

The Oakwood Pre-school

St. Marys Church Hall, High Road, BASILDON, Essex, SS16 6HG

Inspection date

02/07/2013

Previous inspection date

09/06/2011

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This inspection:

3

Previous inspection:

2

How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend 3

The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children 3

The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision 3

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This provision is satisfactory

- Children have fun and make steady progress in their learning, as the staff provide a suitable range of activities that are tailored to their interests and enthusiasms.
- Effective use of the key person system means that staff work in partnership with parents and get to know each child individually. This contributes to the children feeling secure, settled and happy during their time at the pre-school.
- Children are appropriately safeguarded through policies and procedures, which are understood and implemented efficiently by an enthusiastic and caring staff team.

It is not yet good because

- Not all the required records that promote children's welfare and safety are easily available for inspection.
- Planning of activities and interactions between staff and children do not always maximise opportunities to extend learning and promote critical thinking, so that all children learn as much as they can.
- Children's ability to make independent choices and use their imagination is not fully supported because materials and resources are not always easily accessible.
- The monitoring of the impact of staff's practice on children's learning and development is not fully effective.

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 activities in the indoor and outdoor learning environments, this included a joint observation with a deputy.
- The inspector held discussions with the manager, staff and children.
- The inspector viewed a sample of the children's learning journals.
- The inspector saw evidence of risk assessment, policies and procedures and other documentation in relation to health and safety checks.
- The inspector took account of the views of parents spoken to on the day and from comments in the self-evaluation document.

Inspector

Patricia Champion

Full Report

Information about the setting

The Oakwood Pre-school was registered in 1996 and is on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. It operates from a church hall in the Langdon Hills area of Basildon, Essex. There is a fully enclosed area available for outdoor play. The pre-school is privately run and managed. It serves the local area and is accessible to all children.

The pre-school owner employs 14 members of childcare staff. Of these, one member of staff holds an early years qualification at level 4; five staff hold qualifications at level 3; and four staff hold qualifications at level 2. There are four staff working towards early years qualifications at level 3.

The pre-school opens Monday to Friday during school term times. Sessions run between from 9am until 3pm. Children attend for a variety of sessions. There are currently 69 children attending who are within the early years age group. The pre-school provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children. It supports a number of children who speak English as an additional language and children with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

To meet the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage the provider must:

- ensure that records are easily accessible and available for inspection; this relates to the evidence of the staff's suitability checks
- improve staff use of questioning and the planning of activities so that they are consistently precisely matched to the needs of the children, and opportunities to offer additional challenge and extend learning are maximised.

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

- extend children's learning and critical thinking by monitoring and evaluating more closely the impact of staff's practice on children's learning and development
- inspire children's creativity by making a wider range of resources and materials easily accessible, to ensure everybody can make choices and use their imagination to develop their ideas.

Inspection judgements

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

Children enjoy their play and learning because they are welcomed by caring staff who offer a range of fun and interesting experiences. Overall, staff have a sound understanding of how young children learn. A key person system is effectively used and key persons have established close relationships with children and their families. This creates security for children, which encourages them to be confident and enables them to develop positive attitudes towards learning in readiness for school.

The educational programmes enable children to access a suitable range of activities and experiences across the seven areas of learning. They particularly relish the opportunity to play outdoors, where they have more space and freedom to take part in larger scale experiences. Children develop steadily and gain useful skills for their eventual move to school. For example, children use chalk and paintbrushes with water to draw or practise their early writing skills on the playground or fence. Most children recognise their first name when it is written. Older and more able children are beginning to write recognisable letters, and are adeptly writing their names. Children show awareness of numbers and readily count during familiar routines. They recognise simple shapes and patterns and staff encourage them to name shapes as they are playing. Children confidently use mathematical language such as 'big' and 'small' when comparing pictures of undersea creatures. They also eagerly gain knowledge of the natural world when using magnifiers to look at the snails and insects they find when playing outdoors.

Children love stories; they sit attentively, listen well and can contribute and predict the ending, as staff positively encourage this. Children sit with their friends and look at books independently, turning the pages carefully and discussing the pictures and understanding that print carries meaning. Children gain a repertoire of familiar songs and enthusiastically demonstrate how they accompany action rhymes with simple sign language. Staff foster children's communication and language skills suitably. However, during some adult-led activities, questioning and the planning of resources is not precisely matched to the needs of the children. Consequently, opportunities to offer additional challenge and extend learning are not maximised.

The arrangements for recording progress and celebrating children's achievements are continually reviewed and updated. The staff appropriately use guidance documents to assess where children are in relation to their age. Each child has their own unique learning journal containing positive observations illustrated by photographs and examples of artwork. Learning priorities are identified and these are used generally well to inform the activity planning. However, planned activities and staff use of question are not consistently accurately matched to children's learning needs. Therefore, their progress is not maximised. There is a sound process for completing the required progress checks for children when they reach the aged of two. This means that staff promptly identify when children are progressing well or if progress is less than expected, so that any additional support from outside agencies can be secured without delay. The appropriate systems for working with other professionals ensure children with special educational needs and/or

disabilities are closely monitored and they are given valuable support to enable them to participate and achieve. Staff value children's backgrounds and their home languages and they have useful systems in place, such as, using visual clues and prompts, to help children and families with English as an additional language.

