

Rochester Kindergarten

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number 103836
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Inspector Susan Scott

Setting address St John Fisher Church Hall, Maidstone Road, Rochester,
Kent, ME1 3EN

Telephone number 07774843488 Mrs McLa

Email

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

Rochester Kindergarten opened in 1987 and operates from one room in a church hall. It is situated in the town of Rochester, Kent.

A maximum of thirty children may attend the kindergarten at any one time. The kindergarten is registered on the Early Years Register and both parts of the Childcare Register. It is open each weekday from 09.00am to 12 noon for 38 weeks of the year. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area. There are currently 38 children aged from two to five years on roll. Of these 22 children receive funding for nursery education. Children come from a wide catchment area. The kindergarten currently supports a number of children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and children who speak English as an additional language.

The kindergarten employs seven staff. Six of the staff, including the registered person and manager hold appropriate early years qualifications.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

The uniqueness of each child is recognised by staff who provide good support for individuals and their families, ensuring that all children make progress in their learning and development. Children feel secure because there are good systems in place to safeguard their welfare. They benefit from the relaxed and welcoming environment and experience good opportunities for outdoor play and very flexible and responsive planning. All the staff assist in the self-evaluation process by identifying strengths and improvements. The stable staff team use information provided by parents and other agencies who are involved in children's care to ensure children's experiences are positive and support their development. Parents are encouraged to provide feedback and their involvement is welcomed.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- provide dual language books to raise awareness of different scripts and to match the languages spoken by families at the setting
- create an indoor environment that is reassuring and comforting for all children, particularly for the youngest children

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Staff have all obtained information and training to support their knowledge of safeguarding and have clear, well understood procedures for dealing with concerns. The staff keep good records, such as those noting medication administered and accidents. The risk assessments are updated to address and minimise any hazards. Thus play resources are all safe, age-appropriate and checked regularly to ensure they are in good condition and safe to use. There is good adult supervision by staff who are vigilant at all times, protecting children effectively. Although visitors are recorded and their identity checked, the children are not always introduced to them to build upon their awareness of personal safety. However, children benefit from playing in a secure and attractive environment that offers good opportunities for outdoor play, using a selection of resources that is adapted to meet the needs and interests of all children.

Staff understand the importance of valuing individuals and there are clear procedures in place to support children with special educational needs and/or disabilities who are welcomed into the setting. Children with English as an additional language are well supported although there are limited resources reflecting the languages spoken in the community. The manager and staff have completed a self-evaluation and identify improvements they intend to make. Staff continually review and evaluate the children's use of resources and their responses to activities and changes are made to build upon the quality of the provision. Training has resulted in improvements to benefit all children as the staff have a well developed ability to evaluate provision and to address the needs of groups and individuals. For example, changes have been introduced to planning to ensure that boys, and children with special educational needs are keen to participate in all aspects of play. However, as all children share the room and most activities, this can result in younger children occasionally opting out of the group activities to observe or be close to an adult.

A good two way flow of information enables staff to regularly make parents aware of children's achievements and share information. Parents appreciate the opportunities to access written and verbal information about their children's progress. Parents report on very positive relationships which enable them to consult with staff so they can meet the needs and interests of individual children. Staff value parental contributions and ensure that information is sought from parents and carers when children first begin at the group, so that their individual requirements and preferences are catered for effectively. The staff confidently refer to, and consult with, other agencies who work with children in order to provide good support. For example, staff use local authority specialists and parents share advice given by speech therapists so that children can be supported effectively. There is a good relationship with the neighbouring school which enables smooth transitions for children who are moving on.

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

Children benefit from practitioners secure knowledge of the Practice Guidance for the Early Years Foundation Stage. Staff work together effectively, utilising daily opportunities to get to know the children well and using this information to support their planning. Children are therefore making good progress because the staff encourage their learning by providing varied, interesting activities which they adapt to suit the needs of individuals. Staff use a system to ensure there are regular and frequent observations and assessments that cover children's progress in all six areas of the curriculum. Key staff know their key children well and identify their learning styles and welfare needs with great confidence.

Staff ensure children are able to fully participate and enjoy their play by ensuring activities are developmentally appropriate and accessible to all children. There are good measures in place to ensure children are kept safe in the premises. For example, staff always accompany children to the toilet as there are sometimes visitors in the Church, although they may wait at the door to allow children independence, whilst ensuring their safety. Children enjoy their time here as staff recognise their skills and praise their achievements, encouraging their contributions. Staff are happy to accommodate children's wishes as they realise the importance of involving all children. Children's relationships with each other reflect the good role models of the staff who value the children and treat them with respect. Children's behaviour is good as they are skilfully reminded to be polite by staff in everyday discussions.

Children enjoy using the inside and outside areas and staff are flexible in providing the resources so that they ensure activities are developmentally appropriate and accessible to all. This means that all children respond to the varied experiences by sharing their ideas and thoughts with staff, supporting close relationships. Children clearly feel safe as the premises and routines provide a secure environment for them and staff offer good support to them. They learn about procedures that protect their safety, such as the emergency evacuations which they practice regularly. Children confidently help themselves to the snack foods and pour themselves drinks of milk or water and can access water to drink independently. They develop an awareness of their own health by enjoying opportunities to discuss the foods they eat and the benefits of a balanced diet, both during snack times and when they cook food they have grown and harvested.

Children play happily in this welcoming environment as they have lots of choices and benefit from the opportunities to initiate their own activities. There are plenty of examples of children's work which the church allows them to display and this builds children self-esteem by showing their contributions are valued. They learn to respect and tolerate others through varied activities and festivals which they celebrate. For example, they enjoyed celebrating 'cherry blossom day' and learning about another culture through this. Their independence is fostered through the system for self-registration when they find their name cards using the text and picture on each. This routine is reinforced for outdoor play and at snack time so that they become familiar with written names.

Children have regular opportunities to enjoy outdoor play in the secure play area and they also use of the outdoor environment for learning about nature. There is a range of apparatus such as a climbing frame and slides that encourage vigorous physical activity both outside and inside. They enjoy a range of interesting resources for outside use such as pans strung across a rope which allow them to beat and hammer. Children have good access to play resources that are age-appropriate and in good condition and enjoy freely using the resources for imaginative role play, including dressing up clothes, toy buggies and dolls and these are adapted by staff to represent various scenarios.

Children recently enjoyed a visit from their police community support officers and the Priest. This supports children's understanding of their community and the people in it. They experiment using paint which they mix, observing and describing colour changes and using different types of brushes. The computer offers opportunities for children to explore and investigate using technology and they also enjoy opportunities to construct and build with different resources. They are encouraged skillfully in their explorations, for example, when a member of staff enables them to prop a board up, making a slope for them to send the new toy fire engine down. Children enthusiastically participate in singing and use musical instruments or wave ribbons to keep time with the rhythms which encourages their listening skills. They develop their number skills by counting the number of bounces they complete on the mini trampoline and enjoy using the height chart to measure themselves.

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

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
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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