

# Seashells

Inspection report for early years provision

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**Unique reference number** EY337834  
**Inspection date** 08/11/2011  
**Inspector** Patricia Webb

**Setting address** Mablethorpe Children's Centre, Stanley Avenue,  
Mablethorpe, Lincolnshire, LN12 1DP

**Telephone number** 01507 479412

**Email**

**Type of setting** Childcare - Non-Domestic

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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

Seashells nursery opened in 1998 and re-registered in 2004 under the governance of the Pre-School Learning Alliance. They subsequently re-registered again in 2006 when they moved premises to operate as part of the Mablethorpe Children's Centre. There are three rooms used for activities and all children have access to an enclosed outdoor play area. The nursery is open each weekday from 8am to 5pm for 50 weeks of the year. All children have direct access to secure outdoor play areas.

The nursery is registered to care for a maximum of 55 children under eight years, all of whom may be in the early years age range. There are currently 74 children on roll in the early years age group. The nursery is registered by Ofsted on the Early Years Register and on both the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. The nursery serves the immediate locality and surrounding villages. The nursery supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and has systems in place to support children who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery employs 15 members of staff to work with the children on both a full-time and part-time basis. They also employ a cook. All of the staff who work directly with the children have appropriate early years qualifications.

## The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children are making good progress in their development and learning. Safeguarding arrangements and the setting's high commitment to partnership working are key strengths within the provision. There has been significant improvement since the last inspection, resulting in practice that is tailored to meet individual needs effectively. Staff are highly motivated to continue to improve the quality of the provision and its impact on children's attainment is supported by effective evaluation systems.

## What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- expand the range of activities that support children's understanding of the wider world, reflecting the diversity of children and adults within and beyond the nursery
- develop inclusive practice further through the more regular use of non-verbal communication strategies, such as sign language.

## **The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision**

Children are fully safeguarded by robust recruitment and vetting procedures, including effective procedures for the induction of new staff, students and volunteers. Staff have an extremely clear understanding of child protection issues and are fully aware of the procedures to follow should they be concerned about a child in their care. They are exceptionally confident in the action they would take in the event of any concerns. The excellent partnerships developed with specialist staff within the children's centre is a significant contributing factor in this aspect. Detailed risk assessments are completed and cover the indoor and outdoor areas and outings. Written policies and procedures are in place. The deployment of resources is excellent. The environment both indoors and outdoors is inspiring, well organised and provides very good learning opportunities for all children. Staff are deployed effectively throughout the session, ensuring that children's needs are fully supported. Positive outcomes for children are attributed to the good use of time, space and resources.

Staff are motivated to develop their practice, having high aspirations and drawing on a full range of quality improvement tools, such as the Pre-school Learning Alliance quality systems. They also use the local authority early years evaluation of the use of the environment. Self-evaluation is accurate, realistic and challenging and supports the nursery's capacity to maintain continuous improvement. Excellent links have been established with other early years professionals at the children's centre where regular meetings are held to ensure consistency of care, development and learning for all children. The manager employs a whole group approach and as a result, staff are passionate about their roles in raising standards for children and their families. Parents speak passionately about the impact the nursery practice has had on their children's progress. They contribute to the evaluation process through questionnaires and some speak positively about having the opportunities to contribute to the planning for their child's activities. For example, they are invited to contribute to the spidergram, regarding ideas to be incorporated in the monthly planning of activities.

Staff are dedicated to working with external agencies to support the inclusion of children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Some staff have skills in Makaton sign language to promote non-verbal communication. This tends to be seen as a tool for children who may require specific support in this area. As such it has not been fully considered for enabling all children to gain skills for the future and possibly reducing frustration for younger children, whilst language skills are still developing. All children access a wide range of positive images within resources that depict diversity. However, the activities presented do not always focus on extending children's awareness of differences in the wider world.

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

Children in the nursery benefit from the experience and dedication of the staff team and their high expectations of what children can achieve. In assessing individual children's attainment, there is a clear acknowledgement of their starting points and planning reflects differentiation for each child. The balance of activities is strongly in favour of child-initiated selection as they explore, investigate and test out their skills. Staff have a good knowledge and understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage and use observations and assessment effectively to plan next steps for each child. The skilled and enthusiastic manager is working with the staff team to develop this process further. They have recently implemented a new system for tracking to ensure that any gaps in children's progress or evidence of a need for additional challenge or support may be even more quickly spotted and planned for.

Children delight in exploring their environment. Recent training was instrumental in staff re-assessing the layout of the baby room, in order to enhance children's opportunities to move more freely around a homely space. In the pre-school room, a higher proportion of boys being in the group, resulted in staff successfully reassessing how to engage them in early writing activities. Children of all ages have ample opportunities in this area. Babies use paint, shaving foam and sand to create patterns and develop their finer motor skills in preparation for early mark-making. Older children use salt, sand, soil and water to refine their abilities in this aspect. Some children show much prowess in this area, writing recognisable letters from their names in a variety of media, including on computers, dough and gloop. Children tend to their plants in the outdoor area and water them with gusto. They access the water butt and remind each other about ensuring that the tap is turned off. They eagerly show visitors their skills in construction using wooden planks, large cable spools and boxes to design and create with increasing imagination. They can also discover and hide themselves in the various dens and hidey-holes indoors and outside, discovering the properties of the torches in the dark. They have built an insect hotel to provide habitats for various wildlife and regularly examine the slots, turning over the logs and tiles.

The promotion of children's health and safety are outstanding elements in the nursery's practice. Children gain an awareness of effective personal hygiene routines from a very early age. Babies have their hands wiped and cleaned after nappy changes, so that connections with toileting and hygiene are embedded. Older children tend to their personal care needs with very little need for reminders from staff. The hygiene routines within the nursery are highly effective in reducing the risk of the spread of infection. Great attention is given to the meals and snacks children have. The cook works most effectively with parents, sharing the recipes, which children have enjoyed and inviting parents to gain further skills in preparing and providing healthy and nutritionally balanced meals.

Exceptional attention is given to ensuring that children learn about keeping safe for themselves. They participate in fire drill evacuations and some remind visitors about the yellow 'triangle' indicating a wet floor. They use real tools and

equipment, such as hammers, screwdrivers and saws, with great care and dexterity. Children's behaviour is very good. They are sensitively supported by staff to cope with separation from their parent, as they learn to share and take turns. Where additional support is identified for individual children, parents, staff and outside professionals work cohesively. As a result, this brings about significant improvement in children's ability to manage their strong feelings and emotions.

## 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

<b>How well does the setting meet the needs of the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?</b>	2
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	2

### The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	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	1
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	2
The effectiveness of partnerships	1
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

<b>Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	2
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	2
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	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