

First Class Nurseries

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspector John Anthony

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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

First Class Nurseries opened in 2002. It is privately owned and jointly operated by two managers. The nursery has a purpose built building which is situated on the St. Mary's Primary School site in Bridgwater, Somerset and serves the local community. The building consists of an entrance, two main playrooms, a quiet room, office, kitchen and toilet facilities. Children are able to access an adjacent tarmac and grassed area for outdoor play. The setting is registered on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. The nursery is open five days a week for 50 weeks of the year from 8am until 5.30pm. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The nursery provides meals and snacks for children including a cooked lunch. It is registered to provide care for 36 children aged from two years to under eight years, of these 12 may be under three years. There are currently 55 children on roll in the early years age group and of these 45 children are in receipt of funding. There are eight staff who work with the children and all have appropriate childcare qualifications. The setting receives support from the local authority.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is outstanding.

This is an outstanding nursery which provides excellent care for the children who enter a happy, fully inclusive, impeccably clean and well-equipped environment where they are closely supervised throughout. Much thought and careful planning has clearly been applied to making this a successful and valuable experience for the children. The wide range of activities are well-orchestrated to provide children with a constant variety of learning experiences which makes learning fun and is enhanced by imaginative use of the outside area. Carefully planned and well supervised group activities help to foster excellent social skills which enhance the children's personal development and leave them well prepared for transition to school. There is an outstanding capacity for improvement.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- increase opportunities for the children to develop their understanding of the natural world, for example, by experiencing play in 'The Forest School'.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

This exceptionally well run and efficient setting was judged to be outstanding at the last inspection. This remains the case. The staff and management work tirelessly to provide the children in their care with an exhilarating and richly

rewarding educational experience. The facilities are excellent, standards are very high and relationships with the children and with parents are very positive. Safeguarding arrangements are fully in place, all staff have received advanced child protection and paediatric first aid training. Enhanced checks have been carried out to ensure that all staff are suitable to work with children.

The children are carefully supervised by a vigilant team of staff who ensure that their welfare and safety are the primary concern. The children are carefully signed into the daily diary on entry and checked out safely into the custody of their parent or appointed carer. A secure system guarantees that children are only collected by another adult with the prior approval of the parent. The register accurately reflects the children's daily hours of attendance.

The staff have developed excellent relationships with parents who confirm that they greatly value the dedicated commitment of the staff in providing the best possible standard of care for their children, one parent commenting that their child 'has learnt far more from nursery than he would have at home. It has made him enjoy learning and taught him many diverse things', reinforced by another parent that 'this is development and structure rather than just looking after them'.

Parents and carers are closely involved in their children's development, and well informed of their progress by staff who are 'absolutely lovely and very friendly', as one parent describes. Their views are actively sought and acted upon. Policies and procedures for the effective running of the nursery are of a high standard and constantly under review. They are prominently displayed with other information in the lobby for easy access by parents, carers and visitors.

Leaders ensure that resources are in excellent condition, that they are selected on the basis of their suitability for aiding the children's learning and enjoyment, and that they are used well. A formal process of self-evaluation involves parents and children in analysing its provision from a strategic perspective. The managers and staff constantly seek to find ways to enrich the provision by, for example, considering taking training in 'The Forest School' so that they can introduce aspects of the natural world to the curriculum and so broaden the opportunities provided for the children's learning and experience in play. The staff's continuing professional development is comprehensively planned to ensure that the staff are kept fully up to date with best practice, and that the quality and standards of nursery education are constantly improved.

Although thorough, the self-evaluation over-modestly judges its effectiveness as good. The nursery is outstanding in every way, and this process of constantly searching for improvement in the high quality care offered demonstrates that the nursery has an excellent capacity to continue to improve.

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

The nursery provides a rich variety of activities to heighten the children's experiences of the world around them and provide them with an excellent start to

their education. All the required areas of early learning are covered and a highly focused programme of activity is supplied through a process of constant analysis of curricular planning. Parents spoken to commented that other parents 'always sing your praises and recommend you to anyone who will listen'. Because the staff 'always ask for feedback, and respond', they are able to adapt the provision to the needs of the children. The children's relationships with each other, and with the staff, are excellent. This leads to the building of a strong sense of community in which the children learn to play safely and sensibly with each other, developing excellent behaviour and social skills through which the children prosper in every way.

The children's progress is thoroughly monitored and evaluated. Each child has a profile which is informed by observations and shared with parents. Activities are well paced with frequent changes which maintain the children's interest and provide them with a rich variety of learning aids. The provision for learning is well planned and excellently implemented.

Vibrant displays of children's work are posted all around the walls, showing the wide variety of creative activities offered to enhance and develop the children's skills. Themes regularly change to stimulate learning. Colour is used very effectively to heighten the children's visual awareness. Black and white is the current colour theme, highlighted across the setting and integrated into the children's play through activities such as exploring the mixing of colour and texture by mingling corn flour in a suitably messy container of blackened water.

The outdoor garden is used effectively to aid the children's learning about the natural world while developing creative skills. In one activity, a group of children were seated in front of a colourful display of flowers with paint and sketchbooks, dressed in protective aprons, to paint the display. Nearby the children have the opportunity to pick ingredients for salads and collect their own home-grown vegetables. They have healthy choices for their snacks and fully understand the importance of keeping a well-balanced diet.

The children enthusiastically embrace the wide variety of activities available, which are constantly changed so that all children have the opportunity to choose for themselves which they wish to pursue. This helps them to develop independence and confidence in making judgements and selecting through choice. Imaginative facilities for helping them to understand the wider world while learning basic literacy and numeracy skills are provided throughout the nursery. They have access to computers, and the children develop dexterity in opening and using the programmes.

Good hygiene routines ensure that children keep themselves clean. They wash between activities when necessary, such as when changing from mixing flour and water to make pastry to measuring water by pouring it into different sized containers. The use of number comes into all activities. Children are encouraged to respond in groups, as well as with each other. The emphasis is on constant communication. They are encouraged to converse by responding to questions verbally and by signing. In one session the teacher and children wished each other 'Good afternoon' and answered 'What day is it?' correctly, in spoken and sign

language. Direction is very focussed and clear. Children learn the date and the month, and were able to volunteer that the weather was 'cloudy'.

Physical well-being is emphasised all through the year and in all-weather play. In the winter children are provided with wet suits to let them continue to play outside. Photos show children happily and safely playing in the snow. The staff are fully vigilant all the time, engaging closely with the children, and ensuring that the activities also help them to continue to learn. Thus the children are encouraged to develop their understanding of the use of number and calculation in practice, and to use appropriate language while exploring and working together in groups. The wide range of activities and opportunities for learning helps to prepare the children well for their future development.

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

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	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	1
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

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
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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	1
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