

Carousel Nursery 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*.

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

Carousel Nursery School opened in 2006 as part of the East Hastings Children's Centre. The nursery is open each weekday for 51 weeks of the year from 8am to 6pm. The nursery is housed within the main Children's Centre building but has a separate street entrance. Children are cared for in two main group areas organised by age and all children share access to a fully enclosed outdoor play area.

The nursery is registered on the Early Years Register and both the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register and may provide care for a maximum of 30 children under eight years of whom no more than six may be under two years. The nursery is currently only operating early years provision, with 36 children on roll including five who are under two years. Children attend on both a full time and part time basis. The nursery welcomes children with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

Whilst the Children's Centre is run by East Sussex County Council, the nursery is privately owned and operated by a provider who also runs two other nurseries locally. There are eight staff working at the nursery all of whom hold appropriate early years qualifications.

The nursery obtained the East Sussex Quality Award in May 2011.

The nursery receives funding for the provision of free early education.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is outstanding.

Children have tremendous fun and make excellent progress in their learning and development in the safe, inclusive and wonderfully child-centred environment. The total commitment to promoting their safety and well-being ensures that they feel secure and develop positive self-esteem. Systems and processes for sharing information are, for the most part, exemplary. Highly effective partnerships with parents, carers and other professionals support the provision of coordinated and consistent care. An outstanding capacity for self-evaluation and continual improvement enables the nursery to offer a service which is constantly evolving to meet the needs of the children and their families.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- reviewing the presentation of information given to parents and carers about the next step identified for their child in order to provide more specific detail about the way in which these will be achieved.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children's safety is given excellent consideration throughout the nursery as is the need to promote their independence. Robust recruitment and vetting procedures are in place and thorough risk assessments are undertaken to ensure that the environment is safe and working practices reflect the needs of the children attending. The careful organisation of the environment and the relaxed but vigilant supervision by staff ensures that children are able to play safely whilst experiencing a very good level of independence. One member of staff takes lead responsibility for child protection and is well aware of the responsibilities attached to this role. Clear and detailed written policies outline the process to be followed in case of any concerns about the children or to respond to any allegations against staff.

Systems and processes are extremely well organised to promote the safe and efficient running of the nursery. The owner and management team demonstrate an outstanding capacity for continual improvement. Robust self-evaluation, which takes into account the view of all staff, parents and children, ensures that the strengths of the provision are recognised and areas for improvement easily identified. In addition a very strong focus is placed on staff training and development. Impressive systems are in place to observe and monitor children's individual progress. A system has also been introduced to analyse data relating to children's rate of development to support the owner and management team to identify and address any gaps in achievement across the nursery as well as for individual children.

Children play in a wonderfully stimulating and child centred environment. They very confidently select from the fantastic range of toys and resources which are very imaginatively organised to pique their interest. All furniture and equipment is well maintained and appropriate for the ages and stages of development of the children. The two outdoor play areas have recently been revamped and are particularly inspiring with a variety of different play surfaces, natural features and an extensive range of activities and experiences.

A clear commitment to identifying children's personalities, preferences and learning styles enables staff to plan opportunities which they are confident will be enjoyed by individual children. Discussions, stories and activities take place to support children to develop an understanding of diversity. These are supported by an excellent range of resources. The traditions and beliefs of the children and their families are marked wherever possible; for example, cooking soup from a traditional Polish recipe. The premises are fully accessible to wheel chair users and staff are trained and experienced in caring for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Extremely effective arrangements are also in place to work with children and families for whom English is an additional language including the use of translation services where necessary.

An exceptional level of thought and effort is given to engaging with parents and carers. They receive a friendly greeting as they arrive to delivery or collect their

child and staff are available for a discussion if necessary. They also receive an impressive range of written formation including each week's activity plans, notices, newsletters and all policies and procedures. They complete annual questionnaires and their feedback is generally very positive, showing high levels of satisfaction with most aspects the service offered. Following the most recent questionnaire a small number of parents and carers stated that they did not feel fully informed about their child's learning. A broad range of strategies exist to share this information but, in the light of these responses, the owner issued clear information to all families explaining the systems in place. Very regular opportunities are provided for parents and carers to meet with their child's key person and discuss their progress. However, written information about the next steps planned for each child does not always inform parents and carers about the specific activities and experiences planned for their child. Extremely effective partnership working with other early years providers and a range of outside agencies ensures that children's needs are identified and appropriate and coordinated support is provided.

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

Children thrive in the wonderfully caring and nurturing environment. Exceptional strategies support them to feel secure and to develop the skills to keep themselves and others safe. The youngest children benefit from the very warm, positive interaction of their trusted carers. Older children take an active part in assessing and managing risks; for example, mapping out the most sensible route for local outings. They also learn, in a sensitive and age appropriate manner, to recognise a range of specific potential dangers including deep water, fire works and speaking with unfamiliar adults.

Children demonstrate a marvellous understanding of the importance of adopting healthy lifestyles. They play in a hygienic environment and are very independent in their toileting, routinely washing their hands. They enjoy a range of healthy snacks and drinks during the session and speak knowledgeably about the importance of good nutrition. They take part in regular cooking activities and recipes for these are provided for parents and carers should they wish to make the dishes at home. Children also benefit from very regular opportunities to take part in physical exercise.

Children make significant gains in their learning and development and are fantastically enthusiastic and independent in their learning. They very confidently explore and investigate their environment and chat happily as they play. Their curiosity and imagination is very positively encouraged by staff. A great deal of one to one attention is given to support each child and, as a result, they have time to question, consider and process their thoughts. This includes very simple but valuable experiences such as observing and discussing a slug in the garden and eventually naming him 'Steve'. These experiences very successfully reinforce children's understanding. The opportunities for children to develop their problem solving, reasoning and numeracy skills are similarly impressive. They learn to count, recognise written numerals and to sort by size, shape and colour. They also

play with resources such as water trays with guttering and water wheels in order to develop an understanding of cause and effect. All children engage in a very impressive range of activities and experiences throughout the day including regular outings into the local community. The nursery makes good use of the local environment to identify woodland classrooms for the children to learn about the natural world as well as enjoying fresh air and physical exercise.

Overall children are wonderfully polite, friendly and well behaved. Excellent strategies are in place to support their social development. They learn how to make a positive contribution to society through activities such as recycling and donating a Christmas tree for the local community. They are encouraged to become proficient in the use of ICT equipment including computers, web cams and cameras and their families are given support to consider the safety aspects of these resources. These skills, along with the excellent support given to manage their transitions, ensure that children are well prepared for the challenges of the challenges they may face in 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?	1
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	1

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

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

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

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