

Petham Pre-School Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspector Cilla Rachel Mullane

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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

Petham Pre-School Playgroup opened in 2005 and operates from the main hall in the village hall in Petham, Canterbury, Kent. They have access to a kitchen, toilets and a meeting area. The building is fully accessible. There is a secure outside play area.

The pre-school is registered to care for 26 children aged under eight years, all of whom may be in the early years age range. There are currently 35 children on roll, 15 of whom are in receipt of government funding. The pre-school is also registered on the voluntary and compulsory parts of the Childcare Register.

The setting is open on weekday mornings from 9am to 12pm, term time only. Staff have experience of supporting children with special educational needs, and children who speak English as an additional language.

The pre-school is run by a committee and employs six members of staff. Five staff, including the manager, hold appropriate early years qualifications. The setting receives support from the local authority.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

All children make good progress in their learning due to staff's expertise, their knowledge of individual children and how children learn, and their ability to treat children as individuals. The learning environment, resources and activities, both inside and outdoors, are well planned to meet the children's various needs. Children feel safe within the pre-school, behave with confidence and independence, making choices and taking charge of their own learning. They form very strong relationships with staff and their peers, they are enthusiastic and well motivated learners, and very much enjoy their time at the setting. Parents are well informed, feel involved in their children's learning and develop positive relationships with staff. The pre-school is very able to maintain continuous improvement; they evaluate, taking parents' and staff's views into account and make well-targeted changes, and have successfully addressed the recommendations of the last inspection.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- strengthen the system for planning play and learning experiences using children's identified next steps and knowledge of their interests
- develop the environment to improve children's ability to choose their own toys and activities, and initiate their own play.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The pre-school is very well organised. Children are carefully protected from harm and neglect by thorough, clear procedures which guide staff effectively and inform parents. Robust recruitment procedures are in place, and records of all staff's Criminal Records Bureau checks help to ensure that they are vetted appropriately and are suitable to be working with children.

Children are cared for by an enthusiastic, knowledgeable and experienced staff team. Responsibilities, such as a designated person for safeguarding, are delegated so that all staff feel valued and involved. The setting is led and supported by a hard working committee, who are clear about their responsibilities.

Careful thought is given to making the layout of the learning environment stimulating, and so children select from a range of well maintained resources which hold their interest. They choose resources and initiate their own activities, for example, from the art and craft trolley, and staff are considering ways to enable all children to ask for favourites, which might be in the shed. Staff deployment is consistently good throughout the sessions as they are guided by a rota and this ensures that children are always very well supervised and supported.

A qualified designated member of staff guides others in their work with children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Individual plans are compiled to meet these children's needs, and parents and other professionals are involved appropriately. Therefore these children make good progress. All children are included in activities as staff adapt them to suit each child's abilities. For example, when making chocolate birds' nests for Easter, older children count the eggs and work out how many are needed. Children with special diets are enabled to join in cooking activities with the others as staff substitute suitable ingredients so they are fully included. Adults sensitively help children to appreciate differences, for example, offering explanations as to why some people wear glasses. Therefore, children are learning to respect each other.

The setting's thorough self-evaluation makes use of all staff's ideas, advice from early years advisors and the views of parents and children, so identified targets are relevant and have a direct and positive effect on outcomes for children. For example, the setting plans to use more screens and cushions to make more cosy and quiet areas for children to concentrate or relax.

Parents are well informed about their children's progress and activities as they are confident to chat with their child's key person; they meet to discuss children's developmental observations and plans in their folders, and they are given information about the six areas of learning. Their replies to questionnaires reinforce the fact that they are happy with all aspects of children's care, including safety, professional and friendly staff, and children's activities. Older children visit the reception class at the local primary school so that they can make the transition from pre-school to school confidently. If children attend other settings, such as childminders, a contact book aids continuity of care.

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

Children very much enjoy learning through play and are making good progress in all areas of learning from their starting points. Staff's effective use of children's observations and assessments show that they have a good understanding of how individual children are progressing. Children's next steps are regularly and knowledgeably identified, and the system to consistently use these to inform planning is evolving. Adults skilfully challenge children's thinking through the use of open-ended questioning and discussion as they support their play. The provision of a daily adult-led activity, such as cooking chocolate birds' nests for Easter, gives children good opportunities to progress and learn new skills.

Children's personal, social and emotional development is encouraged well. They act independently, finding their names on their pegs and hang up their bags or put on their own coats. They are spontaneously kind and helpful towards one another: if a child needs a tissue, another will go and fetch one for him. They take turns, respond to staff's expectations and display a willingness to cooperate with others. They concentrate for long periods of time on chosen activities, such as cutting out a series of Easter eggs, decorating them and writing their names on the back. They are creative, designing a car and using tools from the 'big builder' equipment or making a bracelet with resources from the craft trolley and giving it to a friend. They are gaining a love for music, using the CD player to find favourite tracks on CDs brought from home and listening on the headphones. Activities such as cooking help children learn about numbers as they work out how many chocolate eggs are needed if they have two each. Children's information technology skills increase as they use computer programmes which help them to understand numbers, shapes and colours, and this provides a sound base for the development of computer skills in the future.

Children feel safe within the pre-school. They show this as they move freely and purposefully around the setting, making decisions and choices. They form strong relationships with adults and in addition, bond with their key person. Children's questionnaires (filled in with their parents) have shown that some children can name a staff member to whom they would go to if they felt sad and they felt they would get a cuddle. Children are confident to approach adults for support, for example, calling them over to help when they are upset by another child's behaviour. They start to think about their own personal safety; staff chat about road safety as they role play with the model zebra crossing and road signs in the garden.

Daily access to the wonderful outdoor area ensures that children benefit from playing in the fresh air. Furthermore, they join in well organised and exciting music and movement sessions enthusiastically. Snacks are healthy and nutritious, such as banana, oatcakes and raisins, so children make healthy choices. They take charge of their own personal hygiene, for example, they know where to access tissues and place them in the bin after use.

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

How effectively is the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	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

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