

The Meadows Nursery School

5-6 Fletcher Close, Hailsham, East Sussex, BN27 2BW

Inspection date	19/04/2013
Previous inspection date	16/01/2009

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	2
	Previous inspection:	2
How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend		2
The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children		2
The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision		2

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This provision is good

- Leaders and managers have very effective systems to monitor the educational programmes, which means that children benefit from good quality teaching.
- Staff are skilled at developing children's vocabulary and communication skills in themed activities, and also in child-initiated play.
- Children are happy in the nursery, well settled and secure because of the very effective settling-in procedures.
- Children with additional needs benefit from coherent support. Nursery staff work closely with parents and other professionals to support children.

It is not yet outstanding because

- When playing outdoors, children have few opportunities to design and create their own structures using small portable items, or 'loose parts'.
- Children are not always sufficiently challenged in their physical play, as staff restrict children's use of equipment.

Information about this inspection

Inspections of registered early years provision are:

- scheduled at least once in every inspection cycle – the current cycle ends on 31 July 2016
- scheduled more frequently where Ofsted identifies a need to do so, for example where provision was previously judged inadequate
- brought forward in the inspection cycle where Ofsted has received information that suggests the provision may not be meeting the legal requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage or where assessment of the provision identifies a need for early inspection
- prioritised where we have received information that the provision is not meeting the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage and which suggests children may not be safe
- scheduled at the completion of an investigation into failure to comply with the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage.

The provision is also registered on the voluntary and compulsory parts of the Childcare Register. This report includes a judgment about compliance with the requirements of that register.

Inspection activities

- The inspector observed children at play in their home rooms and in the garden.
- The inspector met with the manager to discuss how the nursery is monitored and developed.
- The inspector sampled key documentation.
- The manager declined a joint observation but shared her practice on how she evaluates staff practice.

Inspector

Susan McCourt

Full Report

Information about the setting

The Meadows Nursery School in Hailsham registered in 2001. It is part of a chain of six private nurseries operating in East Sussex, Surrey and Kent. The premises are made up of two terraced houses that were adapted during building to house the nursery. The accommodation is over two floors and comprises of four childcare rooms, toilets, a kitchen area and an office. There is a fully enclosed garden for outdoor play. The nursery serves families from the local community and the surrounding area. There are currently 94 children on roll, who attend for a variety of sessions. The nursery supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and who speak English as an additional language. The nursery is registered on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. There are nine members of staff who work with the children, including the nursery manager. Of these, eight have an early years qualification and one is on a training programme. There is also a group operations manager and director of education who are responsible for overseeing all six nurseries. The nursery is open Monday to Friday from 8am until 6pm for 51 weeks of the year.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

To further improve the quality of the early years provision the provider should:

- provide portable equipment in the garden that children can move about safely and cooperatively to create their own structures, such as milk crates, tyres and wood

- help children to gain an understanding of risk by supporting them to challenge themselves in physical play.

Inspection judgements

How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend

Staff have a good knowledge and understanding of how children learn and develop in the Early Years Foundation Stage. They provide an interesting, broad curriculum, which successfully engages children in purposeful play. Children are active, independent learners. Staff provide a good balance between adult-led play and time for children to initiate their own ideas. Staff are skilled at monitoring children's learning and making learning fun. As a result, children make good progress through the Foundation Stage.

Staff have strong teaching skills. They encourage children's language development and communication by providing a good range of activities that capture children's

imagination. For example, children are fascinated by the bugs and insects that they have collected. Staff teach them words such as 'cocoon' and 'antennae' to help them describe what they are looking at. With younger children, staff use sign language to support their spoken words and give children time to think and respond. Staff are skilled at helping children to calculate and solve problems. At snack time, children work out how many plates they will need for their friends, and calculate how many more they need if more children come to the table. Children also work out how many is one more or one less when singing counting songs. Again, staff give children time to think when they are working something out. This helps to build children's confidence in problem solving. Staff arrange resources so that they can take advantage of children's spontaneous play ideas. For example, they maintain a box of resources for outdoor play so that children can hunt for the things shown on a pre-prepared card. Children can hunt for a range of green things, or particular bugs. Children also have easy access to magnifying glasses and clipboards so that they can identify and record what they see. This helps staff to bring out the learning in a range of child-initiated play and develops children's interest in active learning. Children enjoy imaginative play in well-resourced play areas. They dress up and act out different characters, building stories as they go. Children also enjoy a good range of craft and art activities which support their skills in design and expressive arts. Overall, children acquire the skills and attitudes to learning that will prepare them well for school.

Staff make frequent observations of children's achievements and record them in their development folders. The key person makes monthly summaries of children's progress and identifies their next steps, which are brought forward into the planning. This is put onto a short and detailed format so that parents can see the general and specific aims for their child. This helps parents to provide complementary activities at home, and helps them to talk with their children about what they are learning. Staff can easily identify children's learning needs and address them quickly, so children make good progress. Staff track children's development using Development Matters in the Early Years Foundation Stage, which gives them a strong basis for knowing where each child is achieving well or needs further support. The close communication with parents gives children consistent support for their learning.

The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children

Children benefit from a thoughtful and careful settling-in period, which helps them to be confident and well-settled in the nursery. Staff build strong working relationships with parents so that they can meet the child's care needs. The key person for each age group oversees the child's learning and development, but all staff build warm and affectionate relationships with children. This gives them the security to feel at home and explore their play. The learning environment in each room supports children in their independent exploration and they can easily reach a good range of toys and equipment. Staff organise the routine very well, giving children clear signals of what is about to happen. This often takes the form of songs about tidying up, or lining up to go inside. Children quickly recognise these cues and join in. Children with communication difficulties benefit from good support with visual cues such as pictures of snack time or outdoor play. Overall, children feel comfortable about knowing what is happening and gain a good sense of

belonging as a result. Indoors, staff provide 'loose parts' such as blocks and a variety of craft items, which children can use to design and build their own creations. For example, children build ramps or walls out of bricks and blocks. Outdoors however, equipment is largely fixed, which restricts children's ability to make their own structures as part of their play.

