

# Dovedale Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

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**Unique reference number** 203907  
**Inspection date** 07/11/2011  
**Inspector** Lynn Clements

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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

Dovedale Nursery opened in 1991. It operates from a purpose built building on the Moulsham Street campus of Chelmsford College. The nursery serves the local and wider area. They are registered on the Early Years Register and on the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. The nursery is registered to provide care for a maximum of 50 children at any one time. There are currently 131 children on roll. This includes 52 funded children. The setting supports a small number of children who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Children attend for a variety of sessions.

The group opens 48 weeks a year during school term time. Core sessions are from 8am until 6pm.

There are 20 members of staff who work with the children. 17 members of staff, including the manager, hold relevant early years qualifications. Two members of staff are currently building on their existing qualifications and working to degree level. The setting receives support from the local authority, the Pre-school Learning Alliance.

## The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is outstanding.

An exceptionally well developed knowledge of each child enables staff to effectively promote children's welfare and learning to a high standard. Children are clearly safe and secure and thoroughly enjoy learning about the wider world around them. Partnerships with parents, local schools, the college and other professionals are exemplary and significant in making sure that the needs of all children are met, along with any additional support needs. This means that children progress extremely well, given their age, ability and starting points. Regular and thorough self-evaluation by the managers and staff make sure that priorities for development are clearly identified and acted on; resulting in provision that responds exceedingly well to all users needs and effectively promotes continuous improvement.

## What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- continue to make effective use of the local neighbourhood to further enhance opportunities for children to discover local diversity to advance and extend their experiences of the world.

## **The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision**

There is a comprehensive awareness of safeguarding issues among staff in the nursery at all levels. All staff receive regular training on safeguarding, making sure that their knowledge and understanding remains current and their approach effective. The nursery's collaborative working with other key agencies is exemplary. Comprehensive policies and procedures are implemented consistently and robustly to ensure any concerns are prioritised and dealt with effectively. Children are safeguarded by extensive recruitment and vetting procedures, including the successful induction of new staff and the ongoing checking and appraisal of existing members of staff. All documentation required by legislation is in place and meticulously maintained. Continuing professional development is high priority and is extremely effective in providing the nursery with highly trained, sensitive and dedicated staff who are highly motivated in providing the best possible quality care and education for the children. Nursery staff have completed training above that required by legislation. Children are extremely safe and secure as thorough risk assessments are undertaken along with thorough daily checks of all child accessible areas. Excellent security systems are in place including coded main entrance and coded entrance to all classrooms. All space, furniture, equipment and resources, both inside and outside are of extremely high quality and clearly suitable for the different ages of children. This attention to detail makes sure that children's learning and development is fully supported. Outcomes are clearly attributed to the excellent use of resources and the extremely effective deployment of staff. All environments in the nursery are exceedingly conducive to learning and safety. The nursery is particularly well-managed and very carefully looked after. Managers and staff pay full regard to relevant legislation including health and hygiene. The managers and staff are taking well-considered steps to ensure resources and the environments remain fully sustainable.

Staff in the nursery place the promotion of equality of opportunity at the heart of all their work. They effectively and actively promote equality and diversity and are proactive in tackling unfair discrimination. Staff are highly effective in ensuring that all children are well integrated and that their development, in relation to their starting points, is very good. Staff have a good knowledge of each child's background and needs. They consider their own attitudes and ensure that their own knowledge about different cultures is up-to-date. They make the most of diversity to help children understand the society in which they live. Staff identify a child's need for additional support as early as possible: they share information and records with colleagues, parents and, where appropriate, with interagency teams to ensure that each child gets the support he or she needs. Exceptional partnership working takes place to ensure every child receives high levels of support at an early stage. Children make smooth transitions into main stream school because staff take the time to develop extremely effective working relationships with staff at the feeder primary schools in the area. There is a cohesive approach to working and being part of their local community and this has been identified by the management team and staff as an area for continuous development.

