

Sticky Fingers Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number

EY415476

Inspection date

17/11/2011

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

Sticky Fingers Pre-school was registered in 2010. It operates from a church hall in Loughton. The pre-school is open each weekday from 9.20am until 12.20pm and until 2.20pm on Tuesday and Thursday, during term time only. A maximum of 26 children in the early years age group, of these none may be under two years, may attend at any one time. The pre-school is registered on the Early Years Register. There are currently 42 children aged from two to four years on roll.

The pre-school is funded to provide free early education to children aged three and four years. The pre-school is supporting one child with special educational needs and/or disabilities and one child learning English as an additional language. The pre-school employs six members of staff, four of whom, hold appropriate early years qualifications.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

The manager and staff team support children's learning well and children are making good progress in their development. Effective partnerships with parents and carers are established and they are kept fully informed about their children's achievement, well-being and development. The staff team work together efficiently and with enthusiasm in the stimulating and inclusive environment. Overall, the manager and staff team have the capacity to evaluate their practice and work towards continuous improvement for the benefit of all children. Partnership with local schools and other agencies is developing, therefore, further assisting the staff in meeting the needs of most children.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- extend self-evaluation in order to identify more accurately where systems need improvement to further meet children's individual needs
- make further links with other early years providers to develop improved continuity for children's learning.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children are safeguarded and well protected in the pre-school as staff demonstrate a good understanding of procedures to protect children in their care. Recruitment and vetting procedures are sound in order to check that staff are safe and suitable to work with young children. Staff are vigilant in carrying out regular risk assessments and daily safety checks, to ensure that children are safe in all areas of the pre-school. The environment is well organised with resources readily accessible

to children. It allows children to move safely around the pre-school, to play in areas of their choice and to make independent choices.

Partnerships with parents and carers are good. Parents speak warmly of the staff and all they do for the children. A free-flow exchange of information means parents, carers and staff, are all kept fully informed about every aspect of children's achievement, well-being and development. This means that parents and carers can become involved in their children's learning. For example, parents are provided with purposeful information on display boards inside the pre-school and are encouraged to share their professional skills with the children. Each child is well supported in making good progress towards the early learning goals. Some effective relationships with other professionals and external agencies involved with the children, are in place. However, links with other early years provisions to enhance improved continuity for children's learning, are not fully developed.

Staff promote children's understanding of similarities and differences through a broad range of activities, such as, festival celebrations. In addition, children have access to a good selection of multicultural play resources that reflects positive images of the wider world. This creates an inclusive environment that encourages children to feel a sense of belonging and promotes their self-esteem.

The manager demonstrates effective commitment to driving and implementing a wide range of improvements in order to enhance children's learning. There are good systems in place to help the manager and staff team evaluate their practice. However, the self-evaluation does not comprehensively identify the pre-school's strengths and priorities for development to further enhance outcomes for children.

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

The pre-school provides a good start to children's learning and play experiences. The high priority placed on children's welfare and personal development means that they soon feel secure and settle in quickly. As a result, children make good progress and clearly enjoy their time in pre-school. Staff are knowledgeable about the Early Years Foundation Stage and use this effectively to support children in their learning. Staff make purposeful use of observations to identify individual children's next steps in all required areas of learning. These observations are effectively used to inform the planning of activities to further enhance outcomes for children.

Children are making good progress in their communication, language and literacy

skills. Staff develop children's communication through daily small group story and singing sessions. Children's early writing skills are purposefully supported as they make patterns with their fingers in the foam mixture. Children's natural curiosity in living things is effectively stimulated by caring for and nurturing the pet African snails. Children have good access to information and communication technology, for example, children's digital cameras, programmable toys and a laptop computer, to support their learning. This contributes effectively in helping children acquire appropriate skills for their future lives.

Visits to the library and post office provide a good opportunity for the children to find out about and identify features in their local community. Children's emotional well-being is very well nurtured by the warm and purposeful interaction of the staff. They clearly apply consistent boundaries so that children develop good knowledge of what is expected and display positive behaviour. Children are very well behaved as they take turns and share resources, demonstrating respect for each other. They contribute to the welfare of others as, supported by staff, they learn to fold the dressing up clothes and carefully help to tidy away at the end of the session.

Children develop a good understanding of healthy lifestyles. A healthy and nutritious snack, which includes fruit and vegetables, is provided at snack time. Children have access to fresh drinking water which they can independently help themselves to when they are thirsty. This helps children to develop an awareness of their own bodily needs. Staff organise snack time to provide an opportunity for children to develop good independence skills by helping to prepare and serve their own snack and pour their own drinks. Children are developing an effective understanding of the importance of personal hygiene through the embedded practice of the staff team who actively encourage them to wash their hands before eating and after using the toilet. Children benefit from regular fresh air and exercise during outdoor play. Their physical and coordination skills are further enhanced by developmentally appropriate yoga sessions. Children learn about safety through regular fire evacuation practice. In addition, children safely use a range of challenging utensils and resources supported by attentive staff.

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?	2
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	2

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
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	2
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	2
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Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	2
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	2

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