

Our Lady's PreSchool

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number 127424
Inspection date 01/05/2012
Inspector Linda Nicholls

Setting address St Joseph's RCP School, Springhead Road, Northfleet,
Gravesend, Kent, DA11 9QZ

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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 preschool registered in 2000 and is registered on the Early Years Register and on both the compulsory part and the voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. The preschool is not registered to provide overnight care. The preschool is managed by committee and operates from a separate building on the site of St Joseph's Roman Catholic Primary School, Gravesend, Kent. There is an enclosed area for outside play.

The preschool operates five days a week during school term time. Morning sessions are from 9am to 12 noon, Monday to Friday and two afternoon sessions, Monday and Thursday 12.20pm to 3.30pm.

Registration is for a maximum of 25 children aged under eight years, at any one time, and they may all be in the early years age range. There are currently 42 children from two to five years on roll. The preschool receives funding for the provision of free early education for children aged three and four years. The preschool currently supports children with special needs and/or disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language.

There are eight members of staff who work with the children. Of these, six are present at every session. Over half the staff have early years qualifications at level two or three and two staff are studying for child development degrees. The manager has National Vocational Qualification at level 3. The setting receives occasional support from an Early Years Advisory Teacher.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

The preschool combines reflective practice with a positive team spirit to drive continuous improvement in the outcomes for children. Overall, children are safe, feel secure and enjoy learning about their local area and the world around them. Flexible and constructive management supports the unique needs of all children and their families. Staff respect the children as individuals and value their achievements generally well. Every child progresses well in most aspects of their learning and development, given their age, ability and starting points.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- provide easy access to a variety of writing and bilingual stories in the home

languages of children attending, so all children see symbols and marks with which they are familiar and learn to value linguistic diversity

- value children's constructions by helping to display them or take photographs of them.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The provision for safeguarding is comprehensive and thorough. Child protection procedures reflect current local Safeguarding Board practice. Effective risk assessments and regular checks include those for the outside play space. Welfare requirements and close supervision by caring staff promotes children's well-being. Children know what to do should an emergency arise as the emergency exit procedure is practised each term.

Children benefit from the excellent resources, ongoing staff training and equipment that support the 'Every Child A Talker' programme. The layout of the main hall provides children with a stimulating environment where activity areas and play resources strongly encourage independence. Children self-challenge, explore and learn as they move independently between the inside and the outside area. Attractive displays include posters of children from around the world, information of children's achievements at home and personal photographs.

Members of the staff team work well together. They have a good awareness of the preschool's policies and procedures and implement them effectively so that children play safely in a caring environment. The policies and procedures are reviewed regularly and shared with parents. Reflective practice, clear evaluation and focused planning contribute to a dynamic atmosphere. There are clear aims and priorities for improvement, such as, development of the outside play area to encourage children to explore and experiment. Steps to improve taken since the last inspection have made a positive impact to the provision. For example, they now have a 'shining stars' display where parents add details of children's achievements at home. This fosters children's self-esteem.

The preschool uses unique learning records to successfully record children's progress towards the early learning goals. Observation and assessment identifies the next steps for children's learning. Planning for the children's further development is discussed with parents and implemented well. As a result all children make good progress given their various starting points. There are close, supportive partnerships with the local authority, education and specialist professionals who provide full support and positive advice for families of children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Clear assessments support the inclusion of all children. Established contacts with other known carers, such as childminders, maintain continuity of care and learning. Resources and celebrations sensitively promote equality and diversity. Key persons learn phrases and words in other languages. However, there is no direct access for children to a variety of language scripts, so all children do not recognise and value their own home cultures as well as those of the children they meet daily.

Engagement with parents is good. Parents praise staff highly for their understanding and caring attitudes. They state they are well informed about their children's progress and fully supported in their child's care and learning. Notice boards and newsletters inform parents of general developments. Daily discussion gains individual opinion as to how well the preschool meets the parents' needs and expectations. Parents also have good opportunities to contribute to their children's learning.

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

Children are animated, happy and show an all-round enthusiasm during their time here. They achieve, enjoy and show they feel safe through their active capacity for independent learning. Children are fully occupied during their play. For example, they use their imaginations as they play with the cardboard robot. They are absorbed as they collaborate in making their own storybooks. They know seeds grow into plants. They are proud of their artwork, drawings and finished constructions. However they are not encouraged to display their constructions or take photographs of them to value what they have made. They discover weight, volume and flow as they scoop and pour the sand through funnels. Children practise and consolidate mark-making skills; they independently draw and colour, make lists, or use stencils with paper and pencils available throughout the session. Children gain confidence from consistent, familiar adults who praise their attempts and achievements as they gain control of scissors, tweezers or threading laces. They are confident and readily engage adults to join them in their play, responding confidently to questions as to their likes and dislikes. Children join each other to look at books and listen to simple stories in the tented cosy corner. Adults encourage children to recognise the names of days of the week, numbers, colours and shapes supporting their development of language. Children have a rapidly growing knowledge of how things work and practise the skills they will need in the future. They develop knowledge and understanding of the world as they explore keypads or interactive resources, such as, the computer. They are patient and take turns with resources during their play and at the snack table because adults are good role models who consistently reinforce wanted behaviour, such as sharing and being kind.

Children keep themselves safe and demonstrate a strong sense of self-reliance. They build secure relationships with adults and children, in whole group activities and during one-to-one activities designed to support and focus their play. They problem-solve and self-challenge as they build an air-ship together from wooden bricks. They know that exercise makes their heart beat strongly as they scoot or pedal the tricycles outside. Children establish everyday personal hygiene habits; wash their hands after messy play and before eating. They dispose of paper towels and tissues hygienically. They demonstrate positive social skills and care for each other as they sit sociably and chat to each other. Children are well behaved. They contribute to the running of each session by tidying away equipment as part of their daily routine.

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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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