

# Meadow Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

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**Unique reference number** EY330525  
**Inspection date** 21/05/2012  
**Inspector** Cilla Mullane

**Setting address** Millmead Children's Centre, Dane Valley Road, MARGATE,  
Kent, CT9 3RU  
**Telephone number** 01843 282247  
**Email**  
**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**

Meadow Nursery is part of the Millmead Children's Centre. The centre opened in 2003, and was re-registered under new management in 2006. The Children's Centre is situated in a large residential area on the outskirts of Margate, Kent. The nursery operates from three playrooms and there are two enclosed outdoor play areas.

The nursery is registered on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. It is registered to care for 50 children aged under eight years and they may all be in the early years age group, 25 of whom may be aged under two years. There is currently 104 children on roll in the early years age group. The nursery is in receipt of funding for the provision of free early education for children aged two, three and four years. The nursery supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and those children learning English as an additional language.

The nursery is open each weekday from 8am to 6pm for 50 weeks of the year.

The nursery employs 21 staff, including the manager and deputy, and the Children's Centre manager and teacher. The majority of the staff hold appropriate early years qualifications to at least level 3. Two staff are currently undertaking childcare qualifications.

## **The overall effectiveness of the early years provision**

Overall the quality of the provision is satisfactory.

Staff know the children's interests and plan enjoyable activities based on these. Staff in the baby room are kind and caring and make sure they meet the physical and emotional needs of the babies; however, routine care often limits the amount of key person's engagement with children's play. Children make satisfactory progress in their learning and development. Support for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities is a key strength of the nursery and they are successfully narrowing gaps in children's achievement. The outdoor areas are well resourced and exciting, but the quality and provision of resources indoors, and wall displays, vary in quality. Partnerships with parents and others who support children's care and learning are strong and well established, resulting in good continuity for children. A satisfactory capacity for continuous improvement is demonstrated.

## **What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?**

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

- develop the environment so that it is rich in signs, symbols, notices, numbers and displays of children's work
- monitor and evaluate the continuous provision to ensure that children in all rooms have access to consistently good quality and varied toys and equipment
- improve the effectiveness of the key person system in the baby room

## **The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision**

Children within the setting are well safeguarded by staff who have a good knowledge of child protection issues and procedures, and maintain strong links with local authority workers. The suitability to work with children has been checked for all members of staff. Thorough risk assessments are used to keep hazards to a minimum. Safety and health procedures in the baby room are implemented carefully to keep children safe. Sleeping babies are checked frequently and staff consistently use hygienic procedures to change babies' nappies. Staff in the baby room are vigilant towards babies' health and safety. They are quick to identify any safety hazards and take immediate action to minimise them.

Babies and toddlers have a cosy indoor area, where they are able to select their own toys from a suitable range, including good quality natural resources. They benefit greatly from an exciting outdoor area, where they are challenged physically, cuddle up in a little tent with cushions, and enjoy messy play. However, staff deployment impacts on the quality of adult interaction babies receive. They have their basic physical needs met. Although the adult to child ratio is maintained to at least minimum standards, when the room is full, staff may be deployed changing nappies, rocking a child to sleep, holding an immobile baby, or leaving the room to get a highchair or lunch, leaving few opportunities to organise and support activities.

The deployment of resources throughout the setting is variable. Work on the organisation of the rooms has resulted in some improvements, such as developing the role play area in the pre-school group. Individual staff here take responsibility for arranging various areas, resulting in an enthusiastic attitude to providing exciting resources. However, in the middle room, the system is different, and some areas are less interesting. For example, there are few resources in the role play area and hardly any books are accessible. In the pre-school group children make good use of an exciting variety of creative materials to design and create, but the resources in the middle room are limited. Displays throughout the setting are also of variable quality and interest for children.

Adults are well qualified and the nursery maintains continuous improvement by supporting staffs' training, and acting on advice and support from other professionals. Staff are supported by the Children's Centre teacher, who is working with them to support children who need extra help especially with speech and language development. Records show that this is having a beneficial effect, as adults' ability to question, listen to and respond to children improves, and gaps in achievement are lessening. Parents praise staff for the way they treat their

children very much as individuals, for example, recognising how each child learns best. Good strategies are in place to identify children's special needs early, and to work with other settings to find the right support for children and their families.

Strong partnerships with parents result in good information sharing and trusting relationships. Parents feel well informed about their children's time in the setting. They discuss their children's progress folders with staff, and know the next steps in their child's learning that staff are working on. They report that the nursery is welcoming and the staff are very caring. Partnerships with other professionals, such as social workers and health visitors is a strength and results in a consistent, informed approach to children's care.

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

Adults know the children well and plan activities which meet their needs and interests. This results in children making sound progress and enjoying their play and learning. When staffing allows, adults in the baby room organise interesting activities with the children. For example, they use various tools and their bodies to paint. However, when babies and toddlers try to extend activities in ways that were not planned often the staff will stop the activity, limiting children's enjoyment and satisfaction. Children in the other groups share the well equipped garden, where they choose from a range of activities. They develop balance and coordination on the challenging climbing apparatus, and use resources such as bats and balls. They begin to make sense of the natural world, growing beans and caring for the African snails. Indoors, a large interactive board introduces them to information technology, early writing skills and helps with turn taking and encourages conversation.

The key person system works well for the older children, helping them to feel secure, and providing a contact for parents. Children run to find their special person for a cuddle and reassurance, having trusting relationships. The key person system in the baby room is less effective resulting for example, in several adults feeding individual children. The youngest children develop positive and warm relationships with adults, who chat and play with kindness and affection, but occasionally the quality of interaction is less supportive, with staff sitting in silence with children. Babies are helped to gain a sense of belonging; they can see pictures of themselves and staff displayed attractively on the nursery floor. Older children go to their key worker groups to talk about what they want to do, and this helps them form firm bonds.

Children generally behave according to expectations and learn to keep themselves safe. Babies glow with pleasure when adults tell them how clever they are, for example, when they present a 'meal' made with the play-food. Staff help older children to manage their feelings and behaviour by offering simple explanations and encouraging sharing. Children are given tasks to distract them from unwanted behaviour, such as helping to set out the drinks. This gives them a great sense of pride and self-worth.

Adults are developing strategies to build on the skills children will need for future learning. They encourage children's interests, and are constantly striving to improve children's speech language and numeracy skills.

A healthy lifestyle is encouraged. The outdoor play areas are challenging, and children grow vegetables, pick and eat them. In the toilet area, their independence is promoted as they refer to pictures showing how to care for their own personal hygiene.

## 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

<b>How well does the setting meet the needs of the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?</b>	3
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	3

### The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	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	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding	2
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	2

### 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

<b>Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	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	2
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	3

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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