

Early Years Childcare

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	508990
Inspection date	28/06/2010
Inspector	Stacey Sangster

Setting address	St James Street, Lewes, East Sussex, BN7 1HR
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Type of setting	Childcare on non-domestic premises

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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under Sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006 on the quality and standards of the registered early years provision. 'Early years provision' refers to provision regulated by Ofsted for children from birth to 31 August following their fifth birthday (the early years age group). The registered person must ensure that this provision complies with the statutory framework for children's learning, development and welfare, known as the *Early Years Foundation Stage*.

The provider must provide a copy of this report to all parents with children at the setting where reasonably practicable. The provider must provide a copy of the report to any other person who asks for one, but may charge a fee for this service (The Childcare (Inspection) Regulations 2008 regulations 9 and 10).

The setting also makes provision for children older than the early years age group which is registered on the voluntary and/or compulsory part(s) of the Childcare Register. This report does not include an evaluation of that provision, but a comment about compliance with the requirements of the Childcare Register is included in Annex B.

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Description of the setting

Early Years Childcare opened in 1995 and is one of a chain of nine privately owned nurseries nationwide. The nursery building was formerly a Victorian school, which is located in Lewes, close to the town centre. Children are accommodated in five rooms. The nursery is registered to provide full day care for 51 children in the Early Years age Range. The area occupied by the youngest children is a self-contained unit with its own sleep room, kitchen area, nappy changing room and separate outdoor play space. Children over two years are accommodated within one of three family rooms. There are two fully enclosed outdoor play areas.

There are currently 103 children from six months to four years on roll. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The nursery makes provision for children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and for those who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery is open Monday to Friday from 8am until 6pm all year except on public holidays.

Including the manager there are 20 members of staff who work with the children. Of these 15 staff hold relevant childcare qualifications and 5 staff are unqualified and working towards a recognised early years qualification. A number of the qualified staff are attending training to increase the level of qualification that they hold. In addition to the childcare staff the nursery employs a chef and a housekeeper. Rotas are arranged to ensure that the required ratios of qualified staff are in place at each session.

The nursery receives support from the local authority.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

The nursery has a strong leadership team who are committed to continuing improvement and who support the development of the staff. The arrangements for self-evaluation are well established and enhanced by close working links with the other nursery's in the chain. The nursery demonstrate a good capacity for ongoing continual improvement, and the nursery focus on improving areas which will have the greatest impact on improving the service for children and parents.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To further improve the early years provision the registered person should:

- ensure that what is known about each child's progress is benchmarked against the Early Years Foundation Stage to more accurately identify learning priorities

- ensure that requests for information from parents are clear and that the engagement with parents is monitored to ensure that constructive partnerships are formed with all parents

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Safeguarding arrangements are given high priority by the nursery. All staff go through a rigorous vetting procedure including Criminal Record Bureau checks. No staff member is permitted to have unsupervised contact with the children until all checks are satisfactorily completed. Staff are clear about their role and responsibility in relation to child protection, and who has the lead role for this responsibility within the nursery. The nursery carefully risk assesses the environment and activities provided.

Resources are of good quality, are plentiful and are well maintained. Staff are skilled at using the resources in imaginative and creative ways to support children's learning and development. Activities provided often support the development of skills in several areas of learning at once.

Staff have good opportunities for training. The nursery regularly employ trainees who complete National Vocational Qualifications while working in the nursery. The manager reports that trainees usually leave after training is completed and this results on a regular turn over of adults, the impact of which is managed effectively to reduce the impact on children. The management recognise the importance of the team working well together and appropriate focus is given to supporting the current team, some of whom are relatively new to the nursery.

Steps to promote equality and diversity, successfully teach children positively about the similarities and differences within both their own communities and the wider world. Children have opportunities to learn about different festivals, celebrations, beliefs and values. Staff ensure that all children attending the nursery have an opportunity to share events which are culturally important to them and their families. The nursery ensure that all children attending are able to find positive images, which they can relate to themselves and their families.

The nursery have clear and well established systems for reflecting on their practice and identifying where they can make improvements. The management strive to continually improve the service being offered and the team as a whole demonstrate enthusiasm for identifying better ways of working. The improvements made positively impact on the service that children and their families receive.

The nursery have developed effective partnerships with healthcare professionals; the local authority and other external agencies and services. These partnerships make a strong contribution to children's achievement and well-being. Systems are in place to engage with other providers of the Early Years Foundation Stage, who share the care of some of the children who attend the nursery. Use of these systems is not yet fully embedded and the nursery are still getting to grips with the best way to both share and request information. The current arrangements are not

supporting all children who receive shared care. The partnership with parents in relation to care is very well established and there is evidence of a regular two-way communication that effectively supports children's basic care needs. The partnership with parents in relation to children's education is emerging.

