

Pelican Children's Centre

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspector Anne-Marie Moyse

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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

Pelican Children's Centre is a community run voluntary centre, which was first opened in 1991. It is situated in an extensive double-fronted, end of terrace property in Keyham, Plymouth, Devon. It is an inner city area adjacent to the Royal Naval Dockyard. There is a fully enclosed outdoor play area. The centre is open from 8am to 6pm for 48 weeks each year.

The centre is on the Early Years Register and both the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. It is registered to care for a maximum of 47 children under eight years. There are currently 80 children on roll in the early years age range. The centre is in receipt of funding for free early education for three- and four-year olds. It supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and children who are learning English as an additional language. There are currently 18 staff employed, of whom most hold recognised childcare qualifications. Two are currently working towards level 2 qualifications. Pelican Children's Centre is run by a full-time manager, under the supervision of a board of trustees. It receives support from the local authority and the Pre-school Learning Alliance and is working towards a quality assurance programme.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is outstanding.

A team of dedicated and highly skilled staff support children to make excellent progress in their learning and development. Children are extremely happy, settle well and form close bonds with the staff and others. Overall, their health is promoted exceptionally well through the effective systems in place. Strong relationships with parents and others promote consistency for each child's unique needs. All staff reflect very thoroughly on their daily practice, adapting to meet the needs of children attending each day extremely well. There are excellent self-evaluation systems in place and the centre shows an outstanding capacity to maintain continuous improvements.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- extending younger children's awareness of healthy practices with regard to eating and informing parents about appropriate contents for packed lunches.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Staff demonstrate an excellent knowledge of their responsibilities with regards to protecting children. Comprehensive policies and procedures are in place underpinning their highly effective practice, with safety and security given a high priority. Electronic entry systems methodically monitor visitors, with parents fully aware that they should not permit others to 'tailgate' into the building. The centre has highly effective, robust systems to monitor staff suitability and monthly reviews are used to check staff's thorough understanding of the child protection procedures. Staff are very attentive and vigilant and involve children in the systems to promote their safety.

Children benefit from an extremely well-organised environment. Staff have made changes to the layout of the rooms which has positively improved outcomes for children. A view over the dockyard and river provides stimulation and interest in their local community. Excellent resources are easily accessible, appealing to and reflecting the children's interests. Children play outside in the recently renovated secure area as much as possible. Colourful displays of children's work boost their self-esteem and sense of pride. The baby suite is very well organised and imaginatively adapted according to the individual needs of the children attending. For example, very young babies settle and establish bonds with their key person in the calm environment of the sleep room, before transferring into the main baby room. All areas are immaculately clean, safe and tidy.

Staff respect and support each child highly effectively. Children who are learning English as an additional language have booklets with pictures and familiar words from their home language to aid communication and acknowledge their own culture. Gifted children have their learning extended through excellent links with parents and their prospective school. This gives them additional challenges and promotes consistency. Children learn about wider society by using an extensive range of high quality resources that promote diversity. A wide range of activities promotes awareness of diversity, including visits in the local area, celebrating festivals and tasting foods from different countries each month.

Staff use excellent observation and assessment systems to support and plan for each child's progress. Parents see the beautiful annotated learning journals at least once a term, and daily contact books and chats contribute to parents being fully involved in their child's development. Staff work closely with parents to support every child in their learning at home. For example, parents can borrow story sacks to share with their children. The centre uses a photographic slideshow to provide an interesting insight for parents into their children's day. Excellent, regular contact with other agencies involved with the families contributes to a consistent care and learning plan for each child. Smooth transition arrangements for children moving on are in place. For example, familiar staff move with the children when they progress to new rooms. Exceptional links with local schools and detailed communication with the next provider eases the transition process for each child.

