

Katherine Wheel Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspector Sara Garrity

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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

Katherine Wheel Pre-school opened in 1989. It is committee-run and operates from one room in a self-contained unit within the grounds of St. Katherine's School in Snodland, Kent. There are steps leading to the main entrance. The children have access to a secure, enclosed outdoor area, which has a ramp leading into the building.

The pre-school is registered on the Early Years Register for a total of 24 children. There are currently 53 children on roll aged from two to four years. It is funded to provide free early education to children aged two, three and four years. The pre-school supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. It is open Monday to Thursday 9am to 3pm and Fridays 9am to 11.30am. It is a member of the Pre-school Learning Alliance and receives support from the local authority Setting Improvement Partner.

The pre-school employs seven members of staff. Of these, five hold relevant National Vocational Qualifications at levels 2 to 4. The manager is working towards a foundation degree.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is satisfactory.

The pre-school offers a caring environment where children make satisfactory progress in their learning and development. Staff have a sound knowledge of how to keep children safe. However not all required documents were available for inspection. Staff regularly talk with parents about the children's progress. The written assessment of children is not consistent and some of the children progress files are not regularly updated or shared with parents. The pre-school indoor environment is ineffective in immediately engaging the children's interest. Staff are meeting recommendations from the last inspection and are making sufficient continuous improvement.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To meet the specific requirements of the EYFS, the registered person must:

- ensure that records are easily accessible and available for inspection, with particular regard to the risk assessment. 02/02/2012

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

- improve the observation and assessment records so that all staff keep them up to date
- develop the environment to make it more interesting and stimulating, in order to engage the children as soon as they enter the pre-school
- develop ways of sharing the children's progress files with parents and ensure that all parents are aware of who their child's key person is.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The pre-school regularly reviews policies and procedures and all staff are aware of how to implement them to support children's safety. All staff have undertaken safeguarding training, and have suitable background checks. Daily risk assessments are completed; however, the full risk assessment was not available for inspection. This is a breach of a specific legal requirement. The pre-school practises regular fire drills with the children. All staff have attended first aid training and they record accidents and incidents accurately.

The pre-school uses self-evaluation suitably to reflect on practice. Staff attend weekly meetings and are encouraged to attend training courses as part of their professional development. They carry out observations in the pre-school; however, they do not complete them regularly enough, resulting in the written record of children's progress not being updated consistently. The pre-school has recently introduced what they call a 'Wow' board which has an interactive frame enabling photographs taken of and by the children to be immediately displayed. Staff support the children's learning through asking open-ended questions and allowing them time to think about what they wish to say. They have developed this further through some staff attending a course on communication.

The playroom is set out in areas and children are able to access most resources. The resources are set out on the floor and tabletops; however, they are basic and do not immediately engage and involve the children. The pre-school is in the process of adopting a new planning system, which takes into account children's interests and next steps. The outside environment immediately engages the children's interest. It is set out to enable the children easy access to all the equipment. They have areas to ride bikes, and a tree where they can engage in imaginative play. Wind chimes and other sensory equipment bring further texture and interest to the outside area.

Staff have a sound understanding of equality and diversity. The displays in the room reflect the children's backgrounds. Sign language and picture communication cards are suitably used to enable inclusive practice. The Setting Improvement Partner has undertaken audits on the pre-school about the accessibility of the environment, especially for the younger children. As a result of this, the pre-school has devised action plans to enable staff to address any identified weaknesses.

Changes are already evident; for example, the lid has been removed from the wicker basket to enable all children to explore the resources inside.

The pre-school staff work very effectively with local organisations and agencies to support the children and their families. They have built communicative relationships with other day-care settings that the children attend. Staff support parents with settling new children and each child is allocated a key person prior to starting. They use a daily contact book when parents are not seen on a regular basis. Some parents are not aware who their child's key-person is, and the children's assessment files are not regularly shared with parents. Parents are satisfied with the pre-school, and their children are eager to attend and play with their friends.

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

Most children are making sound progress in their learning. They are aware of the pre-school routines and help to tidy up and put equipment out. Most of the children are caring to their friends and thoughtful, helping each other and taking turns to use activities. They appear motivated, and are excited to show friends and staff their lovely pictures. The children enter the pre-school ready to learn, and explore the basic resources available to them. They chatter away to friends and adults, explaining what they are doing. Most children are aware of how to look after themselves and their friends. They know how to use equipment safely, and have developed a sense of how to keep safe in the pre-school. The children listen to instructions and occasionally remind others of the rules. Generally, the children cooperate with each other, through sharing and taking turns with resources.

Children are eager to put on their coats and venture outside to explore and run around. Curious and inquisitive children make use of the guttering track on the side of the building. They roll the balls from the top to bottom, predicting events and watching where the ball will go. Other children explore the climbing frame and slide, and enjoy target practice using the balls and basketball hoop. Most children are aware of how to adopt a healthy lifestyle through regular exercise.

Snack time is a social event and is an opportunity for the key person to catch up with their key children, finding out what they have been doing and how they are feeling. The children have a healthy snack morning and afternoon. They wash their hands before snack, serve themselves food, and pour their own drinks. Children staying for lunch club are encouraged to bring in a healthy lunch. Staff support this through sending home letters to inform parents of how to provide healthy options.

Most children are confident and show good levels of self-esteem; they talk about their friends and seek friends to share experiences with. Children enjoy working independently as well as taking part in large group music and dance activities. Their behaviour is generally good. Children are encouraged to tidy up their environment and are confident enough to ask staff if they are unsure where to put

equipment. They are eager to please and appreciate the praise they receive. Children are developing suitable skills for the future; they have opportunities for mark making both inside and out. Some of the children are developing good problem-solving skills, looking at how to climb to the top of the slide or stand tall to reach higher on the height chart. The children are inquisitive and ask about how things work. They are curious about the world around them. Imagination and role-play are evident with chairs lined up to make a bus for friends to ride on.

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?	3
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	3

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	3
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding	3
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	3
The effectiveness of partnerships	2
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	3

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
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Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	3
The extent to which children feel safe	3
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	3

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