

St Margarets Pre School

St Margarets Catholic Church Hall, Doddinghurst Road, DODDINGHURST, Essex, CM15 0QH

Inspection date

04/07/2014

Previous inspection date

06/11/2008

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This inspection:

1

Previous inspection:

2

How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend	1
The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children	1
The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision	1

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This provision is outstanding

- Children form exceptionally strong bonds and emotional attachments to their key persons and other staff. This ensures that they achieve an extremely positive sense of security and well-being.
- Children enthusiastically participate in the imaginative activities that effectively support their learning and development to an outstanding level. Children are extremely confident, self-assured, highly motivated and eager to learn.
- Children are exceptionally well behaved. They take responsibility for small tasks set for them by kind and nurturing staff and they learn to care for, and be considerate of, each other.
- Children who have additional needs are superbly well supported as staff form exceedingly strong partnerships with parents and other professionals. This ensures that all children receive the support they need to help them achieve to the very best of their ability.
- Security and safeguarding of children are of paramount importance to the management and staff. They have secure and highly effective strategies in place to ensure that all children are protected from harm.

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 children engaged in activities indoors and outdoors.
- The inspector spoke with the owner, manager, staff and children.
- The inspector carried out a joint observation with the manager.
- The inspector took account of parents' views by speaking with them on the day and by reading parents' feedback and comments.
- The inspector sampled a range of documents including policies and procedures, staff suitability records, risk assessments and records of children's progress.

Inspector

Jenny Forbes

Full report

Information about the setting

St Margaret's Pre-school opened in 1969 and was re-registered under new ownership in 2008. It is registered on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. The pre-school operates from two rooms, in a church hall in the village of Doddington, Essex. The premises and toilets are accessible to people with disabilities. The pre-school opens during term time only. It operates from 9.15am until 12.15pm, Monday to Friday, and sessions are extended until 3.15pm on Monday and Wednesday. Children may also stay for lunch until 1.30pm every day except Thursday. There are currently 39 children aged from two to five years on roll who attend for a variety of sessions. The pre-school employs six members of childcare staff, all of whom hold appropriate early years qualifications. The pre-school supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who are learning to speak English as an additional language.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- enhance the already excellent provision for children's learning in language and literacy by presenting an even more language rich environment in the outdoor play area.

Inspection judgements

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

All staff have an excellent knowledge and understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage. Staff support children's learning and development exceptionally well through their expert knowledge of how children learn. This excellent understanding of children's development ensures that their progress in all areas of learning is extremely well promoted. The confident and enthusiastic staff team work exceedingly well together to consistently support children's ongoing development. The quality of teaching is inspirational. Staff enhance children's learning by effectively extending their chosen activities to challenge their creative thinking. For example, as children engage in role play as shopkeepers and customers, they notice that some labels are missing from their imitation food containers. Children enthusiastically engage in making their own labels as staff use sensitive questioning techniques to encourage children to think for themselves and solve their own problems. An excellent balance of child-initiated and adult-led play activities provide children with plenty of challenge and encourages their natural curiosity to learn. Children are highly motivated and eager to participate in the activities provided by staff and consistently demonstrate the characteristics of effective learning.

Staff share their assessments of children's starting points with parents on entry to the pre-

school to ensure children make excellent progress from the beginning. Staff and parents work together to identify individual children's next steps in learning. Records of these assessments are contained within each child's individual learning journals. These clear and concise records, together with staff's superb understanding of children's interests, inform careful planning for their continued progress. Staff skilfully undertake the progress check for children between the age of two and three years in partnership with parents to ensure their ongoing development. Children effectively lead their own play and develop at their own pace. Staff tailor their support to meet individual needs. For example, a group of children of different ages engage in a cutting and sticking activity. Staff give glowing praise and encouragement to older, more confident children while the younger ones receive close attention, instruction and a guiding hand. Children beam with pride when they master a skill for the first time.

Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities, are exceptionally well supported within the pre-school. Staff skilfully organise the learning environments to suit children's individual needs. They easily capture children's interest when they learn about nature in the pre-school garden. They plant and tend herbs and make homes for insects and spiders as they learn more about the world they live in. Staff support them in an activity counting and sorting imitation money, making piles of coins and notes. This links with children's current theme of 'mathematics' and teaches them valuable skills for the future. Children develop their skills in communication and language as they talk about the items they have brought for the interest table, to support their mathematical theme. Staff help them to describe their objects to the other children and explain how they work. For example, children demonstrate the knowledge they have gained at home when they present a retractable tape measure. They show the other children the numbers on the tape and demonstrate how to measure a table. Staff extend this activity by measuring a child and showing how it relates to a height chart on the wall, which is more familiar to them all. Older children are supported to practise the skills they will need for the future, such as pencil control and forming letters and numbers, in readiness for the next stage of their learning and school.

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

The highly effective key person system ensures that every child forms secure bonds and emotional attachments. Children exhibit high levels of self-assurance and confidence. They learn to share, take turns and cooperate with each other. Children's independence and confidence continually develops through making choices and decisions, with regard to their play. Staff follow children's lead and support them as they select their own play resources. The vast range of resources are of extremely high quality and are accessible to children as they are stored at their level. Children are exceptionally well behaved in the pre-school. They are polite, friendly and caring. Older children take good care of the younger ones as they play and learn closely together. For example, as children sit on the carpet for registration, older children speak up for the younger ones saying, 'she is a little bit shy'. Children develop superb self-care skills as staff encourage their independence. They independently address their own care and personal hygiene needs appropriate to their age and stage of development. They do not need to be prompted to wash their hands after using the toilet and before meals. Staff have introduced portable hand

washing facilities for use after messy play and children make use of this regularly. They dry their hands on their own towels brought in fresh every day by their families, which they keep on their own individual pegs.

