

The Swan Nursery School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number EY335553
Inspection date 22/01/2010
Inspector Sarah Johnson

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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

The Swan Nursery School opened in 1990 and registered in the current premises in 2006. It is privately owned and operates from a purpose-built premises in the village of Roydon, near Diss in Norfolk. The building has a small ramp leading to the entrance door and there are accessible toilet facilities available. Children access two enclosed play areas for outdoor activities. The nursery school is open each weekday from 8.00am to 5.30pm, during school term-times. Children attend for a variety of sessions.

A maximum of 26 children aged from two years to under eight years may attend the nursery at any one time, all of whom may be in the early years age group. There are currently 58 children on roll in this age group. Some of these children also attend early years sessions at another nearby pre-school and some are cared for by registered childminders. The nursery provides funded early education for three and four-year-olds. The staff currently support a number of children with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and have strategies in place to support children who are learning English as an additional language. The nursery also offers a holiday club for children aged up to eight years, this provision is registered on both the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. The holiday club operates each weekday from 9.00am to 3.30pm during school holidays.

There are 12 members of staff, including the proprietor and manager, who work regularly with the children. Nine staff hold appropriate early years qualifications to at least Level 2, and three members of staff are working towards further relevant qualifications.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children make positive progress in their learning and development as they engage in a wide range of play opportunities, most of which are organised to meet their individual needs and interests. The setting promotes inclusive practice and staff link up well with outside agencies to provide effective support for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Partnerships with parents and carers are also well promoted as information is exchanged effectively and there are good opportunities for parents to become involved in nursery life. Self-evaluation and reflective practice is ongoing and plans for future improvements are in place as the manager and staff strive to extend their good practice further.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- review systems to ensure they are flexible enough to respond to and meet

the needs of individual children, this particularly relates to the organisation group circle time

- open up opportunities for children to experiment with writing for different purposes in their role-play activities, using features of different forms such as labels, letters, lists, stories and instructions.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children are very well protected because staff fully understand their responsibilities in keeping them safe and are confident in following the setting's policies for safeguarding children. Well established recruitment procedures are followed and consequently all staff and students complete the necessary checks to confirm their suitability to be in contact with children. Children play in safe and secure surroundings. This is because the manager carries out routine daily risk assessments of all of the areas of the nursery environment and staff are very mindful to ensure children are well-supervised at all times. All visitors to the premises are asked to confirm their identity before entering the nursery, and there are secure procedures in place to ensure children only leave the premises with authorised adults.

The staff work closely with parents, carers and outside professionals, including the speech and language therapist, occupational therapist and the area Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCO), to enable them to meet children's individual needs. The successful deployment of staff ensures children with special educational needs and/or disabilities experience excellent levels of one-to-one support, and the layout of equipment and resources is reviewed regularly to ensure they remain fully accessible to all children. Staff facilitate informal daily discussions with parents to exchange information about children's daily experiences, and issue monthly newsletters to keep parents informed of key themes and events at the nursery. Parents are encouraged to access their children's 'learning story' records on a reasonably regular basis, and their contributions to these are valued. As a result, some children bring in family photographs to add to their records. Parents welcome opportunities to share their expertise with the children, visiting to bake cakes and show children how they make plaster casts in their work as a nurse. The nursery is continuing to foster links with the other Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) settings that some of the children attend. For example, staff share information with registered childminders when they collect children from the nursery, and support children's transition into full-time school by passing on development records.

Weekly team meetings enable the staff to engage in regular self-evaluation and reflective practice. As result, they often trial and adapt practices to bring about sustained improvements to the provision. All staff have good opportunities to contribute their views to the self-evaluation process, ensuring the key strengths and areas for improvement are realistically identified across the setting. For example, staff devise a system for recording daily notes on a dry-wipe board in order to fully embrace children's daily interests and spontaneous events. The manager is very receptive to support provided by advisors from the local authority

and ensure that staff training needs and aspirations are prioritised during annual appraisals and training audits.

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

Strong emphasis is placed on encouraging children to actively learn about aspects of a healthy lifestyle. The staff plan highly meaningful opportunities for children to grow a wide range of vegetables in the outdoor area, which they then harvest and prepare for snack. They learn the importance of brushing their teeth and avoiding sugary foods when a dental hygienist visits to share her expertise. As a result of the staff's consistent reminders, children follow positive personal hygiene routines for themselves. For example, staff sing a jolly song about hand washing which inspires children to understand that soap washes away the germs that make them feel poorly, and children intuitively help themselves to a tissue when they need to wipe their nose. Children are also supported to develop a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe as the staff ensure they are involved in practising the emergency fire drill and arrange for the local fire service to visit the setting.

Children make very good progress in their learning and development, skilfully supported by staff who demonstrate good knowledge of the EYFS. An effective key person system ensures that staff and children develop strong bonds, helping children to feel settled and reassured that someone familiar is always close by for support. Children benefit from a very bright, warm and child-friendly learning environment, where they can hang their belongings on their own labelled peg and access many of the resources independently. The play space offers well defined areas for children to spread out with small world cars and construction resources on the carpet, to relax and share books, and to be creative with glue, sand, water and paint. The well-resourced outdoor environment is used widely throughout the session. Consequently, children are very active and benefit from being out in the fresh air as they pedal a range of ride-on toys, climb on the larger apparatus and play football together. Children remain engaged and interested as staff encourage them to discuss their thought processes and ideas. For example, whilst children complete puzzles, staff use the completed picture to encourage children to think about how a hot air balloon stays up in the sky. Children develop their mark-making skills as they create swirls and lines with their fingers in shallow trays of couscous, and use paintbrushes and water to scribe on the fence. However, opportunities for children to attempt mark-making and writing for a wider range of purposes, such as in their role play situations, are not always as fully promoted as they could be. Children show strong interest in learning about the uses of everyday technology when completing simple programmes on the computer, and using telephones, a cooker, iron and Hoover in the imaginative home area.

The staff are skilled in using observations and assessments to track children's progress towards the early learning goals. Detailed records of learning and development include meaningful photographs of the children participating in a range of learning opportunities, and observations which are linked appropriately to the six areas of learning in the EYFS. Although children are offered time to lead their own play, at times the organisation of the daily routine does not allow

sufficient flexibility to meet the differing needs and interests of individual children. For example, the grouping of children during whole group circle times does not always maximise the active involvement of all children and consequently some children become unsettled after a short time.

Children respond extremely well to the staff's consistent approach to supporting their behaviour which helps them to play harmoniously together and to share resources with little support. For example, children use the egg timer to independently manage their turn-taking on the computer. Consistent praise and encouragement offered by the staff helps to ensure that all children have high levels of self-esteem and achievement. Children are well supported to acquire a positive attitude towards diversity in the wider world. This is because a range of different festivals, celebrations and cultural traditions are covered in the planning. For example, children enjoy a range of Christmas and Easter craft activities, take part in a traditional dragon dance during Chinese New Year and help to decorate the nursery during the Diwali festival of lights.

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	1
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	1
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