

Methwold Nursery School Limited

39 Stoke Road, Methwold, THETFORD, Norfolk, IP26 4PE

Inspection date	31/03/2014
Previous inspection date	03/11/2009

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

- Partnerships with parents are highly effective, as staff are committed to working together with them, to ensure that each child's individual care and learning needs are met.
- Outdoor play and learning is particularly well-established, promoting children's interest, ensuring that those children who learn best through being outdoors, are able to do so.
- Children's transition to school is managed well; this supports children to be emotionally ready for school and to embrace new experiences with confidence.
- Children's language and communication skills are given good priority. Staff encourage children in conversation, helping them develop their vocabulary and become confident communicators.

It is not yet outstanding because

- There is scope to enhance children's good health because management do not routinely check the nutritional information of any packaged ingredients, resulting in occasionally high salt content in meals.
- Staff do not always maximise opportunities for children to practise using their knowledge of mathematical language, such as counting in play situations.

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 toddler room, the preschool room and the garden.
- The inspector spoke with staff at appropriate times throughout the inspection.
- The inspector looked at activity planning, records of children's learning and a selection of policies and records.
- The inspector held a meeting with the nursery manager and the nursery owner.
- The inspector checked evidence of suitability and qualifications of staff working with children, the provider's self-evaluation form and improvement plan.
- The inspector spoke to parents.

Inspector

Jacqueline Mason

Full report

Information about the setting

Methwold Nursery School Ltd was registered in 2009, having been previously registered under the same ownership since 2006. It is registered on the Early Years Register and the compulsory parts of the Childcare Register. The nursery operates from a converted Court House in Methwold, a rural village between Thetford and Downham Market in Norfolk. It is privately owned and managed, serves the local area and is accessible to all children. The nursery employs 12 members of childcare staff. Of these, seven hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3. The manager has a qualification at level 5. The nursery opens from Monday to Friday, all year round. Sessions are from 7.30am until 6pm. Children attend for a variety of sessions. There are currently 65 children on roll of whom 60 are in the early years age range. The nursery provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children. It supports a number of children with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- support children's good health by checking the nutritional value of any ingredients, to ensure that the salt content is suitable for young children
- maximise the use of play situations, to encourage children to use and practice their own mathematical knowledge.

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; staff understand that children learn in different ways and they foster the characteristics of effective learning well. They establish children's starting points on entry to the nursery, through discussion with parents and encouraging them to complete an 'all about me' questionnaire. This supports staff to identify children's starting points. They undertake thorough observations, which are evaluated effectively to identify children's next steps. These are reflected in their planning, along with children's interests, to meet the unique needs of every child. Parents are encouraged to remain involved in their children's learning, in the nursery and at home. They are actively engaged in the progress check at age two and all parents are encouraged to look at records of their children's learning and contribute to them. Effective systems are in place to monitor the progress of individual groups of children. For example, information about children's stage of development is collated and analysed when they leave nursery to go to school. This identifies the number of children who are working at the expected band for their age, those who are not and those who exceed. Management

is looking at how to use this information to close any identified gaps, such as between boys and girls.

Children are supported well, to become enthusiastic learners and be ready for the next stage in their learning. Staff engage well in children's play and the quality of teaching is good, although on some occasions staff do not always maximise opportunities for children to count, during play situations where mathematics is being promoted, instead counting for the children. Despite this, good mathematical language is used by staff, such as positional language and size language. Children understand bigger and smaller, higher and shorter, readily using this language when comparing the towers of bricks that they have built. The quality of staff interaction with children is good. They talk to children about what they are doing and ask questions to challenge their thinking, giving them time to process questions before answering. For example, when looking at a picture book with children, staff talk about the illustrations and encourage children to compare the picture to their own experiences. Older children sit in the cosy areas and enjoy looking at the varied and interesting range of books available to them. They understand that print carries meaning. Staff extend this by introducing initial sounds. Children confidently suggest other words that start with the letter sound, including their own name and those of others. Children are encouraged to make marks, such as in shaving foam and in mud. They are supported to write their own name and older children write recognisable letters.

Staff recognise the short concentration span of younger children and provide a range of activities for children to self-select. The environment is very much child-led and younger children explore the environment confidently, knowing that a familiar adult is nearby. Staff provide plentiful opportunities for children to play independently, supporting this well by providing a varied and interesting range of resources, which promote all areas of learning. Outdoor play is particularly well-established, promoting children's interest and ensuring that those who learn best through being outdoors are able to do so. Younger children enjoy exploring the mud kitchen and the soil container. They post leaves and twigs through the spout of the kettle, developing their hand to eye coordination.

