

The Rainbow Ark Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

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14/03/2012

Inspector

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Type of setting

Childcare - Non-Domestic

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Introduction

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Description of the setting

Rainbow Ark Pre-school opened in 2012. It operates from Mundella Primary School in Folkestone, Kent. The pre-school has access to a class room and the school toilets. The pre-school is accessible to people with disabilities, although with a step to/from the entrance. All children have access to a secure outdoor play area in the school grounds. The pre-school is open five days a week term time only, from 9am to 12pm with an optional lunch club which extends to 12.50pm. The setting may care for no more than 20 children in the early years age group; of these, none may be under three years at any one time. Children receive funding for pre-school education. The setting is registered on the Early Years register. The pre-school cares for children with learning difficulties and disabilities and children who speak English as an additional language. There is a manager and two members of staff. The manager holds degree level qualifications and the deputy holds a Level 3 qualification. Other staff are enrolled for further training.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is satisfactory.

The quality of provision is satisfactory in all areas illustrating that staff have worked successfully to meet the requirements for a new setting. Children respond happily to the care and support they are given and their achievement is satisfactory. The setting engages well with parents and carers on a day-to-day basis. Adequate systems are in place to monitor and evaluate the provision although the checks of some required policies and procedures are not rigorous enough. In addition, there are too few opportunities for children to develop their early language and literacy skills, and assessment information is not sufficiently detailed. Staff work well together and attend appropriate in-service training activities showing a satisfactory capacity to improve further.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- organise all policies in a systematic manner and ensure they are dated, signed and identify when they will be reviewed so that parents and carers can be sure all welfare requirements, such as insurance cover are met??
- extend the records of what children do and learn and ensure information is used to identify next steps in planning????
- create a mark making area so that children develop an interest in early writing activities???
- encourage children to discuss their ideas in greater detail and use more words in displays in order to help children develop their language skills

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Policies and procedures have been established to ensure that the children are safeguarded to a satisfactory standard. Recruitment procedures ensure that children are cared for by staff who have been appropriately checked and are suitably qualified. Accidents are recorded and staff are trained in basic first aid and child protection requirements. The setting is secure and staff show good care in checking arrival and departure procedures. Risk assessments and daily health and safety checks are satisfactory. Fire evacuation practices are suitable. However, while all statutory policies are in place, some are often very brief, unsigned or dated. The checks made of such documentation, for example of the date the insurance policy runs out, are limited. There is currently no easy to review list of what is in place or not or when policies or procedures need to be updated.

The Folkestone Rainbow Centre, the general manager and deputy manager are involved in the leadership and management of the setting. They work closely with the Rainbow Centre's other setting to provide suitable care and education for the children. The staff attend meetings to reflect on their practice and plan further improvements. While the planning of activities is brief, it is broadly appropriate. The leadership and management team is encouraging and supportive and is in the process of developing a more rigorous system to check the effectiveness of what is provided in all areas.

All children are welcome in this inclusive setting. Appropriate attention is given to ensuring all children have equal opportunities to succeed and any kind of discrimination is actively discouraged. The staff work with parents and carers to help identify and address individual needs including through discussions of age-appropriate expectations for their development. Children who speak English as an additional language are helped to make progress alongside their peers. Children develop a satisfactory understanding of some cultural differences through a celebration of festivals. The Christian ethos of the group is reflected in the use of short prayers at several times of the day. Children are provided with adequate resources to support their learning, which are accessible to all.

The setting warmly welcomes parents and carers with detailed discussions when they visit to enroll their children. The adults spoken to during the inspection are very happy with the service provided and think the children are well supervised and cared for. They are kept well informed through daily conversations although the use of contact books and newsletters is not extensive or detailed. Staff liaise with the teachers in the host school to ensure safe usage of the outdoor play facilities when these are not used by the school. The general manager notes many informal plans to extend provision as the setting becomes more established.

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

Children are happy and confident and look forward to attending the inclusive setting. They are warmly welcomed by staff and should they very occasionally be unhappy at leaving a parent or carer, they are consoled sympathetically. The key

person system ensures that children's welfare needs are met appropriately. Children involve themselves in play as soon as they arrive making choices in what they want to do. Several enjoy the role-play area and particularly like dressing up. The costumes used are imaginative, clean and well stored. Children are clearly reminded to look after such resources and contribute to the smooth running of the centre by tidying up after themselves and hanging items up in a neat and tidy manner.

Children take part in a few adult-led activities, including making a Mother's Day card. They use potato printing techniques to represent flower shapes, although there are limited opportunities for them to design and cut their own potato shapes. Staff have begun to plan specific activities, observe children's learning and collect evidence of their progress in order to plan next steps in learning. Planning is adequate but brief. Therefore while this ensures adequate breadth and balance in the type of activities undertaken, these are often very similar for all abilities. Children like making choices of the healthy fruit snacks they have at break time and are encouraged to take responsibility and develop independence by pouring their own water or milk. Children say they feel safe and like playing outside. They know that when kicking a ball or using a scooter or trike they must be careful and think about other people. Most know what is expected of them. They behave well and demonstrate a good understanding of how to play safely without many adult reminders.

Children engage in purposeful discussions with adults although at times staff miss the opportunity to ask follow up questions to encourage children to give more detail in their answers and use a wider vocabulary. Most enjoy story times and like using the spacious book corner. However, there is no mark-making area to encourage the children to start to develop early writing skills through making lists or writing their names. Little of the children's work is displayed and there is limited use of simple labels or children's names in the environment to create an interest in what words say. Children join in traditional action rhymes, such as 'Wind the bobbin' and 'Incy Wincy Spider'. They also enjoy using a range of good quality musical instruments including a small steel-pan drum which has a positive impact on their musical development.

Children start to learn about numbers and shapes when using building bricks and puzzles. They learn more about growing things through the current focus on 'Spring and Gardening' by growing their own cress. The staff have designated a computer area but no resources were apparent in the inspection. As a result of satisfactory provision, children are generally confident and have reasonable levels of self-esteem. They are adequately prepared for their future learning experiences.

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	3
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	3
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	3
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	3

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