

Cherubs Firststeps

Waterson Road, Grays, ESSEX, RM16 4NX

Inspection date

12/09/2013

Previous inspection date

01/11/2010

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

- Babies and children show that they feel safe and secure because staff are experienced and caring. Transitions between rooms are well-supported by familiar staff so that children continue to feel safe and secure.
- Children are confident, happy and settled in the relaxed and friendly atmosphere of the nursery. They form very good relationships with staff, who ensure that their well-being, safety and individual needs are effectively met.
- Regular monitoring of staff ensures that the nursery's policies and procedures are effectively implemented. Staff skills are regularly supported through regular monitoring, supervision and training.
- Good relationships with parents help children to make progress, as staff work in partnership to ensure continuity of learning between the nursery and the home environment.

It is not yet outstanding because

- There are missed opportunities at snack time to enable children to fully develop their very good independence skills and to guide their own learning. For example, children are not involved in the preparation and serving of their own food, or in the tidying away afterwards.

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 all areas of the nursery, including the garden.
- The inspector spoke with the owners, manager, staff and children.
- The inspector took account of parents' views by speaking to them and reading parent feedback.
- The inspector looked at policies and procedures, risk assessments, children's development records and all necessary and relevant documentation.

Inspector

Jenny Forbes

Full Report

Information about the setting

Cherubs Firststeps Day Nursery is privately owned. It opened in 2004 and operates from a room and a large hall within a community building in Chadwell St Mary, Essex. The nursery is registered on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. The nursery serves the local area and is accessible to all children. All children have access to an enclosed, outdoor play area.

The nursery employs 11 members of childcare staff. Of these, 10 hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3 or above and one member of staff is currently working towards a level 3 qualification. The nursery also employs a midday kitchen assistant.

The nursery opens Monday to Friday all year round. Operating times are from 7am until 5.30pm and children attend for a variety of sessions. There are currently 63 children attending who are in the early years age group. The nursery also runs a holiday club for older children in the school holidays. The nursery provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children. It supports a small number of children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. The nursery receives support from the local authority.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- encourage children to prepare and serve their own food and take responsibility for tidying up and clearing away, in order to promote their independence and develop skills for the future.

Inspection judgements

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

Staff have a secure knowledge of how children learn through play and the quality of teaching is good. They have high expectations for the children in their care and are skilled at providing activities that effectively support their achievements and progress. This ensures they are ready for school. There is a good balance of child-initiated and adult-led play based activities that provide effective challenge and stimulation. Children's progress is closely monitored through successful observation and assessment systems. Information gained from these is used by staff to identify the next steps in children's learning. Children are well-motivated and eager to learn. Parents provide information about children's starting points and regularly share information with key persons regarding their children's

development. This means that any gaps in children's learning are quickly identified. Staff record children's development using individual tracker and profile books, and parents are invited to come into the nursery at any time to discuss their children's progress.

A wide variety of resources support children's learning in all parts of the nursery. Activities are changed frequently throughout the day to ensure all children experience a good variety of learning resources appropriate to their needs. Babies' development is closely monitored by skilled staff who support them and extend their learning through a variety of activities. For example, when babies show thorough enjoyment playing with fishes in water outdoors, staff provide a similar activity inside to continue their learning. They extend the activity further by drawing pictures of fish and helping babies to grasp a pencil to make marks on the paper. Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities are well-supported in the nursery as they receive individual support from their key persons. Staff know the children well and understand their needs. For example, children indicate when they want to use the computer. Staff help them to find a programme promoting mathematical development that supports their current interest. Children are encouraged to count and recognise number shapes and they hold up corresponding fingers to indicate the number and receive enthusiastic praise.

Children's communication and language development is supported through activities, such as story time, when children and staff explore books together. Staff ask children questions about where the book begins and ends and what holds the pages together. This supports creative thinking and children are eager to answer questions and take an active part in the story telling. Staff ask children if they think they can eat ice cream with their fingers and they answer, 'yes, if it is in a cornet', displaying quick thinking and imagination. Children's personal, social and emotional development are well-supported in the nursery. Children are encouraged to share and take turns as they sit in a circle around a large sheet. Underneath are a variety of musical instruments for children to feel and describe what they find there. Children new to the nursery examine their discovery with obvious pleasure. They play their instruments together and sing. Children develop their physical skills indoors and outdoors using a variety of resources. They are supported to develop their skills when manipulating scissors to cut paper. They are encouraged to hold them correctly, and try different shaped scissors for more successful cutting, which also promotes their confidence and self-esteem. Children making the transition to school in the autumn are supported by staff and parents working together. They organise an end of term 'leavers' prom' event to celebrate children's achievements.

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

Children form secure attachments with their key persons and other staff, who work closely with parents to ensure children's needs are met. Babies feel safe and secure as they play 'peek-a-boo' with kind, caring staff. Staff caring for babies are sensitive and attentive to their individual needs. Babies go to sleep according to their needs and are comforted when upset. New cots are a source of interest as they are 'double decker' and are open at the bottom for babies to crawl into and snuggle together as if making a cosy den.

