

Mayfield Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspector

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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*.

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Description of the setting

Mayfield Pre-School has been in operation since the 1970's and is run by a parent committee. The pre-school is situated in the village of Mayfield, near to Tunbridge Wells. It operates from a mobile classroom adjacent to Mayfield Church of England School. Accommodation includes a main activity area, kitchen and toilet facilities and an enclosed outside play area.

The pre-school is registered on the Early Years Register and may accept 20 children from two years to the end of the early years age range at any one time. There are currently 39 children on roll attending a variety of sessions throughout the week. The setting welcomes children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and English as an additional language. The pre-school opens Monday to Thursday from 9am to 3pm and Friday from 9am to 12.30pm.

There are seven staff employed to work with the children, most of whom work on a part time basis, and a minimum of four are present each session. Four members of staff have completed appropriate early years qualifications and one is working towards a qualification. The pre-school is a registered charity and a member of the Pre-school Learning Alliance and receives funding for the provision of free early education.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children play and learn in an inclusive, inviting and child centred environment. A good level of focus is placed on promoting their safety and effective systems are in place to identify and address their individual needs. Children benefit from the good arrangements in place to communicate with their parents and carers although some of the partnerships with other providers are less well established. The overall organisation of the pre-school is efficient despite some very minor inconsistencies in some written records and in the implementation of some activities. A strong commitment to self-evaluation and continual improvement results in practices which are constantly evolving to reflect the needs of the children and their families.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- strengthen the arrangements to work with other early years providers to more effectively share information relating to children's learning and development in order to enable all parties to provide care which is consistent and coordinated
- review the implementation of some adult instigated activities to ensure that

- the level of support offered does not inhibit children's creativity
- address the minor inconsistencies in the quality of some of the required written records.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children's safety is given high priority within the pre-school. Clear and detailed procedures are in place to deal with any child protection concerns and staff have attended training in order to recognise the potential signs and symptoms of abuse. Robust recruitment procedures ensure that staff are fully checked. A consultant has undertaken an inspection of the premises and provided a detailed evaluation of the areas of potential risk. Staff use this information to form the basis of their risk assessments and hazard checks but are conscious to also consider the differing abilities of individual children.

The committee, joint managers work and staff team work very effectively together successfully creating an inclusive, happy and stimulating environment for the children. Sensitive observations are used to monitor children's progress, identify their interests and preferences and to plan for their next steps.

Highly effective self evaluation and a very strong commitment to ongoing improvement helps to ensure that practices and processes are constantly reviewed. Staff meet regularly to share information and frequently attend training courses to update their knowledge. All required documentation is maintained although there are some minor inconsistencies in the quality of some records, for example missing surnames.

Children have access to a broad range of resources aimed at promoting their all round developmental needs. These are well maintained, attractively presented and easily accessible. Staff skilfully select toys and equipment that pique the children's interests, for example a pair of funky metallic bean bags in the book corner very successful entice children to that area. Space is well used and the outdoor area is particularly inspiring. There are open areas for the children to engage in physical games and more enclosed areas to offer shade and to encourage quieter, more relaxing activities.

A number of staff have recently attended training to consider disability and the identification of children's individual additional needs. There are policies in place which inform parents and carers of the pre-schools commitment to inclusion and this is reflected in the provision of resources. There are images, toys and books which reflect diversity including those which feature positive images of people with disabilities. Children also take part in a range of activities and discussions which extend their knowledge of different traditions and customs. These include celebrating Chinese New Year and linking with children from an African school. Appropriate procedures are also in place to support children and families for whom English is an additional language.

A range of effective strategies are in place to ensure that parents and carers are

well informed about the day to day life of the pre-school and more specifically about their child's progress. There is a website which contains a good deal of information, including forthcoming events, and parents and carers also receive emails and regular newsletters. Contact books are used to share information and parents and carers are given good encouragement to contribute observations from home which are used to help with future planning. Good focus is also placed on creating strong links with the reception teacher at the neighbouring school to ease children's transitions. The managers also recognise the importance of sharing information with other providers involved in caring for the children throughout the week but these arrangements are less well established.

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

Children thoroughly enjoy the time they spend at the pre-school and demonstrate a good sense of security as they approach staff readily for support and attention. They are well behaved and move safely and sensibly around the setting. They are developing very good social skills and are particularly well supported to learn about the importance of making a positive contribution to society. They are involved in activities which are aimed at fund raising, either for the pre-school or other charities. They learn about the importance of helping others and have previously donated to the homeless for Harvest Festival. The support they receive in this area also promotes their knowledge and understanding of the world, for example watching a film showing the journey of a t-shirt donated by someone in Scotland to its eventual recipient in Africa.

Children are extremely happy and are becoming independent in their learning as a result of the encouragement they receive to explore and investigate. They are exposed to a broad range of experiences including digging, planting and growing as well as learning about specific topics such as farms. Children's communication and language skills are promoted during their many charming conversations as well as focused work to help them to recognise letters and sounds. They also demonstrate good concentration and abilities in their problem solving, reasoning and numeracy. Imaginative strategies are employed to help them recognise written numbers including an activity to hook rubber ducks for a water tray and read the number on the base.

The organisation of each session and the implementation of activities is generally very successful at ensuring that children learn through taking an active part in the process. However, on occasion, the aim to maximise children's learning experience results in slightly too much adult intervention. This inhibits their creativity, for example when preparing displays to link with topic work there is a tendency for adults to plan how these will appear. This is at odds with the generally strong focus placed on encouraging children to express themselves creatively.

Children are well supported to recognise the importance of following healthy lifestyles. They take part in activities which help them to learn about good nutrition and enjoy extremely good opportunities to play in the fresh air. They are also

developing good personal care routines, washing their hands after using the toilet and before sitting down to eat.

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	3
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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