

John McNeill Opportunity Centre

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspection date 26/02/2010
Inspector Penny Wood

Setting address Odstock Road, Salisbury, Wiltshire, SP2 8BG

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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

John McNeill Opportunity Centre opened in 1979. It operates from three playrooms within its own premises in Salisbury, Wiltshire. Additional areas include a gym, a sensory room, therapy room and a meeting room for parents. There is a fully enclosed outside play area, which includes a designated sensory garden. Children attend from a wide catchment area and the setting mainly supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

The setting operates each weekday from 9.30am until midday and there is an optional lunch club, which operates from midday to 1pm. The setting also opens for reduced hours during the summer holidays. A maximum of 40 children under the age of eight years old may attend the setting at any one time, all of whom may be in the early years age group. There are currently 47 children aged between one and four years old on roll. The setting employs 20 staff who work directly with children, 13 of whom have relevant early years qualifications and two members of staff have qualified teacher status.

The setting receives support from education and health professionals and from the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership. The pre-school is registered on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is outstanding.

Children thrive within the setting because staff are highly motivated, knowledgeable and attentive to their individual needs. Inclusion is promoted exceptionally well by the staff, who work effectively as a team. Children throughout the setting participate in a wide range of opportunities, which are adapted according to their individual needs and abilities. Partnerships with parents and the supporting external agencies involved with the group are a particular strength. Management and staff are proactive in the continual evaluation and development of the setting and as a result, children benefit from high quality provision.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To further improve the high quality early years provision the registered person should consider:

- further opportunities for all children to experience a balance of indoor and outdoor experiences on a daily basis
- ensuring an accurate record of children's attendance is maintained at all times.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children are safeguarded well because staff have a very good understanding of the child protection policy and the procedures to follow. Robust recruitment procedures ensure adults are suitable to work with children. Most documentation is completed in clear detail. However, the daily register is not completed promptly as children arrive to ensure an accurate record is in place of children present at all times.

The different rooms within the setting are utilised very well, although the youngest children do not benefit from as much access to the outdoor area as the older children. Effective risk assessments throughout the setting ensure children are able to participate in activities free from the risk of harm. Highly effective strategies are in place to ensure children are safely escorted to and from the setting on the mini bus. Thorough risk assessments on outings enable children to benefit from an exciting range of experiences away from the setting, such as riding and swimming.

Since the last inspection, thorough and effective systems have been utilised to evaluate the quality of provision and positive steps have been implemented, which have resulted in a vast improvement in practice and the quality of children's experiences. All staff contribute to the success of the group. Ongoing training is valued in order to support staff's individual professional development. Staff are enthusiastic in their roles and work effectively as a team.

Inclusive practice is promoted exceptionally well throughout the setting, with excellent strategies in place to ensure children's welfare and physical needs are individually met. They provide high levels of support to children and their families. Staff utilise an extensive range of strategies to support children within the setting and to promote their inclusion and participation within activities and daily routines. For example, staff are skilled in using sign language and visual prompts, such as transition cards, to communicate with and to reassure children.

Children benefit from the very strong partnerships between staff and their parents and carers. Exceptional levels of support are readily available, with children not only supported within the setting, but also within their home. Parents benefit from opportunities to meet in a welcoming coffee room and the setting provides support groups where parents are able to discuss concerns and issues with external agencies. Parents are involved at every stage of children's development within the group. They play an integral part when staff review children's targets and individual education plans. Parents talk highly of the support their children and families receive and comment on how staff treat and value every child as an individual.

Children thrive because of the excellent levels of support they receive from the external agencies that visit the setting. Strong partnerships between the setting and other pre-schools and childminders that children attend, ensure all adults are able to support children within their development. Excellent strategies promote children's smooth transition on to school.

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

Children are happy and settled within the calm setting and relate exceptionally well to the staff. Most children enter the setting with ease and children who are transported by the mini bus greet staff with enthusiasm and big smiles on their arrival.

Children participate in a wide variety of activities, which encourage their development across all areas of learning. The planning of activities recognises the individual abilities of children, with opportunities provided within groups and on a one-to-one basis. Excellent strategies to gain thorough information on individual children on joining the group enable staff to gain an in-depth insight into the child and their individual needs on which they are able to plan for future development. Successful systems support and enable staff to observe, record and plan for children's development effectively and on an individual basis.

Children benefit from activities throughout the setting. The outdoor area, which includes a sensory garden, is utilised by staff as an extension of the indoor learning environment. Older children enthusiastically engage in activities outside, such as painting and opportunities to play on the tricycles.

Children throughout the setting enjoy opportunities to engage in messy play, such as paint and gloop. They are not restricted by staff and enjoy the freedom to explore different media, regardless of how messy they get. They enjoy singing, arts and crafts and opportunities to make choices from the range of activities and resources provided. Throughout the setting, consistent use of praise and encouragement boosts children's confidence and self-esteem. For example, children are repeatedly congratulated for 'good listening'.

Children are eager and keen participants in activities, which is encouraged through staff's enthusiasm. They behave well because they are able to participate in a wide range of opportunities, which ensure they are occupied at all times. Staff are proactive in reinforcing the setting's rules, such as encouraging children to stay seated on their chairs and not running inside.

Staff encourage children's independence during routine activities, such as washing their hands before eating. A varied range of snacks promotes children's good health and staff sit with children during snack and mealtimes to promote good eating habits. Staff are attentive to children's dietary needs and adapt their practice accordingly to ensure children's individual needs are met.

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?	1
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	1

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

How effectively is the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	1
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	1
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	1
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	1
The effectiveness of safeguarding	2
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	1
The effectiveness of partnerships	1
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	1

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	1
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	1
The extent to which children feel safe	1
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	1
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	1

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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