

# Great Barton Pathways

Inspection report for early years provision

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**Unique reference number** EY381254  
**Inspection date** 04/03/2009  
**Inspector** Sarah Johnson

**Setting address** School Road, Great Barton, Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk, IP31  
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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 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.

## Description of the setting

Great Barton Pathways is managed by a voluntary management committee made up of parents of children who attend the setting. It re-registered in 2008 after moving into a new purpose-built premises in the village of Great Barton in Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk. The setting is open each week day from 08.00 to 18.00 for 51 weeks of the year. Children attend for combination of sessions. All children share access to an enclosed outdoor play area. The setting is registered by Ofsted on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register.

A maximum of 26 children aged from three to under eight years may attend the setting at any one time. There are currently 120 children on roll, all of whom attend on a part-time basis. Of these, 56 children are within the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) age range. Children live in the local area and some attend half-day sessions at Great Barton Primary School. The staff offer to escort children to and from the primary school. The setting has strategies in place to support children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and children who are learning English as an additional language.

There are nine members of staff, six of whom hold relevant qualifications to at least Level 2. Two members of staff, including the manager, are working towards an additional qualification.

## Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good. The staff have very good knowledge of each child's individual needs ensuring they can promote children's welfare and positive progress in most areas their learning and development. Partnerships with parents and the local primary school are key strengths, ensuring children make smooth transitions between the setting, home and school. Children are developing strong relationships with each other and are supported to feel confident and independent in the inclusive environment. There are good systems in place to ensure the manager and staff team regularly reflect on their practice, leading to ongoing improvements that benefit the children in their care.

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

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

- provide further opportunities for children to attempt writing for different purposes, using features of different forms such as lists, stories and instructions
- offer opportunities for children to begin to know about their own cultures and beliefs and those of other people.

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

The manager and staff work together as an enthusiastic and cohesive team. They are eager to complete ongoing training to ensure they continue to build on their knowledge and understanding of promoting children's welfare, learning and development. Their effective practice is underpinned by the written policies and procedures which are reviewed regularly and shared well with parents. Thorough daily 'safety sweeps' are carried out to assess any potential safety risks, ensuring children's safety in all areas of the premises and whilst accessing the outdoor area. Children are effectively safeguarded from harm and neglect by staff who have attended safeguarding training and have good understanding of child protection issues. They experience very good levels of direct support and attention because the manager organises a daily rota which sets out the deployment of staff very effectively. For example, children are always well supervised as they flow between indoor and outdoor play as the staff are mindful to maintain the required adult-to-child ratios.

Staff build positive relationships with parents and promote daily sharing of information, ensuring children's changing needs are met. Parents are very well informed about the activities that children are participating in during their time at the setting as there are numerous photographs displayed and they receive a monthly newsletter detailing the key themes that are covered each week in the planning. In addition, parents and grandparents feel actively involved as they are invited in to take part in cooking activities and are asked to bring in items from home to support children's learning. Comments from parents are very positive and clearly show that they are pleased with their children's progress. Partnership working is promoted further as the staff have fostered good relationships with the teachers at the local primary school. For example, staff ensure children's assessment records are passed onto the school and children become familiar with the school environment when they meet the teachers and visit the classrooms.

The manager and staff are keen to improve the provision for children. They often trial and adapt routines and practices to bring about sustained improvements to the provision, often acting on the advice they receive from advisors at the local authority. Clear development action plans are completed for many areas of the provision. Staff also value the views of parents and children and use comments on parental questionnaires to identify any key priorities for future improvement.

## **The quality and standards of the early years provision**

Children make good progress in their learning and development as they participate in a wide range of interesting play activities and enjoy using the many resources. The child-friendly environment affords them ample space to move about freely and to spread out in their play. Children are actively encouraged to make choices about what they want to do and can independently access many of the resources and equipment for themselves. For example, they readily help themselves to books which they then eagerly ask the staff to share with them. The children's self-care skills are very well fostered as they are encouraged to pour their own drinks and to

access the toilet and hand washing facilities independently. There is very good provision for daily access to the outside learning environment in all weathers, where children develop their climbing and balancing skills on the large pirate ship apparatus and engage in sand and water play. There are good sensory experiences available for children through various art and craft activities and they have rich experiences to learn about the natural world. For example, they explore the cornflour mixture as they squeeze it between their fingers and they touch and look at interesting reptiles such as snakes and lizards. Children make sound progress in communication and literacy as they identify objects that begin with the sound of the 'Letter of the Week' and they find their names to self-register at the beginning of the session. However, opportunities for children to practise their mark-making and writing skills for a wider range of purposes are not always fully promoted.

Systems for assessing children's learning and development are effective, as each child's key person is given time to closely monitor their progress and next steps in learning. The staff make good use of a variety of methods to observe children and systematically use these observations to plan play opportunities which match children's individual needs and interests.

The staff have good understanding of how to create a welcoming environment in which children are able to stay safe. A good range of safety measures are in place, including securely locked gates in the outdoor area and a high level lock to prevent children's unsupervised access to the kitchen. Children are gently reminded that they could fall and hurt themselves if they run around inside and they have meaningful opportunities to learn about fire safety during a visit from the fire service. Healthy eating is promoted through the provision of a well-balanced range of nutritious meals and snacks, including daily portions of fresh fruit, vegetables and freshly prepared hot meals which are brought in from the kitchen at the local school.

Children are developing positive impressions of their similarities and differences through spontaneous discussions about their home lives and feelings, and they play with 'small-world' characters and complete puzzles that reflect a diverse range of cultures, gender roles and disabilities. However, opportunities for children to learn about their own cultures and beliefs and those of others are not fully maximised in the planning. All children are relaxed as they play cooperatively alongside each other, sharing and taking turns, with little need for support from the staff.

## 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

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

### Leadership and management

<b>How effectively is provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?</b>	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?	2
How well are children safeguarded?	2

### Quality and standards

<b>How effectively are children in the Early Years Foundation Stage helped to learn and develop?</b>	2
<b>How effectively is the welfare of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage promoted?</b>	2
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

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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