

Coton Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspector	Margaret Goodchild

Setting address	C/O Coton C of E Community Primary School, Whitwell Way, Coton, Cambridge, Cambridgeshire, CB23 7PW
Telephone number	07930 911484 + 01954782331
Email	Chair: alison_bford@hotmail.com
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

Coton Pre-School opened in 1992 and is managed by a committee. It operates from a mobile classroom in the grounds of Coton Church of England Primary School in the village of Coton, Cambridgeshire. A maximum of 22 children may attend the pre-school at any one time. The pre-school is open each weekday during school term from 9.05 to 12.00. In addition, a lunch club runs from 12.00 to 12.45 on three days a week and the setting is currently offering the club on a fourth day for a trial period. All children have access to a secure and enclosed outdoor play area and are able to make use of the grounds belonging to the primary school. The building provides satisfactory access for all groups.

There are currently 18 children aged from two to five years on roll. Of these, 11 children receive funding for early education. Children come from the local area, as most live in or around the village. The pre-school currently supports a small number of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and a small number who speak English as an additional language. The pre-school employs three members of staff who all hold suitable early years qualifications. They work closely with the local authority adviser and with the primary schools. The pre-school is a member of the Pre-School Learning Alliance and is registered on the Early Years Register.

Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

This is a good pre-school that provides an interesting range of activities which engage and motivate the children. Good teaching, with some outstanding features, enables children to make good progress. All the children are included well and enjoy learning a great deal. Children are very well known as individuals and cared for exceptionally well. The provision is led and managed well. Self-evaluation is effective and developing further. The setting has a good understanding of its strengths and areas for development, and this ensures that it is well placed to continue to improve.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- strengthen the partnership with parents by establishing a two-way flow of information about what children know and can do
- introduce a system for tracking and monitoring children's progress
- build on the recent self-evaluation exercise and complete the self-evaluation form.

The leadership and management of the early years provision

The management committee and staff work well together. The manager provides good leadership and both the committee and staff have a clear understanding of their role. The staff are very experienced in working with this age group and all are trained to the level expected of an early years manager. The setting's work is underpinned by a comprehensive set of policies which are of high quality and show very good attention to detail. Systems for ensuring children's health, safety and well-being are very thorough. As the premises are shared with an out-of-school club, this places some restrictions on space and the layout of resources. Nevertheless, staff make good use of the accommodation, and toys and equipment meet children's needs well. Outdoor space is used effectively to maximise play opportunities for children.

Good progress has been made in addressing issues raised at the previous inspection, which took place earlier this year. The setting has worked closely with a local authority adviser in evaluating the quality of provision. This has led to the refinement of various procedures as well as developing staff skills in self-evaluation. This has helped staff to develop a clear idea of the effectiveness of the pre-school. There is a good commitment to continuous improvement and parents' views are taken into account. Staff have not yet built on the work done with the local authority to incorporate the use of self-evaluation, including recording the resulting information in their self-evaluation form, as a regular part of their work.

Partnership with parents is satisfactory overall. General communication with parents is good, for instance, through newsletters and informal feedback when parents collect their children. Home visits are offered and some useful information is displayed on the notice board in the entrance. However, a two-way flow of information between staff and parents has not yet been established as a means of sharing information about what children know, understand and can do. Thus, parents are not as well informed as they could be about how they might support their children's development at home. Staff liaise well with other providers about children's care; they are developing systems for exchanging information about what children know, understand and can do.

Inclusion is good. Staff liaise very closely with the adjoining primary school in passing on information about children with learning difficulties and ensure that individual children who need additional help receive a good deal of attention.

The quality and standards of the early years provision

Children's health, safety and well-being are promoted exceptionally well. Children learn and grow in an environment that is homely, safe and caring. Children are encouraged to develop an awareness of healthy living, for instance, through helping to prepare fruit and vegetables at snack time and through playing in the outdoor area. New children settle in quickly and children of all ages play together very well. They enjoy warm relationships with the adults and grow in confidence in an atmosphere that is both relaxed and purposeful. As a result, children feel free to be spontaneous but also concentrate exceptionally well for long periods of time and are eager to learn. Behaviour is outstanding: even the very youngest children sit quietly and become completely absorbed during story time.

From their smiling faces, it is clear that the children very much enjoy their time at pre-school. They readily choose from the activities provided, playing independently in activities of their choice and co-operating with others. Staff are very good at engaging and motivating the children and particularly skilled in interacting with individuals and small groups. They promote children's language and thinking skills exceptionally well and get children to talk at length about what they are doing. They ask probing questions and challenge children to solve problems for themselves. The teaching of personal, social and emotional development and the way staff instil in children an excitement about letters, sounds and numbers are outstanding. For instance, a three-year-old said, 'Why don't we peg J for Jasmine up and then mummy can see it when she gets here?'

Staff think carefully about the activities they provide and ensure that all the areas of learning are covered effectively. Children are known very well as individuals and staff regularly observe and record what children are able to do. They have begun to use this information to identify next steps in each child's learning and to use this in planning. There is, however, no system at present for tracking children's progress or systematically recording their development towards the Early Learning Goals.

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

Overall effectiveness

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?	2
How well does the provision promote inclusive practice?	2
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement.	2

Leadership and management

How effectively is provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	2
How effective is the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement?	2
How well does the setting work in partnership with parents and others?	3
How well are children safeguarded?	2

Quality and standards

How effectively are children in the Early Years Foundation Stage helped to learn and develop?	2
How effectively is the welfare of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage promoted?	1
How well are children helped to stay safe?	2
How well are children helped to be healthy?	2
How well are children helped to enjoy and achieve?	2
How well are children helped to make a positive contribution?	2
How well are children helped develop skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being?	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

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 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.