Of three- and four-year-olds receive funding for free early education. The group is open on Monday to Thursday 9.30am to 2.30pm and Tuesday and Friday 9.30am to 12.30pm term time only. There are four volunteers and one student who work in the group. There are nine staff who work directly with the children, all of whom hold appropriate early years qualifications. There is also a speech and language therapist who supports children in the setting twice a week.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is outstanding.

Dorchester Opportunity Group provides a truly unique service to the children and families who use their service. Every child thrives in their care and all make good to outstanding progress in their own learning and development. Children are very safe and secure and enjoy their time in the group. Overall, staff reflect extremely well on their practice to ensure they continue to offer the best possible support for the children and families attending. Their ability to support both the children and their families and produce such excellent outcomes for children that is the key to their outstanding practice. Parents are delighted with the provision made for their children. The capacity for the setting to maintain continuous improvement in the future is also outstanding.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To further improve the high quality early years provision the registered person should consider:

- developing further the self-evaluation process to reflect all staff contribution and shared vision of the process.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

This is a highly effective setting in which the quality of provision is outstanding for all the children who attend. The standard of care is exemplary. Safeguarding and ensuring children's safety underpins all aspects of the day-to-day workings of the centre staff. All staff are fully aware of the safeguarding policies and procedures. They are also all involved and take ownership of undertaking risk assessment and ensuring children's safety. Security is excellent, with measures in place to see parents and visitors in and out of the building. Children are safe and feel secure within the setting as staff maintain vigilant supervision and high adult to child ratios at all times.

Staff work together as an excellent team. When reviewing their practice and completing their self-evaluation, most staff play an active role. Overall, this ensures they have shared aspirations, an inspirational vision for the future and a clear understanding of what it is about their existing practice that works so well. Awareness of issues of equality and diversity underpin everyday practice as staff get to know each child extremely well and understand how to meet their differing needs.

Expert practice and an inspiring commitment from staff in this group ensure that all aspects of children's care and learning are promoted with great success overall. Parents are offered superb levels of support and the staff understand the benefits of working in true partnership with them. Partnerships with parents are one of the key strengths and are significant in ensuring the needs of all children are very well met. Throughout the year staff organise activities to enable the whole family to have fun together. For example, family fun days and family learning programme. At the inspection parents commented that staff always go 'above and beyond' to support them and described the group and staff team as 'amazing'. Parents have regular opportunities to discuss their children's progress and are encouraged by the highly skilled staff to play an active role in their children's learning and development. Parents are encouraged to attend regular planning and review meetings, and are supported to express their views of their child's needs. Partnerships with others sharing the children's care are outstanding. The staff work extremely closely with many professionals in order to support the individual needs of the children and their families. The group manager meets regularly with other professionals to discuss and review the individual needs and progress of the children. If children attend another setting, comprehensive information is shared in order to promote children's learning and development collaboratively. Members of staff accompany parents on their visits to first/special schools in order to support them to aid the child's transition. The result is a truly holistic approach to Childcare.

Children have access to an outstanding selection of resources. These are plentiful in all areas and freely accessible to all children. Children's artwork is beautifully

displayed around the centre, showing how much they value individual achievement.

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

Children show clear delight at attending this centre. Children are happy and feel safe, secure and have a strong sense of belonging. This is because they are supported by staff who believe that the freedom of children to play independently and to discover the world is crucial to their development and happiness. They develop close and trusting relationships with the staff and are superbly well supported in their learning and development. They undertake an extensive range of activities and learning opportunities. Staff undertake comprehensive preparation for these to ensure all the required resources are to hand. The areas of learning are seamlessly weaved into each activity. For example shapes, numbers and patterns are integrated into every activity and learning experience. Children have plenty of opportunities for physical activities including gymnastics. The music therapist encourages physical movement to music in the therapy group which takes place each week. There are daily opportunities for soft play and self-stimulating sensory play in the sensory room and garden. Children relish swimming sessions in the hydrotherapy pool. They laugh and splash as they learn to swim, chasing after inflatables and foam shapes. There are frequent opportunities for outside play using a range of equipment. Children have great fun walking or having picnics within the school grounds. Children enthusiastically join in singing songs and story time. Staff enhance these activities by using puppets and also use sign language so that every child is able to participate.

All children show clear enjoyment in their learning. Staff use structured, spontaneous and informal play activities to encourage children's learning and development. They use Picture Exchange Communication System, and sign language with all of the children. Consequently children are able to progress and achieve at their pace relative to their starting points. This is a credit to staff's ability to motivate children even for tasks they find hard or those that test their existing skills. The staff know each child incredibly well and can talk knowledgeably about each child's stage of attainment and future goals. Staff are very skilled in observing children's development regularly and identifying the next steps in their development. This is used very well to plan for the needs of children of all abilities. Due to this, all children are making good to outstanding progress. Staff have a superb understanding of how to support the children to ensure they excel in all areas of their development. Staff act as good role models and have high expectations of the children. Many opportunities are available to develop the skills of turn-taking, waiting and sharing and staff encourage the children to be kind to each other. Children develop their creative skills through the use of mixed media and concepts of the world through themed days. In addition, children visit local farm shops to look at the animals; garden centre's to buy bulbs, vegetables and seeds to grow and to harvest in the centre garden. They then make soup with some of the vegetables or slice the fruit to make smiley faces for a snack time. Children have access to a range of information and communication technology. For

example, a programmable Ladybird and touch screen computer.

To promote children's understanding of good hygiene practices, staff draw their attention to everyday activities such as hand washing. By reinforcing simple messages the highly skilled staff ensure children do not miss out on this type of incidental learning. Children have daily opportunities to develop independence skills such as washing their hands, toileting, dressing and undressing and finding their own bags. Children are encouraged to make healthy choices in their diet. They discuss the need for a balanced diet in their topic work when undertaking activities such as fruit picking in the garden. Children enjoy a range of healthy snacks and a hot meal at lunch time. This ensures that the children from an early age understand how to promote their good health.

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? | 1 |
| The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement | 1 |

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 | 1 |
| The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement | 1 |
| The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources | 1 |
| The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity | 1 |
| The effectiveness of safeguarding | 1 |
| The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement | 1 |
| 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

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| The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage | 1 |
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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 | 1 |
| The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning | 1 |
| The extent to which children feel safe | 1 |
| 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