Children enjoy good opportunities to learn about healthy lifestyles. They eat healthy, well-balanced meals and snacks and have good skills in self-care such as serving their own food and pouring their drinks. Children learn about food when they plant vegetables and berries, which they can harvest and eat. They adopt good hygiene habits because staff are rigorous in establishing clear routines for hand washing and nappy changing. This reduces the risk of cross-infection. Children's physical development is generally fostered well. Children have good opportunities to be independent in their self care and they develop good small muscle control as they practise early writing skills, for example. However, their large muscle development is somewhat restricted because staff do not consistently support children in challenging their physical skills. For example, younger children are told not to attempt to climb on some equipment, or they have to wait until a member of staff is nearby. This also limits children's exploration of risk and how to manage their own safety.

Children's behaviour is good. Staff give very precise and descriptive praise, so children know what it is they have done well. Children know what is expected of them and respond well to staff suggestions about how to play. As a result, children are cooperative in their play and build good friendships. Children are caring and thoughtful towards each other, showing mature skills in turn-taking and sharing. They enjoy taking responsibility for tidying up or acting as special helpers with younger children or at meal times.

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

The leaders and managers have clear aims and objectives for what they want to achieve for children and families in the nursery. Managers enjoy good support from the higher management team and all staff have a good understanding of how to meet the learning, development and safeguarding requirements. Robust recruitment procedures mean that all staff are checked as to their suitability before they have unsupervised contact or intimate care of children. All staff are familiar with the policies and procedures that guide their work. They know who to report to should they have any concerns about the welfare of a child. All documentation is well-maintained, and staff are strongly aware that this underpins children's well-being.

The work of the nursery is closely monitored. The manager is alongside staff in the setting and oversees their assessments of the children's development. She analyses the progress checks to identify any achievement gaps, for example, between boys and girls. This analysis gives her strong evidence that all children are making good progress given their starting points and capabilities. She works with the nursery chain's director of education and area manager to evaluate and make improvements to the nursery. For example, they

have recently started using 'grab and go' boxes of resources, easily at hand to support children's spontaneous play. Staff state that they have good opportunities for ongoing training and development and appreciate the supervision and appraisal processes. All staff contribute to the self-evaluation and they value seeing their ideas taken forward to improve routines and the learning environments. As a result, the nursery is able to make good continuous improvements.

Parents are very appreciative of the care provided by the nursery. They state that their children are always happy to go to nursery and have a good range of interesting activities to take part in. Parents know that their children are progressing well, and appreciate the extra support staff provide on issues such as potty training and feeding. Staff work in close partnership with children and give regular verbal and written feedback. Parents value the quality of information provided on noticeboards in the reception area, which provide a lot of information about how the nursery works. Staff are skilled at identifying and supplying any additional help that children with special educational needs may have. The manager coordinates this element of partnership working which means that children get the specialist help they need. She initiates improvements in the relationship with schools to help support children as they move on, such as asking for more feedback on children's attainments. As a result, children enjoy coherent care for all their needs.

The Childcare Register

The requirements for the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are **Met**

The requirements for the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are **Met**

What inspection judgements mean

Registered early years provision

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	Outstanding provision is highly effective in meeting the needs of all children exceptionally well. This ensures that children are very well prepared for the next stage of their learning.
Grade 2	Good	Good provision is effective in delivering provision that meets the needs of all children well. This ensures children are ready for the next stage of their learning.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	Satisfactory provision is performing less well than expectations in one or more of the key areas. It requires improvement in order to be good.
Grade 4	Inadequate	Provision that is inadequate requires significant improvement and/or enforcement action. The provision is failing to give children an acceptable standard of early years education and/or is not meeting the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. It will be inspected again within 12 months of the date of this inspection.
Met		The provision has no children on roll. The inspection judgement is that the provider continues to meet the requirements for registration.
Not met		The provision has no children on roll. The inspection judgement is that the provider does not meet the requirements for registration.

Inspection

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006 on the quality and standards of provision that is registered on the Early Years Register. The registered person must ensure that this provision complies with the statutory framework for children's learning, development and care, known as the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Setting details

Unique reference number	511228
Local authority	East Sussex
Inspection number	846878
Type of provision	Full-time provision
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	1 - 8
Total number of places	45
Number of children on roll	94
Name of provider	Places For Children Limited
Date of previous inspection	16/01/2009
Telephone number	01323 440144

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Type of provision

For the purposes of this inspection the following definitions apply:

Full-time provision is that which operates for more than three hours. These are usually known as nurseries, nursery schools and pre-schools and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. They are registered on the Early Years Register and pay the higher fee for registration.

Sessional provision operates for more than two hours but does not exceed three hours in any one day. These are usually known as pre-schools, kindergartens or nursery schools

and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. They are registered on the Early Years Register and pay the lower fee for registration.

Childminders care for one or more children where individual children attend for a period of more than two hours in any one day. They operate from domestic premises, which are usually the childminder's own home. They are registered on the Early Years Register and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Out of school provision may be sessional or full-time provision and is delivered before or after school and/or in the summer holidays. They are registered on the Early Years Register and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. Where children receive their Early Years Foundation Stage in school these providers do not have to deliver the learning and development requirements in full but should complement the experiences children receive in school.

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