Children are extremely safe in the pre-school. External gates remain closed at all times when children are present. Staff hang notices on gates to inform visitors that children must be kept safe and the gates are closed at all times. Staff place a cordon across the car park, as an added precaution, to show the line children must not cross. All children learn how to keep themselves safe, by not crossing this line and to play on the large playground or grassed area where staff constantly supervise them. Fire evacuation procedures are displayed and fire drills are practised so that children and staff know what to do should an emergency occur. Robust and clear risk assessment procedures are followed every morning to ensure the indoor and outdoor environments are safe and children are protected from any potential dangers. Staff are kind and caring and they are excellent role models as they lead by example. They use frequent praise and encouragement to raise children's self-esteem, which encourages positive behaviour. Staff provide a warm, welcoming, safe and stimulating environment where children thrive and are free to explore and use their imaginations.

Children's health is promoted exceptionally well by the staff, as they make sure that children with specific medical or dietary needs are safe. Staff are extremely vigilant as children unwrap their packed lunches and ensure that children with allergies do not come into contact with foods that could harm them. Staff sit with children while they eat their packed lunches and talk about the health properties of the food they are eating. They provide fruit at snack time and plenty of water to drink. Children learn to tidy away after eating, and after playing with resources, learning skills for the future. Children have opportunities to play outside in the fresh air every day as they have free access to the garden in all weathers. Staff ensure that children have appropriate clothing when playing outside and ask parents to provide sun hats and sun cream in hot weather and wellingtons for the rain. Their physical development is promoted as they chase each other around the garden and engage in role play. The children are very imaginative and they play with a host of enticing resources that challenge their skills. They try to spin hula hoops around their waists and catch balls in scoops and with rackets. However, there is more scope for the pre-school to utilise resources in the outdoor environment to extend children's learning still further. For example, by enhancing the learning potential in the garden by providing more signs and labels to promote literacy development. Children who are leaving to go to school show remarkable confidence and self-assurance. Staff provide them with a graduation ceremony to mark the end of their pre-school years and help them to feel excited about going to school.

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

The pre-school has extremely robust systems in place to ensure that children are very well safeguarded. Staff regularly update their safeguarding knowledge through appropriate

training and fully engage with their policies and procedures, which are regularly reviewed. Staff recruitment is rigorous in ensuring that newly appointed staff hold appropriate qualifications. They follow a thorough induction programme, which supports them to learn about all the procedures of the pre-school to ensure that children remain safe at all times. All staff are subject to the appropriate background vetting checks and these also apply to any students or volunteers who come to work with children. Staff management is of a very high standard and all staff receive regular individual support, supervision and training. Very thorough annual appraisals are carried out and staff have the opportunity to talk to the manager about their roles and any support they feel they might need. The manager supports staff well and enthusiastically invites their suggestions for improvements to activities and resources. The manager and deputy are highly motivated and enthusiastic and have high expectations of themselves and their staff. As a result, all staff share a strong drive for excellence and are thoroughly dedicated to children in their care.

The manager monitors the educational programmes and planning for children's development through regular observations of staff practice. Staff track children's progress and analyse any gaps in learning. Activities are monitored and evaluated to ensure they are accessed by all children and meet the outcomes intended. Peer-to-peer observations are undertaken by staff to support each other's practice and to maintain high levels of consistency across the pre-school. There is a strong self-evaluation process to which parents, staff and children actively participate. Clear and concise focused and detailed improvement plans ensure that self-reflection and the continued development of the pre-school remains a high priority. Partnerships with parents are exceptionally strong and parents feel very included and welcome in the setting. Parents are actively involved in their children's learning as their views, comments and ideas are sought through a variety of ways. Parents are invited to meet with their children's key person every term to discuss their progress and agree their next steps. Parents speak especially highly of the care, kindness and friendliness of staff. They are full of praise and admiration for the successful way their children are learning. Parents regularly send letters of appreciation to the manager, and parents of children with additional needs, cannot praise staff highly enough.

Extremely effective partnerships with many external agencies and other professionals are secured to support identification of any concerns that staff may have regarding children in their care. Staff are passionate about their roles. They are enthusiastic and highly motivated. Staff ensure that the areas they are responsible for are extremely well planned and resourced invitingly to encourage all children to take part. Highly successful staff deployment, along with strong adult-to-child ratios ensures all children are supported in their play and their learning is extended and assured. All staff receive regular ongoing training, which is monitored to ensure it is effective and contributes to improvements within the pre-school. Strong links are made with all schools that children will attend and visits are organised, to ensure that children are prepared and ready for the next important stage in their learning. Children with additional needs are exceptionally well supported through this time of change, as staff ensure that school teachers have access to all the information they need to support the children's continued 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	EY374433
Local authority	Essex
Inspection number	858249
Type of provision	
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 17
Total number of places	30
Number of children on roll	39
Name of provider	Chuckles (UK) Ltd
Date of previous inspection	06/11/2008
Telephone number	07731 303919

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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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