Parents and carers are very well informed about all aspects of their own children's

achievement, well-being and development. Staff provide tailored guidance and information about the ways parents and carers can support their children's learning across different areas and they fully encourage them to share learning which happens at home. Parents and carers are closely involved in decision-making on key matters affecting the setting through well-established and highly inclusive procedures, including open discussions and self-evaluation. Children too are fully encouraged to share their views and suggestions about their nursery, which they do with confidence. Self-evaluation at all levels reflects rigorous monitoring and searching analysis on what the setting does well and what it needs to improve. As a result actions taken are well targeted and have an effective impact in bringing about sustained improvement. The manager is highly effective in communicating ambition and inspiring the staff team. They all have high expectations and set high standards which are embedded across all areas of practice. Morale is very high and staff wholly believe in their setting and are fittingly proud of the service they provide.

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

All staff in the nursery have a comprehensive understanding of The Practice Guidance for the Early Years Foundation Stage and the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage. They used the documents to support and develop effective practice. An effective key person system fully supports each and every child. Observation, assessment for learning and planning are a significant strength and as a result each child is accurately monitored and supported outstandingly well to make very good progress towards the early learning goals. There is an excellent balance of child-initiated and adult-led learning opportunities which build on the children's imagination and participation. Staff are committed to the development of sustained shared thinking by offering encouragement, clarifying ideas and asking open questions to support and extend children's thinking and help them to make connections in their learning. Children are eager to attend and clearly demonstrate that they are successfully developing the skills that will help them in the future. They play a dynamic role in their learning, offering their ideas and responding to challenges with great enthusiasm.

Children show high levels of independence, curiosity, imagination and concentration. For example as they play both outside and inside developing their imaginative play or investigating how best to make buildings in the sand. They construct three dimensional models from click together straws or create firework art expressing and communicating their own ideas, thoughts and feelings through creative media. Children use a range of programmable toys, as well as equipment involving information communication technology, such as computers. They competently use a mouse and keyboard to interact with age-appropriate computer software. The children experience the natural world as they enjoy using their garden or taking regular trips in the local area. In addition they thoroughly enjoy their secret garden, here they experience the natural world first hand as they plant and grow a range of fruit, vegetables, herbs and flowers. As they do they develop their knowledge and understanding about simple sustainability and where food

comes from. Children sustain attentive listening as they enjoy stories and group discussion times. They link sounds and letters and demonstrate key skills, such as writing their names confidently on their creations. Children use number language for example as they count how many straws they need to finish their model. Children clearly learn that some things are theirs, some things are shared, and some things belong to other people, for example as they bring toys from home to share at show and tell. Children enjoy more strenuous activities and negotiate space successfully for instance as they develop their coordination and balance using a wide range of large apparatus and wheeled toys in their secure garden. These opportunities enable the older children to gain a secure understanding about the importance of regular exercise as part of maintaining a healthy lifestyle.

Children display an excellent awareness of safety issues and recognise and understand how to keep themselves safe. For example during lunch they confidently talk about not putting your knife in your mouth as it is sharp and can cut you. Children learn about fire safety and understand the importance of getting out of the building as calmly and quickly as possible if the alarm goes off in order to remain safe. All children show a strong sense of security and demonstrate that they feel safe within the nursery. They show an excellent understanding of what standards of behaviour are expected and apply these in order to keep themselves and others safe. The high quality adult interaction and exemplary organisation of routines help very young children to gain an exceptionally strong sense of security. All children show an exceptional understanding of the importance of following good personal hygiene routines. They show an excellent understanding of healthy eating and make healthy choices at snack and meal times. Children have innovative opportunities to engage in a wide range of physical activities, both indoors and out. Children have ownership of their health and well-being and demonstrate they are well informed about healthy living. Very young children are extremely content and settled because their individual health, physical and dietary needs are met to an exceptional standard.

## 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

<b>How well does the setting meet the needs of the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?</b>	1
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	1

### The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	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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### Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

<b>Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	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