

Freshfields Nursery School

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspector Christine Williams

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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

Freshfields Nursery School is privately owned and run as a limited company. It opened in 1990 and operates from a Grade two listed manor house and adjacent converted coach house, set within an acre of private grounds. Children have access to several outside areas, including a mini farm. The nursery is situated in a rural area close to Stratford-upon-Avon. Children attend from the local area and surrounding villages and towns. The nursery is open each weekday from 7.30am to 6.30pm for 51 weeks of the year.

The nursery is registered on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. A maximum of 154 children may attend the nursery at any one time. There are currently 201 children aged from three months to under five years on roll, some in part-time places. Some children are cared for on the first floor with stair access. The nursery currently supports a number of children with special education needs and children who speak English as an additional language.

There are 22 full-time and 15 part-time members of staff, most of whom hold appropriate early years qualifications to at least National Vocational Qualification level 3. Two members of staff are qualified teachers. Three staff are qualified to degree level, one has achieved Early Years Professional Status and two others are working towards this qualification. The nursery also employs a Principle officer, two managers and 14 auxiliary staff. The nursery provides funded early education to three- and four-year-olds and 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 where outcomes for children are consistently high across all areas. Children are cared for in a unique, rich, learning environment. Absorbing activities, both indoors and outside, promote a strong sense of achievement, self-esteem and a thirst for learning. Safeguarding protocols and practice are exemplary and children show an exceptional understanding of how to keep themselves safe and healthy. The partnership with parents and others is highly successful and makes a significant contribution to the outstanding outcomes achieved for children. Leadership and management are fully focused on the individual needs of children and extensive monitoring and evaluation ensures the nursery is an excellent model of best practice.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- reviewing and extending the ways in which staff openly value parents observations of what their children learn at home.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Safeguarding is given the highest priority and showcases the outstanding level of multi-agency working achieved by the nursery. Protocols and practice for making referrals and sharing information with key agencies are extemporaneous. Staff have a comprehensive awareness of safeguarding issues and receive regular top-up training and internal updates to ensure their knowledge reflects current best practice. For example, safeguarding and safety are main topics for discussion during staff meetings and appraisals and day-to-day practice is constantly reviewed and monitored. There are extensive recruitment and vetting procedures to check the suitability of staff and issues, such as the use of cameras, mobile telephones and the internet, have been carefully considered. Security arrangements are robust and detailed risk assessments ensure children can safely enjoy being with farm animals or use large play apparatus and gardening equipment.

Those in charge provide excellent leadership. They are fully focused on the needs of children, supportive of staff and firmly committed to high quality provision. Rigorous quality assurance and monitoring systems ensure that new ways of working have an extremely positive impact on the outcomes for children. For example, children now benefit from greater continuity of care and improved language and communication skills due to recent changes in practice. Successful action has been taken to recruit and develop a highly skilled and diverse workforce who provide children with extremely positive role models. There is a clear and shared long term vision for best practice and staff are willing to try new approaches because they are supported to do so. Initial assessment and monitoring of children's progress is highly systematic and rigorous and any under achievement is quickly identified. Inclusion is threaded through everything the nursery does and there is a high emphasis placed on working closely with outside professionals to ensure that children get the help and support they need. Record keeping is extensive and policies and procedures promote respect for children and fully support the strong inclusive ethos evident throughout the nursery.

Day-to-day management is highly effective. Close support and excellent training opportunities lead to innovative ways of working. For example, staff are given awards for gaining additional skills, 'going the extra mile' or ensuring children's learning rooms consistently trigger interest and stimulation. Leaders are constantly looking for ways to improve what they do and systematically focus on specific areas, such as, health. As a result, hand sanitizers are within easy reach, both inside and outdoors, children's food is always fresh, locally resourced or grown in the nursery allotment. In addition, babies learn to chew safely because their food is carefully prepared to meet their individual stage of development.

Partnerships with parents are exemplary. Staff value children as unique individuals and work collaboratively with their families so that there is a shared understanding

about what each child needs. They actively celebrate the diversity of different family make-ups, work closely with parents to complement their varying child rearing practices and are highly approachable. For example, there is a private room where parents can talk to staff, access useful information about the nursery or sit comfortably to breast feed. Very effective settling-in procedures, including such things as introduction and home visits, build trust and helps ease separation issues. As a result, parents appreciate and recognise the positive impact the nursery is having on their children and are extremely complimentary about staff and the facilities offered.

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

Children make excellent progress, irrespective of their starting points. Well designed, stimulating learning experiences enthuse all children, including the gifted and those with additional needs. For example, there are superb sensory areas to stimulate learning through specific colours, textures, nature and reflective objects. Outside there is a sensory garden, mini farm and extensive gardens offering places to explore, experiment and try new things. Staff are extremely skilled in knowing how to unlock children's potential. Careful planning, observation and assessment ensure that every child is excited about their learning and has high aspirations. Staff use their detailed knowledge of each child to make informed decisions about how to support children's next steps. However, parents are not always encouraged to contribute to this.

Children show high levels of confidence, self-worth and develop excellent relationships. They show great curiosity, want to explore new things and are highly inquisitive. Excellent resources encourage children to find out things for themselves and four-year-olds show initiative in all areas of their learning. For example, they worked out for themselves how to draw a seahorse using a picture from a favourite book and carefully studied patterns on a razor shell by looking through a magnifying glass. Within the baby and toddler rooms there are unusual textures to explore and places to crawl, stand and refine their walking skills. There are interesting objects to reach out and grasp and comforting corners that make them feel safe and secure. Outside learning is a particular strength and fully supports the learning needs and fascinations of both boys and girls.

Children develop excellent social skills. They behave extremely well and three- and four-year-olds are beginning to understand important concepts, such as respect for others and how fair decisions can be made. For example, children were asked to choose which book they wanted at story time by putting their hand up to vote. Their communication and language skills are supported to a high level and signs, symbols and pictures are used particularly well to help those whose language skills are not yet fully developed. Rhymes and 'songs and signing' are enjoyed with enthusiasm and children see lots of different texts displayed in various ways. Children are confident in using a wide range of mathematical language and use these freely to count and describe shape, size and position. Stimulating projects and challenging activities build on children's interests, such as making pirate

treasure maps and staining the paper with tea to make it look old. Children show they know how to operate simple technology, such as push button toys, lap tops and programmable robots, and show pleasure in gaining more complex skills. Children become engrossed in their imaginary games, creatively express their ideas in their artwork and construction play and enthusiastically join in with music and dancing.

A rich range of learning experiences fully support children in understanding about the benefits of a safe and healthy lifestyle. Experiences including visits from doctors, nurses and crossing patrol officers help children to understand important safety messages about how they can care for themselves. There are constant messages about 'being careful' as they climb, pedal, balance and swing and they often act out what they have learnt in their imaginary play. Children know where food comes from because they help to grow, tend and harvest vegetables, such as carrots and lettuce, in the nursery allotment. They carefully collect eggs from the hen house each day and enjoy a wide range of freshly prepared and home cooked meals and snacks.

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

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|--|---|
| 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

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|--|---|
| 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

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| 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