Parents are provided with good quality information, about the nursery, its aims and objectives as well as the policies in place to guide the practice of the staff. A large quantity of information is shared with parents about staffs observations of their children in the nursery. The nursery request some basic information from parents prior to children being cared for in the nursery. The forms do not specifically request details of key information, that is helpful to support the care of children, such as their religion, special educational needs and/or disabilities; as a result there are gaps in the staffs knowledge of how to fully meet some children's needs when they first start. Staff use their expertise, assessment processes and knowledge of child development to quickly bridge these gaps. A request for information about children's home language has been recently added to the forms and is in place for future intakes. The nursery have strict and detailed policies in relation to obtaining written permission from parents in relation to outings, photographing children, administering medication and applying sun creams. This ensures that parents and the nursery have discussed and agreed the arrangements for these issues and as such supports the partnership between the nursery and parents and promotes consistency.

The quality and standards of the early years provision and outcomes for children

Children's welfare needs are supported well in nursery. Routines are a good mix of adult and child-led activities, breaks for healthy snacks and meals, as well as opportunities to rest and play outside on a regular basis. Younger children's routines are matched to those which they enjoy at home, with children following their own individual feeding and rest patterns. Children's dietary needs are discussed fully with parents and clear labels displayed within the nursery alert all staff to any forbidden foods. Children very much enjoy their time in nursery; they take part in activities with enthusiasm and have fun as they learn. Staff are imaginative and creative in providing children with opportunities to extend their skills.

Staff know the children well. There is evidence of staff using their basic knowledge of where children are in their learning to automatically structure activities at different levels for the children involved. The nursery has devised a written record to reflect children's progress. However this is ineffective as it does not record accurately what staff know children can do. This is due in part to the nursery's self imposed requirement to not record a milestone as being achieved, until they have captured evidence in the form of a 'written' observation. These out of date assessment files are used to inform formally planned activities, but despite this, children are supported appropriately because staff use what they know about children to support them in their play, rather than just what is written. Key workers are not benchmarking children's progress in relation the expectations of the Early Years Foundation Stage and as such are unable to effectively pinpoint 'how well'

children are making progress in each of the six areas of learning. This reduces the nursery's ability to take the next step and focus on identifying and narrowing the gaps between children's achievements as a group and individually in relation to their skills in the six areas of learning.

Staff and children demonstrate affectionate and caring attitudes towards each other. Older children approach staff readily, with confidence and ask for help when needed. Babies snuggle up to staff receiving reassurance when new people enter the room and are supported to engage with others. Children receive gentle reminders about how to play with equipment safely and are given high quality information, pitched appropriately at the child's level of understanding. This helps children to build the knowledge that they need to begin to assess and manage risk for themselves. Children tackle challenges as a result with increasing confidence.

Staff help children to adopt healthy lifestyles, encouraging them to play outside on a regular basis. They facilitate this in all weathers so that children develop a love of the outdoors and an understanding of the benefits to health of fresh air and exercise. Routines within the nursery help children to develop an awareness of what action they need to take to maintain good health and hygiene. Children talk about washing germs off their hands and are encouraged to be independent when washing their faces and brushing their teeth. Staff practices, such as using gloves when changing nappies and posters reminding staff to wipe the changing mat between each use, along with the nursery's policy of not accepting children in the nursery who have infectious illnesses, help to minimise the risk of cross infection and support the children's general health and well-being.

Children behave well in this nursery. Staff model expected behaviours, such as saying please and thank you and children receive high levels of praise for being kind, sharing and being helpful. Negative behaviour is dealt with sensitively, bearing in mind the child's age and level of understanding. The nursery support children in accessing heuristic play opportunities and set time aside to engage in this type of play on a regular basis. Children develop skills to support them in the future. Communication, language and literacy skills are developing well, Children are becoming independent and demonstrate ability to count, recognise numbers, reason and problem solve.

Annex A: record of inspection judgements

The key inspection judgements and what they mean

Grade 1 is Outstanding: this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality

Grade 2 is Good: this aspect of the provision is strong

Grade 3 is Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound

Grade 4 is Inadequate: this aspect of the provision is not good enough

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

How well does the setting meet the needs of the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?	2
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	2

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	2
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding	2
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	2
The effectiveness of partnerships	2
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	2

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

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Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	2
The extent to which children feel safe	2
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	2
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	2

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Annex B: the Childcare Register

The provider confirms that the requirements of the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are:	Met
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The provider confirms that the requirements of the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are:	Met
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