

Portman Early Childhood Centre

Inspection report for early years provision

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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

The Portman Children's Centre registered in 2007. The premises are located near the Edgware Road, in the London Borough of Westminster. The setting operates from a purpose built, three storey high premises. The setting is located on the ground floor. Children have free flow access to the nursery school and share a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

The setting receives funding through the school grant mechanism, together with a contribution from Westminster children's and families division. The setting provides a range of services to children and families living in the locality, including before and after school care, daycare, a drop in and play schemes operating during the school holidays. Children are referred through the local authority allocation panel and from local health services. This inspection focused mainly on the under threes provision within the setting.

The setting may care for a maximum of 40 children from one to under eight years. There are currently 69 children on roll; of these, 60 receive early education funding. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The setting supports a number of children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those children who speak English as an additional language.

The setting is open each weekday from 8am to 6pm for 48 weeks of the year. The setting is registered on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register.

The setting employs 39 staff, including the administrative and specialist support staff teams. The head teacher holds a master's degree, with the majority of staff holding early years or teaching qualifications. One staff member holds an early years degree.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is outstanding.

The setting provides an extremely welcoming and inclusive environment for all children and their families. Children make exceptionally rapid progress in their learning and development at this stimulating setting. Staff have highly effective strategies in place to meet the needs of all children, recognising their uniqueness and supporting them, so that no group or individual is disadvantaged. Children benefit from the outstanding partnerships that are in place with their parents, and other professionals involved with their care and learning. Highly reflective practice clearly identifies areas for continued progression, which results in well-targeted and sustained improvement to the setting.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- consistently improving the record keeping in respect of children's assessments
- improving hand washing practices, at snack times in particular.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The management team and staff have created an exciting place where children are very happy, secure and particularly confident in their environment. They take their responsibilities for safeguarding children very seriously and have a comprehensive policy in place that all staff fully understand and implement. The setting gives high priority to ensuring children's safety within the setting, with detailed and highly effective risk assessments and daily checks being meticulously carried out to eliminate any risks to children. Robust and effective recruitment, vetting and induction systems are in place to ensure that all staff are suitable to work with children.

The management team has developed highly comprehensive records, policies and procedures to support the safe and efficient management of the provision. The staff team are deployed very effectively around the setting, which enables them to interact exceptionally well with children during play, and respond to any individual needs. This is further supported by the very successful key person system that supports all children to feel secure in their environment. The key person is also responsible for the continual monitoring of children's care and learning progression, which also works most effectively.

Children confidently access their child friendly environment, as resources are extremely well organised to promote many early independence skills. Consequently, children have successful opportunities to make choices about their play, and thus initiate their own ideas. The staff team promote equality and diversity exceptionally well within the setting; this supports children's awareness of the society in which they live. They celebrate festivals and special events from around the world and access excellent resources that reflect positive images of people from different cultures. For example, children and families join in on an international day, where each family's background and culture is fully celebrated. Children, parents and staff dress up, try different foods and dance and listen to stories from each other's cultures. This creates a fully inclusive atmosphere where differences are celebrated and embraced.

The nursery's leadership and management constantly reflect on practice and provide a very clear vision for its future, which involves all staff, parents and children. The staff team take very positive steps to make improvements. All

recommendations in the previous report have been very successfully addressed. Consequently, the outcomes for all children and their experiences are extremely positive.

The setting has excellent partnerships with parents. Parents are kept exceedingly well informed about their children's progress, as staff share children's achievement records and meet with them, both formally and informally, throughout the year. Parents contribute effectively to their children's learning, which helps improve outcomes for the children, such as getting involved in activities and trips out. Parents are extremely happy, feel involved with the nursery and know their children thoroughly enjoy their time. Parents describe the setting as; 'fantastic', 'very well presented', and praise its 'excellent support for children and parents' and 'great facilities'. One parent commented that they 'think the Portman Centre is set brilliantly. It was the first time I left my child, but because of the infrastructure, he settled very well and sees it like his second home'. There are highly effective partnerships with outside professionals who offer additional support to children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Children with additional needs are encouraged to become competent learners and receive outstanding support from staff, as well as space and the freedom to play by themselves. These valuable relationships ensure that children are given professional support and interaction, which enhances their overall ability to enjoy and achieve within the setting.

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

Children thoroughly enjoy attending this exciting setting. Children work extremely well independently using their own initiative, and working alongside their peers, where they develop excellent skills. They play a full and active role in their learning, showing great curiosity and the desire to explore; they are inquisitive learners as they move freely and confidently between the nursery school and the under three's area. Inclusive practice is at the heart of the nursery, meaning that every child matters and is very well supported. This results in all children fully participating and making a positive contribution to the setting. Children show through their body language that they feel happy, safe and secure, playing happily by themselves and approaching staff when they want reassurance.

Children develop a strong sense of belonging and security from the moment they arrive, as an array of photographic displays cover the walls, showing them enjoying and achieving. Children have wonderful opportunities to develop their sensory skills through a wide range of practical activities. For example, during a water play activity, children have a fabulous time exploring the different visual and tactile experiences skilfully introduced by staff. Bubbles and different colour balls of light in see-through bags fascinate children who show their delight, as they splash and blow the bubbles. In addition, children respond with great enthusiasm to music, rhymes and stories. For example, during small group time, staff skilfully engage children in the story of the gingerbread man. During this time, children learn to take their turns, listen, and join in actively as they handle props to the story to further help them understand and gauge their interest. At other times,

children greatly benefit from one to one quality time with staff, as they use sign language, further developing their individual communication skills. The quality of planning, observations and assessment is high. This means that all of the children receive a purposeful, challenging and enjoyable learning experience across all six areas of learning that truly reflects their unique needs and interests. Plans and most assessment profiles are generally clearly written and regularly reviewed to ensure children's individual needs are effectively met.

Children thoroughly engage in a wide range of physical activities, both indoors and out, increasing their understanding about the importance of regular exercise as part of maintaining a healthy lifestyle. Although children generally learn good hand washing practices, they miss opportunities to wash their hands prior to snack times. Children enjoy freshly cooked nutritious meals as part of a healthy diet. Meal times are sociable occasions where children sit in small groups with their own photo placemats, which further enhances their sense of belonging at this fantastic setting.

Staff are extremely kind and have caring relationships with children. Young children show a strong sense of security and feeling safe within the nursery, as they move confidently around it. In addition, children are developing a very good understanding of fire safety, as they participate in regular fire drills. Children develop excellent relationships with adults and other children in the setting.

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	2
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