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

Established routines are in place, promoting a good sense of belonging. Children know what happens next, at any point during the day. They are helped to learn to keep themselves safe and take managed risks. For example, they when children walk along the tyres in the garden they are shown how to balance, so that they do not fall off. Staff offer support to those children who need it, holding their hands as they learn to balance. Children's health is generally managed well and a good emphasis is placed on playing outdoors and exploring the outdoor environment. Children demonstrate that they manage their own personal hygiene needs, relative to their age, such as taking themselves to the toilet and washing their own hands. Their good health is further supported by the provision of healthy snacks. However, occasionally when the nursery cook is absent, lunch time meals prepared by the proprietor contain ingredients that are too high in salt content. Parents have the option of providing packed lunches if they wish to do so.

Children's transitions into the nursery are managed well. They are supported well by their

key person, who takes responsibility for their daily well-being, plan for their learning and development, and build positive relationships with parents supporting and developing relationships with children and their families. Staff are good role models and treat children with respect and equal regard. They use verbal praise to place a meaningful value on children's individual efforts. Children behave well and even very young children seek out others to share play experiences. Consistent boundaries are in place, to help children know what is expected of them. Staff skilfully support children to solve their own conflicts and recognise the impact that their behaviour has on others. As a result, children learn right from wrong and develop self-esteem. All staff are responsive to children's needs and benefit from a wide range of play materials, to support their learning and development. The thoughtfully planned playrooms and garden create an enabling environment for all children. This supports them to engage in purposeful play, ensuring that they have a firm base from which to build their growing independence and confidence, as they get ready for their transition into school. Transitions into school are managed very well and include a 'powerpoint' presentation for parents as well as activities for children.

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

Staff have a good awareness of the signs and symptoms of abuse, to help them recognise when children may be at risk. They are confident to report concerns in line with Local Safeguarding Children Board guidelines. This inspection was brought forward following a recent management notification to Ofsted. This inspection found that the provider did not follow their safeguarding policy because they began an investigation before contacting the Local Authority Designated Officer and Ofsted. This is a breach of requirements; however, following this incident the safeguarding policy has been thoroughly reviewed, ensuring that procedures are robust, and all staff and management know the processes they must follow. This will help to ensure that this situation never arises again. Risk assessments are effective, ensuring that children are able to play safely indoors and outside. Good use is made of the outdoor play environment; children are able to move freely between indoor and outdoor spaces. Staff move between these play environments, to ensure that staffing arrangements meet the needs of all children and ensure their safety.

Staff are led by a management team that is enthusiastic and committed to providing good quality care and education. The learning and development requirements are monitored and staff are supported well. As a result, they are motivated and work well together as team. There is an effective system of supervision and appraisal in place, helping to identify the strengths and weaknesses of staff, and plan for their professional development. Recruitment and selection procedures for new staff are good. Management uses '14 steps to safer recruitment', to support them in their employment of people who are suitable to work with children. A record is maintained of Disclosure and Barring Service checks. Staff are encouraged to reflect on their practice and regular staff meetings take place to discuss practice issues. This forms part of strong self-evaluation processes that include seeking the views of parents. Management reflects on views of parents, make changes as a result of their comments. For example, changes were made immediately to the question about ethnicity on the registration form, following a parent's comments that 'White Irish' did not feature on the form.

Staff have exceptional relationships with parents; their partnerships are friendly and trusting. Parents are extremely happy with the service that is provided, valuing the care and support that is offered to them and their children. They find that staff genuinely care about their children, and value the emotional support that staff and management offers to parents, during times of crisis and vulnerability. Good information is shared with parents, both verbally and in written format. A daily diary is maintained for younger children, keeping parents informed about their child's day. Concerns about children's development are discussed with parents and effective links are made with external agencies. This ensures that children receive the necessary support to make the best progress that they can in their learning and development.

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	EY393602
Local authority	Norfolk
Inspection number	965918
Type of provision	
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 17
Total number of places	36
Number of children on roll	65
Name of provider	Methwold Nursery School Limited
Date of previous inspection	03/11/2009
Telephone number	01366 728419

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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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