Parents are actively involved in their children's development as they frequently meet with key persons to find out how they can continue children's learning at home. They also add their comments or photographs to the journals so that key persons have a clear all-round picture of the children's interests. Parents are encouraged to join the pre-school for special events, such as sports day and craft days. Some parents also come into the pre-school to share information about their occupations and hobbies with the children.

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

Children are happy and settled. They experience positive continuity in their care, learning and development because there is a stable and long-standing staff team. New starters settle quickly into the pre-school due to the effective settling-in systems, resulting in children separating from their main carer with ease. The key persons are caring and attentive to the needs of the youngest children and gather information about their interests, enthusiasms and capabilities right from the start. The staff also provide appropriate support to children when they are due to move on to school. For example, they visit the nearby school to take part in events in the hall and the teachers come into the pre-school to meet the children. As a result, children know what to expect from school life and are well prepared for their transfer.

Children are sociable and confident. The staff are courteous role models and, as a result, children play cooperatively with their friends and quickly learn what is acceptable behaviour. The staff use positive behaviour management strategies and children's self-esteem is enhanced as they receive praise for good behaviour, effort and achievement. Different cultures are reflected in the resources and books on offer in the pre-school so that children learn to respect each other's similarities and differences. In addition, children show care and concern and eagerly offer to help a visitor who uses a wheelchair.

The staff work hard to make the premises welcoming and display children's work so they know their efforts are valued. There are impressive plans to improve the toilet and kitchen facilities later this year, to enhance children's well-being and safety. There is appropriate child-sized furniture so that children can play and eat in comfort. Although children benefit from a broad range of play equipment and creative resources each session, not all of these are immediately accessible or visible to children so that they have consistent opportunities to make choices or use their imagination.

Staff support children's emerging understanding of the importance of a healthy lifestyle that involves physical exercise and a healthy diet. Nutritious snacks and lunches, which include fruit and vegetables, are provided by parents. The staff are knowledgeable about any allergies or special dietary requirements so they can ensure individual needs are met. Children are learning about the need for good hygiene practices as they routinely wash hands before touching food and after visiting the toilet. They benefit from regular fresh air

and exercise during outdoor play. Staff thread safety through daily routines to raise children's understanding. For example, they learn that sand must be used with care and they have to take care with scissors. Children know to wear their sun hats and drink plenty of water to protect their health in hot weather. They also learn about safety through regular fire drills, so they can swiftly evacuate the premises in an emergency.

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

The management and staff have a reasonable understanding of the requirements of the Statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage. The essential policies and procedures are regularly reviewed. These support staff in meeting the needs of children and contribute to the smooth running of the pre-school. Although the registered provider visits the pre-school each week, she manages the setting from a distance. There are two appropriately qualified deputies who efficiently run the pre-school in her absence. However, not all the required records, such as information about the suitability checks of the staff, are held on the premises and are easily available for inspection. This is a breach in the welfare requirements.

Staff have a trained knowledge of the local safeguarding procedures and clear understanding of signs and symptoms that would concern them. Therefore, they are committed to keeping children safe from harm and neglect. The premises remain safe as staff carry out detailed, written risk assessments and daily checks, including those concerning security. All visitors to the premises are closely monitored and main doors and gates remain locked to prevent unauthorised access or children exiting the premises unnoticed. Children are closely supervised as they move between indoor and outdoor play.

Overall, reflective practice is reasonably effective in identifying areas of strength and items to improve. The educational programme is closely monitored to ensure any gaps are quickly identified and addressed so children can make the expected progress in all areas of their learning. A new template has recently been introduced to make tracking and monitoring all children's progress easier and this new system is working well. The recommendation from the last inspection has successfully been addressed and staff are now clearly identifying children's next steps in learning. Staff attend regular training events and receive annual appraisals. However, the monitoring and evaluation of staff performance is not yet precise and sharply focussed on improving any inconsistencies in practice. This means that some activities are not planned to inspire and challenge children to achieve as much as they can.

Staff promote effective relationships with parents and are forthcoming in exchanging information. Displays, noticeboards, parent consultation meetings and newsletters are just some of the ways used to keep parents informed. Parents spoken to on the day of inspection say staff are friendly and approachable and are confident they know their children well. The pre-school works in efficiently in partnership with others. For example, they liaise closely with the children's centre to support families in need of outreach services. Staff have successful links with the local schools to support children's transition when moving on to school.

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	402144
Local authority	Essex
Inspection number	900947
Type of provision	
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	2 - 17
Total number of places	26
Number of children on roll	69
Name of provider	Christine Deer
Date of previous inspection	09/06/2011
Telephone number	07902902632

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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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