

1st Tiny Steps Pre-School

Temple of Light Christian Spiritualist Church, 221 New Road, CHATHAM, Kent, ME4 4QA

Inspection date	31/01/2014
Previous inspection date	29/01/2009

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	
	Previous inspection:	
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

- Children are motivated to learn in a safe, stimulating and welcoming environment.
- Staff have established very positive relationships with children, parents and other professionals in order to provide good support for children's care, learning and development.
- Staff are well qualified and enthusiastic. They demonstrate a strong commitment to further professional development.

It is not yet outstanding because

- Children do not have many opportunities to be able to link sounds and letters into words and observe adults writing for a purpose.

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 compulsory part 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 indoors and outdoors.
- The inspector spoke with staff, some parents and children and took account of their views.
- The inspector looked at a selection of children's records, planning documents and policies.
- The manager and the inspector carried out a joint observation.
- The inspector read the settings on-line self - evaluation form before the inspection.

Inspector

Annette Blundred

Full report

Information about the setting

1st Tiny Steps Pre-School registered in 2008 and is privately owned. It operates from one room in a church hall in the town of Chatham, Kent. The pre-school is open each weekday from 9.30am to 12.15pm during term time only. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area. The pre-school is registered on the Early Years Register and the compulsory part of the Childcare Register. A maximum of 30 children may attend the pre-school at any one time. There are currently 18 children on roll, all of whom are in the early years age group. Children come from a wide catchment area. The pre-school currently supports children who speak English as an additional language and those with additional educational needs or disabilities. The pre-school employs five staff, including the manager. All staff hold appropriate early years qualifications.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- provide more opportunities for children to see adults writing for a purpose, showing them how to link sounds and letters in order to form words

Inspection judgements

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

Children are enthusiastic about attending the pre-school and staff promote learning well. They gather information about children's early starting points from parents and carers and use these to build on early interests and skills. Staff carry out regular observations and assessments in order to identify children's next steps in learning. Assessment processes include the required progress checks for children aged two, which helps to highlight young children's achievements and identify any possible learning needs.

Each child has a developmental folder which contains observations and samples of their work. Staff actively encourage parents to contribute to their children's learning through the use of resources to use at home, such as books, numbers and counting activities. Parents speak with staff regularly about their children's development. They speak very highly of the setting and praise the dedication of the staff.

The well organised staff provide a variety of stimulating learning experiences for the children to enjoy. They encourage them to reflect on their own learning and to learn new skills, for example, by asking what else they want to add to their picture. They have lots of shapes around the setting and children like to name the shapes and demonstrate their knowledge, for instance, when doing collage. Staff praise the children's efforts and encourage them to try out their ideas. Consequently they have a sense of achievement

and they are proud of their model or their painting.

The quality of the teaching is good. Children enjoy a wide range of books and staff teach them that print holds meaning. Younger children enjoy the many opportunities for mark making and learn to write their names. However, staff do not always take opportunities to model writing skills for the older children to show them that writing has different purposes, and to demonstrate the link between sounds, letters and words.

Staff make good use of imaginative play and contribute to it by building on the children's learning. For instance, they join in brushing and cleaning in the home corner, asking children why they need to do it and what they will need when they take a shower. This helps to develop organisational skills. They incorporate number activities into play and make good use of matching, sorting and counting. Numerals displayed around the setting enable staff to reinforce number concepts through songs, rhymes and the daily routines. On arrival children find their names. They later count their friends and they then correlate this to the attendance register. This gives them practice in counting and also shows them the importance of checking for accuracy. Children enjoy this routine and it increases their confidence in their skills and abilities.

The outdoor play area is used every day so that the children can take their learning outside. They have opportunities to play on the wheeled toys, to enjoy role play and to learn about growing fruit and vegetables. Staff make the environment interesting and inviting by taking resources outside and displaying art work there. Children play enthusiastically and make comments about the weather, such as 'It is not raining today - we have had lots of rain haven't we?' They are fully engaged in role play and staff support learning by asking questions to extend thinking, such as asking 'What colour?', 'How many?' and 'What else do you need to do?' Staff give children time to process their thoughts and to respond.

Staff promote inclusion effectively. Children have access to a number of resources showing different cultures and festivals and they enjoy stories about different countries. The pre-school supports children with English as an additional language very well, using key words from the home language given by parents. Staff use a translator to aid communication with parents and children. They also use some visual signs to help children to understand what is happening. As a result, children are settled, confident and ready to try new activities. Staff plan well for children with additional needs or disabilities, implementing advice from other professionals, such as speech and language therapists, and physiotherapists. As a result children make good progress.

The pre-school team give careful thought to planning the stimulating environment. Children enjoy cause and effect toys, construction toys, art materials and musical instruments. They delight in making up songs to sing into a microphone and have great fun doing so. All resources in the room have clear labels to enable children to select items themselves. Staff encourage them to be independent and to undertake self-help skills as soon as possible. Similarly adults help children to plan their activities and then to reflect on their learning. This prepares them very successfully for the next stage in their learning and for starting school.