The manager has an excellent understanding of the centre's strengths and areas

for development. Her extensive experience and expertise are used superbly to guide the work of the skilled and enthusiastic practitioners. Staff are fully supported in continuing their professional development and have their own welfare thoughtfully considered by the management. All recommendations from the previous inspection have been successfully addressed. Parents, children and staff are fully involved in the evaluation process and help to drive improvements. The friendly and welcoming staff are extremely motivated and show pride in their provision, having children's best interests at heart.

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

Children thrive in this welcoming and inclusive environment, where each individual is valued. They are very well-mannered and show consideration for each other from a very early age. For example, toddlers fetch drinks for their friends. Children show a clear understanding of the rules, reminding staff that they are using 'good walking' skills in the building. They show respect for the environment and learn to conserve electricity by switching off lights. They all willingly help to pack away toys before lunchtime, taking responsibility and developing independence. Children follow good hygiene routines and learn the reason for these, including the importance of brushing their teeth after eating. They are quick to remind a member of staff that she needs to wear an apron at lunchtime to keep clean. Meals are very relaxed, social times where children sit and eat with their friends and talk. Displays and information about balanced diets are available around the centre and staff discuss these with the children. Parents provide food but staff do not consistently inform them of suitable contents for packed lunches for younger children. Older children have a growing understanding of healthy choices and are encouraged to eat savoury, nutritious foods first. Their snacks are provided by the centre and include fruit and vegetables. However, the younger children only have the foods provided from home and are not consistently supported in eating healthy options in preference to treats.

There is an excellent balance of adult-led and child-initiated play. Most of the day children make their own choices and become involved and motivated according to their particular interests. They have excellent support wherever they play. The skilful staff know when to step in to extend children's learning and when to let them explore on their own. Children use their imagination as they explore the snow scene in response to the recent icy weather. They create their own adventures with the polar bears and animals, sprinkling them with pretend snow and finding out about their lifestyles and habitats as they talk with the staff. They use writing materials, including a white board, to make marks, record their ideas, and develop skills for the future. Children watch and listen as staff write their names on art work, linking the phonic sounds of letters to the shapes.

Craft materials, tools and messy play resources are always on offer and children use them safely with developing control and care. Children are engrossed as they see the tracks left by the cars when driving them through the paint, commenting on the change in the colours as they mix. The new rope and pulley system

challenges children to work out how to make the bucket rise and fall. They concentrate extremely well as they follow complicated printed patterns, safely manipulating the wooden shapes, fine tacks and hammer, as they tap them into place. They comment about being careful as they pack away the tacks, knowing that they are 'very sharp' and can be 'dangerous'. Children's numeracy and mathematical language is excellent. They count and play with numbers, readily calculating how many items they have and knowing the numeral that relates to this. They count forwards and backwards with ease and children quickly recognise the missing number from the pattern. Small group times help children to refine and practise their skills, enthusiastically playing interesting and challenging games where they show great pride in their achievements.

The outdoor area is exceptionally inviting and well-organised. Children demonstrate a high level of curiosity as they learn about the world around them. They talk about the flow of water as they carefully pour it through the tubes, delighting in jumping in the puddles as it misses the containers. They develop their balance and control as they use various wheeled toys and equipment, moving around others safely and with consideration. A cosy den area provides an area for relaxation and a place to look at and read books in the fresh air. Children use magnifying glasses to look closely at the leaves and insects in the garden area as they explore the natural environment. Children learn about safety as they go on outings, such as a recent visit to see the trains. They take responsibility in knowing when it is safe to cross roads.

Babies are taken out for walks or use their own designated safe play area for fresh air and exercise. They use sensory materials and resources to extend their understanding of the stimulating environment. They spoon and stir the flour to make dough, and are conscientious in helping to sweep up the mess following their play. A wall mounted light box fascinates them as the colours change and they squeal with delight to express their excitement. They communicate highly effectively by using signing. Staff continually talk about what they are doing to promote babies' developing language. They also use music and songs to increase babies' understanding of rhythm and pace.

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