

Top of the Hill Pre-School

64 Windward Road, Rochester, ME1 2NB

Inspection date

Previous inspection date

03/04/2014

Not Applicable

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This inspection:

2

Previous inspection:

Not Applicable

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

- The good use of resources both indoors and outdoors promotes children's learning and development well.
- The relaxing, friendly environment helps children to feel secure, behave well and develop good social skills.
- Effective and well thought out safety arrangements are in place, protecting children as they play and learn.
- Robust arrangements to work in partnership with other professionals support staff to provide cohesive, consistent care.
- Children enjoy practising writing and staff support this very well.

It is not yet outstanding because

- Children create a lot of expressive and individual art but room displays tend to feature adult led activities rather than celebrating children's own ideas.
- Staff do not always seek the views of parents when considering changes and improvements within the pre-school.

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 viewed all areas of the pre-school.
- The inspector observed the interaction of staff and children during a range of activities.
- The inspector completed a joint observation over the lunch time with the manager.
- The inspector spoke with the manager, staff, parents and children during the inspection.
- The inspector viewed a range of documents including policies, procedures and children's progress records.

Inspector

Liz Caluori

Full report

Information about the setting

Top of the Hill Pre-School is registered in 2014. It is privately owned and operates from a hall in Rochester, Kent. There are separate kitchen and toilet facilities and a fully enclosed outdoor play area.

The pre-school accepts children from two years old and is open five days a week, from 8am until 4pm, term time only. It is registered on the Early Years Register and both the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. There are currently 58 children on roll all of whom are in the early years age group. The pre-school is able to care for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities as well as those who speak English as an additional language. The pre-school receives funding to provide early education for children aged two, three and four years.

There are six members of staff, all of whom hold appropriate early years qualifications. The manager has an early years degree and has Early Years Professional Status.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- offer greater recognition for children's freely expressive artwork and creative ideas within the pre-school environment

- extend the arrangements to work with parents to involve them in the planning of changes and improvements.

Inspection judgements

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

Children make good progress in their learning and development as staff provide interesting and challenging educational programmes. Children are extremely active and independent learners. They benefit from very good opportunities to make choices and decisions. This encourages them to learn through exploration and investigation. Staff recognise the importance of first hand experiences and self-discovery to promote children's understanding. They also know when to intervene to extend activities and are on hand to provide support when needed. For example, they respond with genuine interest when children rush in to excitedly tell them about a bird's nest they have spotted in a tree. Staff build successfully on this interest to extend children's knowledge of the natural world.

Staff use appropriate strategies to promote children's communication and language. They engage in lively and interesting discussions with children both in groups and on an individual basis. Children learn good conversational skills as well as gaining the confidence to speak out in front of others. Children develop good vocabulary and use descriptive language to share their views, ask questions and discuss their play. For example, children playing with a large tray of dinosaur figures describe their individual characteristic, such as being 'really really long' or having 'small teeth'. Children enjoy listening to stories read by staff and looking at books in their free play. Staff offer very good support and resources for children to draw, make marks and to practise writing. The relaxed atmosphere at the writing table attracts a lot of children and most concentrate for lengthy periods while also talking and laughing with staff. As a result, many children are developing high levels of literacy. Children participate in many art activities using their own imaginations or during adult led activities. The wall displays tend to feature the adult led activities and do not always show the children's freely expressed work. Children are able to move freely between the indoor and outdoor areas for most of each session. They have fun riding on scooters, playing ball games and climbing on apparatus. They move with control and coordination.

There are clear systems in place to observe children and to monitor their progress. Staff know children's individual personalities, preferences and learning styles well. As a result they are able to very specifically plan activities which reflect children's individual learning needs. Appropriate arrangements are in place to complete the required progress checks for children aged two years. Staff maintain positive relationships with parents and have systems for regularly sharing information about their child's progress. Parents contribute observations from home which they write up and celebrate by placing them on a display depicting an 'achievement tree'.

The pre-school environment is fully inclusive and staff successfully support children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. One member of staff takes lead responsibility for coordinating individual educational plans to meet individual children's needs. Staff respect the religions, cultural backgrounds and home languages of all children. They learn some key words to communicate with children when they first start and provide resources to reflect their languages positively.

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

Children play happily and interact very well with staff. Key person arrangements are very effective and children form trusting relationships. This helps them to develop a strong sense of security. Staff are very sensitive to children's emotional wellbeing, for example they plan their time thoughtfully to offer individual attention to children on days when their best friends do not attend.

Children behave well in the busy, friendly atmosphere. Staff act as very good role models, supporting children to develop their social skills. The high level of independence children experience enables them to begin to take carefully managed risks in a safe environment.

Staff place strong focus on promoting children's health. They teach them good self-care skills such as washing their hands after toileting and when sitting down to eat. Children also help themselves to tissues to blow their nose. Children enjoy healthy snacks and take a very active role in preparing these. They learn to spread using knives and confidently pour their own drinks. Children who stay all day bring in packed lunches which parents place in a specially designated fridge. Lunch times are extremely sociable events and children show a developing understanding of the importance of good nutrition, for example by asking staff 'are yogurts healthy?'

There is a vast array of toys and materials for children to explore. Children know where different toys are stored. They independently select items and transport them around the pre-school to support their games. There are sufficient of each type of toy to allow several children to play the same games. They use these very effectively to extend their learning and enjoyment. For example, a number of children play together exploring the garden using a selection of magnifying glasses.

Staff plan effectively prepare children well for their move to school. This includes supporting children to reach their full potential in literacy and mathematics as well as ensuring that they are emotionally and physically ready. Staff also teach children practical skills such as dressing and undressing.

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

Strong leadership and effective team working result in a well-organised and efficient service. The manager understands the importance of supporting the professional development of staff. She holds regular meetings, one to one supervisions and appraisals to discuss working policies and procedures as well as to identify training needs. This helps to ensure consistency in the quality of care and teaching between the staff team. The management team fully understand their responsibility to promote children's learning and development and do this well. Systems are being implemented to monitor the rate at which children are progressing and to identify and address any gaps in achievement as they emerge. There is a good focus on reflection and self-evaluation and the setting accurately identify the strengths of the pre-school as well as areas for further development. The provider regularly informs parents of any changes to the children's learning but they are not consistently included in implementing these changes.

Good arrangements are in place to promote children's safety. Staff supervise the doors to the pre-school as children arrive and leave. Effective risk assessments are in place to ensure children play in safe premises. A member of staff is responsible for child protection and has attended training for this role. She fully understands the process to follow should concerns arise about the welfare of any child. There are also clear procedures to respond to an allegation against staff as well as a whistle blowing policy should staff have concerns about the behaviour of any colleague. Robust recruitment procedures include rigorous vetting to ensure staff suitability.

In addition to maintaining good relationships with parents, staff have experience of very successfully working in partnership with other professionals and early years providers. This ensures that all parties are able to share information in order to ensure that children receive cohesive and coordinated care.

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	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	EY476475
Local authority	Medway Towns
Inspection number	966540
Type of provision	Sessional provision
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	2 - 8
Total number of places	30
Number of children on roll	58
Name of provider	Lisa Helen Kane
Date of previous inspection	not applicable
Telephone number	01634832764

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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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