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

A highly effective key person system is in place in the pre-school. Staff know the children and the parents well. They welcome children warmly. Staff have established strong relationships with parents and carers so children feel secure and they settle easily. Parents state that staff are friendly and caring and that children are very happy. Staff respond immediately when they see that a child is upset or withdrawn and they offer verbal reassurance or a cuddle if needed.

Staff are good role models for children. They speak pleasantly, politely and clearly to the children and encourage them to respect each other. There are guidelines which are clearly written up and referred to, for example, 'use your indoor voice' and 'be kind'. Staff use simple visual prompts to encourage children to behave appropriately and kindly. They work with parents to find strategies to help children who have difficulties in this area of their development. Parents report that they are very pleased with their children's development because 'they get a lot of individual attention from the staff'. Generally children behave very well, take responsibility, and show a sense of community at the pre-school. They play cooperatively and share resources. For example, they explained to the inspector that the five minute timer is used to show them when to get off the trampoline. The pre-school has a calm and positive atmosphere.

Staff have a high regard for children's safety and well-being. They supervise children well and teach them to use equipment safely. Adults ask children to consider the possible consequences of their actions, for example, when using scissors and walking about with them. Similarly they are reminded to take care to avoid others when steering the wheeled toys outside. Staff organise regular fire practices so that all are familiar with the evacuation procedures. Through these measures children develop a sense of the importance of safety.

Staff follow flexible routines and cater for children's individual needs very well. They clean the tables and equipment thoroughly to maintain good hygiene. Care practices are well defined. Children know when to wash their hands independently and staff encourage them to do so. There are good hygiene practices in place, for example, when preparing food, after using the toilet, and after messy play or painting. There are pictorial reminders to show both adults and children how to wash hands thoroughly.

Children have sociable snack times when they enjoy healthy eating. Role play and posters of fruits and vegetables enhance their understanding. Staff have good awareness of individual children's dietary requirements and these are well documented. Children learn about different types of foods and staff encourage them to make choices. This promotes independence and a sense of responsibility. The adults interact with children and ask them to help, for instance, with putting plates and food out. Children benefit from fresh air and exercise every day in the well-equipped outside area where they develop their skills and learn to operate larger wheeled toys.

When children are about to start school the pre-school staff send records to the

appropriate schools. Children also visit the local schools so they can become familiar with their new environment. Teachers also come to the setting in order to get to know the children and learn about their individual needs. This helps to increase children's confidence and prepares them for the new situation and their transfer to school.

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

Leadership is strong. The provider and her team demonstrate a firm commitment to extending children's learning. The team are well qualified and experienced. They effectively drive and secure improvement through self-evaluation and incorporate the views of staff and parents. Therefore they successfully identify strengths and weaknesses. Recent changes include introducing learning packs for use at home and there are plans for the future which include developing the outdoor area further.

The robust systems for staff induction, supervision and appraisal ensure all staff are clear about their responsibilities and their roles. These procedures facilitate further plans for staff training and development. The team attend a wide range of training, which results in them having a good understanding of how to effectively promote learning for all children. The arrangements for safeguarding children are also very good. All staff take part in regular risk assessments and daily safety checks, which have clear, well defined and documented procedures. They are also clearly displayed for easy reference. Staff understand the need to protect children from harm and are alert to signs which may indicate that a child is at risk. Staff know the procedures to follow, should the need arise.

The team meets regularly to review the provision and to plan. Recommendations from previous inspections have been implemented and they review policies and update them on a regular basis. Parents can make suggestions informally or through the questionnaires the provider sends out. There is a thorough self-evaluation system which staff update regularly as they identify ways to develop their practice.

Well established links with other professionals and the local authority enable staff to work closely with a wide range of outside agencies in order to meet the needs of children effectively. This means that children with additional needs or disabilities receive good support to extend their learning and to experience success. Inclusive practice is very evident in the pre-school and staff work in close partnership with parents and carers to facilitate this. The setting has also established good relationships with local schools and other settings to promote consistency of care for children and to exchange good practice.

Parents are highly complimentary about the pre-school and state that the staff are friendly and caring. Parents explain that they engage verbally with staff at the end of each session and that they also attend meetings to discuss their child's progress during the year. They say that their children really enjoy coming to the pre-school and that they are making good progress, such as 'in their talking and counting'. They say that the pre-school is a 'happy place'.

The Childcare Register

The requirements for the compulsory 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	Requires improvement	The provision is not giving children a good standard of early years education and/or there are minor breaches of the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. It will be monitored and inspected within twelve months of the date of this inspection.
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 monitored and inspected again within six 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	EY382116
Local authority	Medway Towns
Inspection number	838223
Type of provision	Full-time provision
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	2 - 8
Total number of places	30
Number of children on roll	18
Name of provider	Ann Brown
Date of previous inspection	29/01/2009
Telephone number	07946246022

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance '*Complaints procedure: raising concerns and making complaints about Ofsted*', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

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.

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

Piccadilly Gate
Store St
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2012

