

# The Castle Pre-School

Garden Lodge, Whitstable Castle, Whitstable CT5 2BW



<b>Inspection date</b>	9 January 2019
Previous inspection date	Not applicable

<b>The quality and standards of the early years provision</b>	<b>This inspection:</b> Previous inspection:	<b>Good</b> Not applicable	<b>2</b>
Effectiveness of leadership and management		Good	2
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment		Good	2
Personal development, behaviour and welfare		Good	2
Outcomes for children		Good	2

## Summary of key findings for parents

### This provision is good

- Staff provide children with a stimulating environment which is constantly evolving, to help ensure they have a wide selection of activities to choose from and to extend their learning. For instance, children investigate how water changes as they add different resources, such as teabags, to it.
- Children are excited to explore the wide variety of experiences, to play outside and to practise their physical skills. For example, they climb on large play equipment and balance on beams to help develop their coordination and muscle strength.
- Partnerships with parents and carers are effective. Parents share information about their children with staff, and staff regularly inform them about their children's daily routines and activities, to help support home learning.
- Children are cared for by a well established and dedicated team of staff. The staff follow secure settling-in procedures which help to support children's emotional well-being and meet their individual care needs.
- Staff do not consistently support younger children's mathematical understanding and language, such as the relationship between numbers and quantity.
- At times, staff miss opportunities to challenge and extend children's learning to the highest levels and build on their thinking skills.

## 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 younger children to develop further their interest in mathematical ideas
- support all staff to further enhance their skills and knowledge, to raise the quality of teaching to the highest standard.

### Inspection activities

- The inspector sampled a range of documentation, including the safeguarding policies and procedures and children's developmental information.
- The inspector observed staff interactions with children and spoke with staff and children at appropriate times during the inspection.
- The inspector discussed with the managers how they evaluate their practice and support staff with their professional development.
- The inspector carried out a joint observation with one of the managers.
- The inspector read parent's letters and spoke with parents to gain their views on the service they receive.

**Inspector**  
Sara Garrity

## Inspection findings

### Effectiveness of leadership and management is good

Safeguarding is effective. The managers have a good understanding of how to safeguard children and have secure procedures in place to maintain children's welfare. Staff carry out thorough risk assessments to help keep children safe and secure. They teach children how to identify and manage risks for themselves effectively, such as teaching them how to stay safe when using the large play equipment. The managers monitor staff practice and opportunities for their professional development are good. For instance, staff attend training on how boys learn to help them plan a suitably challenging environment for all. They track children's progress efficiently and take appropriate actions to narrow any gaps identified. Staff make strong links with other early years professionals and external agencies to help meet children's individual needs and share important information to support consistency of care.

### Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good

Staff make effective use of observations and assessments to plan activities based on children's stages of development and interests. For example, they ensure books and toy cars are easily accessible to help settle and motivate children to learn. Staff use commentary and repeat new words to help extend children's vocabulary. This becomes evident when they describe the texture of the white, foamy paint children are using to make snowman pictures. Children have good opportunities to develop their senses. They enjoy being creative and develop positive social skills. They eagerly engage in role play with their friends, such as dressing up and pretending to make dinner in the home corner.

### Personal development, behaviour and welfare are good

Children's behaviour is appropriate to their age. Staff are good role models who set clear rules and boundaries to support them. For instance, children enjoy playing team games with their friends and take turns to be the lead character in the game. Staff help children to gain a sense of achievement and praise them effectively to support their self-esteem. Staff support children's independence, such as when they help them to learn how to lead healthy lifestyles. For example, staff encourage children to serve themselves from the wide range of healthy fruit and vegetables on offer at snack time.

### Outcomes for children are good

Children are active learners. They take part in a good range of experiences to develop their interest in the community. For instance, they visit the local castle and beach to learn about the world around them. Children learn to value and respect their own and other people's similarities and differences. They make good progress and gain the skills they need for the next stage in their learning and eventual move on to school. They develop good listening and attention skills. This is evident when they listen to stories and take turns to answer questions and talk about their day.

## Setting details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	EY535662
<b>Local authority</b>	Kent
<b>Inspection number</b>	10076887
<b>Type of provision</b>	Childcare on non-domestic premises
<b>Registers</b>	Early Years Register
<b>Day care type</b>	Full day care
<b>Age range of children</b>	2 - 4
<b>Total number of places</b>	32
<b>Number of children on roll</b>	54
<b>Name of registered person</b>	The Castle Pre-School Partnership
<b>Registered person unique reference number</b>	RP535661
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	Not applicable
<b>Telephone number</b>	01227 277878

The Castle Pre-School registered in 2016 and is situated in the grounds of Whitstable Castle, in Whitstable, Kent. The pre-school operates Monday to Friday from 9am until 3pm, during term time only. The provider receives funding to provide free early education for children aged two, three and four years. There are 11 members of staff, of whom 10 hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 2 and above.

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