

Almonds pre-school

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number 219184
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Inspector Kelly Eyre / Kerry Freshwater

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Type of setting Childcare on non-domestic premises

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 report includes information on any complaints about the childcare provision which Ofsted has received since the last inspection or registration whichever is the later, which require Ofsted or the provider to take action in Annex C.

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).

Description of the setting

Almonds Pre-School originally opened in 1966 and changed ownership to the current private provider in 1996. It operates from three rooms in Bromham Village Hall, Bedfordshire. Ramps to all main entrances mean that the premises are easily accessible. Children have access to a fully enclosed outdoor play area.

The setting is open each weekday during term-time and sessions are from 09:05 to 11:45, with the option of a lunch club until 13:00. There are 60 places for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage and there are currently 68 children attending who are within this age group. Most of the children live locally and in the nearby villages. Eight children attend other settings such as private nurseries and childminders.

There are 11 permanent staff members. Of these, eight, including the manager, hold relevant childcare qualifications.

Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall, Almonds Pre-school makes good provision for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage. The confident, flexible approach to planning takes account of children's individual needs and developmental stages, ensuring that they are offered appropriate activities, play opportunities and are able to make good progress in all areas. Staff create a welcoming environment, building secure relationships with children and making sure that all can participate meaningfully in the activities and daily routines of the setting. The manager works alongside staff to review practice, realistically identifying the setting's strengths and areas for improvement. She has clear aims to continuously improve the practice of the setting and thereby ensure that children are offered positive play and learning experiences.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- develop the initial assessments of children so that these are used to influence the planning of activities and play opportunities to meet their individual needs
- continue to develop the opportunities for outdoor play.

The leadership and management of the early years provision

The manager offers clear guidance to staff and has procedures in place to support the smooth running of all sessions, ensuring that the setting offers children a secure environment in which to explore, play and learn. Comprehensive policies relating to safeguarding children ensure that their welfare is promoted and they are well protected. For example, there are robust systems for recruiting staff and

checking that all staff, students and helpers are suitable to work with children. The daily implementation of the setting's practical policies further supports the efficient running of a safe setting.

The manager and staff use comprehensive yet practical procedures for monitoring and evaluating daily practice. This means that they are aware of areas for improvement and can take appropriate action. A recent example of improvements is the establishment of a secure outdoor play area. The children using the main hall can move freely between indoor and outdoor activities and the range of learning opportunities can be extended. The manager maintains and promotes a very positive attitude to feedback. For example, questionnaires were distributed to parents and carers, comprehensive feedback was given with regard to the results of the questionnaires and the resulting action to be taken. The setting also acted positively on recommendations made at their last inspection, and changes included improved access to play resources during the sessions. The setting maintains good links with the local school and with childminders, thus helping to promote consistent care for all children.

The quality and standards of the early years provision

Children are consistently offered good opportunities and a range of activities that enable them to make very good progress across all areas of learning and development. Staff can respond to children's interests and their individual developmental needs because the planning is flexible and is based on comprehensive observations and assessments of the children. Staff use practical methods to gather information from parents about children's skills, capabilities and areas to work on. This is used to inform initial assessments, but is not always used to inform the planning of activities when a child first starts.

Staff support children well, encouraging them to be active in their learning and to think critically. For example, a group of children playing with play dough are allowed time to explore before a staff member encourages them to count the number of objects they have made and to explore the concepts of addition and subtraction whilst still having fun. This consistent support offers children the reassurance to express their ideas, to explore further and to share their thoughts.

The thoughtful planning of the environment and the presentation of resources encourages children to explore. For example, children select cookery books from a range of reference books and use these when playing with play dough, carefully following the instructions to utilise the play dough and cooking implements. Children select resources from a wide range and use these confidently to initiate and extend their play. Children enjoy the option of playing indoors or outside. They are offered a range of activities outside but these have not yet been fully developed to promote children's learning opportunities to the maximum.

Children work well together and eagerly share their thoughts and ideas. For example, children building a tower with large construction blocks share their ideas about the most effective way to organise the bricks in order to make the tower more robust. They are competent in the use of technology, for example, selecting

and completing programmes on laptop computers. Children can explain why they wash their hands before eating and discuss the different types of food which promote health and development.

Staff carry out comprehensive safety checks before children arrive and regularly review the risk assessments for the setting. Explanations from staff also help children gain an understanding about taking care of themselves. Staff have a clear understanding of issues relating to safeguarding children and have ensured that they have relevant information and contact details.

Annex A: record of inspection judgements

The key inspection judgements and what they mean

Outstanding: this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality

Good: this aspect of the provision is strong

Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound

Inadequate: this aspect of the provision is not good enough

Overall effectiveness

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?	Good
How well does the provision promote inclusive practice?	Good
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement.	Good

Leadership and management

How effectively is provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	Good
How effective is the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement?	Good
How well does the setting work in partnership with parents and others?	Good
How well are children safeguarded?	Good

Quality and standards

How effectively are children in the Early Years Foundation Stage helped to learn and develop?	Good
How effectively is the welfare of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage promoted?	Good
How well are children helped to stay safe?	Good
How well are children helped to be healthy?	Good
How well are children helped to enjoy and achieve?	Good
How well are children helped to make a positive contribution?	Good
How well are children helped develop skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being?	Good

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

Annex C: complaint/s made to Ofsted

This section of the report includes details of any complaint/s made to Ofsted when:

- we took action for the provider to meet the requirements of the Early Years Register; or
- we asked the provider to take action in order to meet the requirements of the Early Years Register; or
- the provider had already taken any necessary action to meet the requirements of the Early Years Register.

We will not report on any complaint where the provider met the requirements of the Early Years Register or did not require any action by Ofsted or the registered provider.

Detail of the complaint/s

There have been no complaints made to Ofsted since registration or the last inspection.

The provider is required to keep a record of complaints made by parents, which they can see on request. The complaints record may contain complaints other than those made to Ofsted.