

# Somerhill Pre-Preparatory School

Inspection report for early years provision

---

**Unique reference number**

EY404048

**Inspection date**

21/06/2010

**Inspector**

Liz Margaret Caluori

**Setting address**

The Schools at Somerhill, Somerhill, Tonbridge, Kent, TN11  
0NJ

**Telephone number**

01732 352124

**Email**

office@schoolsatsomerhill.com

**Type of setting**

Childcare on non-domestic premises

---

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It rates council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

Royal Exchange Buildings  
St Ann's Square  
Manchester  
M2 7LA

T: 0300 123 1231  
Textphone: 0161 618 8524  
E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
W: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

© Crown copyright 2010

## 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).

Please see our website for more information about each childcare provider. We publish inspection reports, conditions of registration and details of complaints we receive where we or the provider take action to meet the requirements of registration.

## Description of the setting

Somerhill Pre-Preparatory School nursery has been registered since 2010 and operates from the nursery classroom in the Pre-prep building of The Schools at Somerhill, situated on the outskirts of Tonbridge. Children have access to enclosed outdoor play areas. The nursery is open five days a week during term times, with sessions running from 8.30am until midday. Those who have lunches stay until 1.15pm and there is also occasional provision for children to stay until the end of the school day.

The nursery is registered on the Early Years Register to care for a maximum of 16 children aged from two to three years. However, as children enter the term in which their third birthday falls, they become part of main pre-prep school which is inspected under the Independent Schools Inspectorate and are no longer counted under the early years registration. Children remain in the nursery room until they transfer into the kindergarten and therefore there may be a maximum of 27 children aged two and three years present at any one time.

The nursery is able to support children with special educational needs and/or disabilities as well as those who speak English as an additional language.

There are six members of staff employed to work directly with the children. Of these, two are qualified teachers, three hold level 3 National Vocational Qualifications (NVQ) in childcare and the remaining staff member is working towards a level 2 NVQ.

## The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children make good progress in their learning and development as a result of the high expectations of staff and the broad range of activities on offer. Their individual personalities and developmental needs are well understood and respected, providing an inclusive and welcoming environment. Whilst minor weaknesses have been identified in the organisation of some of the systems and practices, a strong capacity for on-going improvement and effective self-evaluation supports staff to recognise and address areas for improvement. This enables them to more effectively promote the Early Years Foundation Stage and to reflect the needs of children and their families. Effective partnership working with parents, carers and other professionals helps to ensure consistent and coordinated care for children.

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

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

- consider recording the next steps identified for each child to enable these to

be shared more easily with parents and carers and to be used more efficiently to influence the planning of activities

- continue to move forward with plans to review the organisation of the environment, resources and staff deployment to offer greater encouragement for children to explore and investigate for themselves and to become more independent in their learning
- review the organisation of routines to ensure that these are based around the needs of the children and consider giving greater warning when activities are to draw to a close to enable children time to finish their chosen activity.

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

Children are very effectively protected by the strong focus placed on safety throughout the nursery and wider school environment. Robust recruitment and vetting procedures are in place and all of the staff have attended safeguarding training. Risk assessments are undertaken for each area of the premises and written records are maintained. Consideration is given to each child's developmental needs and access requirements, although these details are not routinely included in the written records.

Good relationships are fostered with parents and carers. They are given a friendly greeting as they arrive to deliver and collect their child and receive very good information, verbal and written, about the day to day life of the nursery. They are also well informed about their child's individual progress but do not routinely work with staff to set future developmental goals. Staff are experienced at working with a range of other professionals, such as health professionals and specialist advisors, to identify and meet children's individual needs. This includes supporting children with special educational needs and/or disabilities as well as those for whom English is an additional language. The nursery has been pro-active in contacting other early years providers working with the children attending in order to share relevant information. This helps to ensure that all parties are well informed and able to work cooperatively to plan and provide appropriate care and learning experiences.

The senior management team, the nursery manager and her team are committed to continually improving the service offered to children and their families. Effective self-evaluation supports the team to identify and prioritise areas for improvement. As a result of this process, there are clear, time-scaled plans in place to improve the organisation of the group room and the presentation of the resources. The setting has also introduced new systems for assessing and monitoring children's progress towards the Early Learning Goals. These are generally effective, although complex and time consuming for the staff. This is an area which has been identified for further improvement by the manager as the current system does not support staff to indicate the next steps which have been identified for each child. As this information is not recorded, it is not readily available for consideration by staff responsible for writing up the future plans, nor can it be shared easily with parents and carers. The staff currently share this information verbally.

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

Children are making good progress in all areas of development as a result of the very high standard of adult input and the broad range of activities and experiences offered. On occasion, there is a slight tendency for some activities to be over planned and directed. This restricts children's opportunities to make choices and to explore and investigate for themselves. However, this has been recognised by the management team as part of the self-evaluation process and is being addressed. Plans are already being implemented to re-organise the play environment and to review the way in which staff are deployed to offer a more child-centred atmosphere. It has also been recognised that some elements of the routine do not fully reflect the needs of the children. There are times when domestic tasks and staff break times require children to finish their chosen activities to assemble as a group to allow for easier supervision. At these times, children are not generally given very long to finish their games before being asked to tidy up. Despite these minor weaknesses, children are settled, motivated and thoroughly enjoy their time in the nursery.

Exceptionally good progress is being made by children in their knowledge and understanding of the world. They enjoy very lively and interesting discussions with staff about a very broad range of topics. Conversations involving large groups of children are skilfully managed to ensure that each child can contribute at their own level. For example, during a discussion about creatures that may be found under the sea, some children volunteer suggestions of fish, sharks and whales whilst others confidently speak about Hammer Head sharks and Killer whales. As a result of the enthusiastic, positive way in which staff deliver activities, children become enthralled and listen with interest to the staff and their peers. This very effectively re-enforces their learning. Children practise their writing and pre-writing skills regularly and enjoy looking at the range of age appropriate books both independently and with members of staff. They use their imagination well during role play games and also enjoy very good encouragement to express themselves creatively in their arts and crafts activities. Children also use information and communication technology toys, construction materials and puzzles to support their learning.

Children behave beautifully and are extremely well supported to develop positive, sociable behaviour following the good role modelling of the staff team. They are also developing a good awareness of diversity and an understanding and respect, of the needs of others. This is achieved through a range of activities and resources which promote positive images of the local community and the wider world. Staff make use of spontaneously occurring events such as children's holidays to discuss different customs and traditions and also plan activities to mark a range of festivals and special days.

Children are welcomed into clean, well maintained and attractively presented premises. They are encouraged to learn how to keep themselves safe through gentle reminders from staff, for example, not to run inside and regular fire drill practices. They are also becoming very independent in their toileting and self-care.

Staff with first aid training are present at all times and appropriate accident records are maintained. Children are very well supported to understand the importance of adopting healthy lifestyles. Nutritious snacks are offered midway through each session and drinks are constantly available. Those who stay for lunch are provided with appetising cooked meals and all children have constant access to drinks. Children's good health is also promoted through very regular opportunities to play outside in the fresh air and to develop their fine and gross motor skills using an impressive range of toys and equipment.

## 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>How effectively is the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?</b>	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	3
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
--	---

### 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	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

Any complaints about the inspection or report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