Photographs of children's families are displayed to help children feel content and give them a sense of belonging. Caring staff chat to babies when changing their nappies to help them feel relaxed and comfortable. Nappy changing is hygienic and discreet and all children are checked to ensure they remain clean and dry at all times. Older children learn to be independent as they manage their own care needs. They learn to wash their hands before eating, after using the toilet or engaging in messy play. The bathroom has been recently decorated and fitted with shelves and steps to ensure it is clean and tidy and suitable for children to use. The nursery environment is welcoming and attractive to children. All resources are stored at child height and are accessible to all children.

Children's behaviour is good in the nursery as they are constantly engaged in interesting learning activities. There are good systems and strategies in place for managing unwanted behaviour and children respond well to reminders to be kind to each other. This ensures that the children feel safe in the nursery. Staff use frequent praise and encouragement to raise children's self-esteem and encourage positive behaviour. Healthy eating is promoted throughout the nursery. Parents provide a packed lunch from home and children are encouraged to eat the healthy food first before their treat of chocolate or crisps. Lunches are heated in the kitchen if necessary and staff sit with children to make sure the food is not too hot. A variety of fruit is provided for snack time and staff talk about the different types on the plate. However, the fruit is prepared by staff in the kitchen so children do not have the opportunity to learn how to cut up the fruit for themselves or to clear away afterwards. This does not promote their developing independence skills as well as possible. Children learn to keep themselves safe as they line up to go outside. Staff explain why they need to line up and support this by providing laminated cards to show children queuing. All children have access to outdoor play and exercise in the fresh air several times during the course of the day. They dance to music inside and resources are carefully arranged to allow plenty of space for children to move around in safety.

The children's safety is of paramount importance to the nursery staff. All visitors to the nursery must sign in and out. Closed circuit television surveys the outside areas so that staff are aware who wants to gain entrance. Tall fences and electronic gates guard the perimeter of the nursery to ensure children's safety. As children grow older and change rooms, familiar staff move with them to ease their transitions. Transitions to school are supported by visits from local school teachers and uniforms are provided for children to dress in and use in role play. Staff work closely with parents and other settings during this time to ensure children's transitions are smooth.

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

Staff have a clear understanding of the Statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage. They provide a welcoming, safe and stimulating environment where children are happy, can build their confidence and are supported towards meeting their early learning goals. Staff ratios and qualifications are well-maintained. Staff use a 'clocking in and out' system for both morning and afternoon sessions to allow the manager to know who is, and who is not, on duty. This enables her to see at a glance that

appropriate ratios are upheld.

The manager spends a great deal of her time with the children and observing staff in all areas of the nursery. Any underperformance by staff is quickly addressed by regular supervision meetings, training and monitoring, and staff morale is good as they feel well supported. All staff undertake regular training in order to continue to develop their knowledge and skills. All actions and recommendations from previous inspections have been successfully addressed. All the necessary documentation for the safe and efficient management of the nursery is in place. Accident and incident records, and signed parental permission forms, are kept confidentially secured in children's individual files in a lockable filing cabinet. Risk assessments are carried out in all areas of the nursery to minimise hazards and separate risk assessments for outings are undertaken. As a result, children can play and enjoy their learning in safety.

A clear safeguarding policy, including procedures restricting the use of mobile phones, is in place to ensure children are protected. Children are effectively protected because the staff have a secure understanding of safeguarding procedures and know what to do if they have concerns about a child. There are rigorous recruitment and induction procedures in operation and all staff have undergone the necessary background checks. Robust systems are in place to ensure children are safe and secure at all times. Information is gathered from parents about children's individual health needs and staff have undertaken first aid training so they can deal with minor injuries should the need arise.

Children's progress is effectively monitored to ensure that any identified gaps in children's learning are quickly closed. Any concerns regarding children's development are discussed with their parents and appropriate measures for intervention put in place through close links with other professional agencies. Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities are very well-supported and staff work closely with parents and other professionals to ensure children make the best possible progress. Staff and parents meetings are used effectively to evaluate practice and a staff briefing every morning ensures that planning and resources are suitable to meet the needs of all children. A thorough self-evaluation of the nursery takes into account the views of parents, children and staff. Detailed focused improvement plans are re-visited every three months to show where improvements have been made or are still in progress. Planned improvements include further renovations to the bathroom area with the addition of soap dispensers, paper towel dispensers and improved nappy changing facilities.

Partnerships with parents are strong and parents give glowing reports of the nursery staff and have extremely positive views about their children's development and progress. Settling-in procedures are good and parents are pleased to report that their children settle quickly and say they are eager to attend. There are regular parents' information meetings and events, such as bedtime stories with parents, and an 'art gallery', where parents can buy their children's art work and help to contribute to nursery funds to buy much needed equipment. Daily diary sheets are produced for parents of babies and they are encouraged to add their comments and suggestions. Good partnerships with other professionals are maintained to ensure that all children are fully supported and are making good progress.

Transitions are effectively managed, both within the nursery, and when children transfer to school. Strong links are forged with the local schools and staff and parents work together to ensure new settings have full details of children's skills and abilities. The management team and staff are fully aware of the timescales for informing Ofsted of significant events and changes to the premises.

The Childcare Register

The requirements for the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are	Met
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The requirements for the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are	Met
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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	EY285273
Local authority	Thurrock
Inspection number	933521
Type of provision	
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 17
Total number of places	43
Number of children on roll	63
Name of provider	Marian Best
Date of previous inspection	01/11/2010
Telephone number	01375 855134

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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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