

Cottage Pre-School Group

Inspection report for early years provision

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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

Cottage Pre-school Group has been registered since 1990 but has been running as a pre-school since the 1970's and operates from a hall within St Mary's Social Centre in Lewes, East Sussex. The group is run by a committee of parents whose children attend the group. A maximum of 24 children may attend the pre-school at any one time. The pre-school is open, during term-time only, from 9.15 am until 12:15 pm every weekday.

There are currently 27 children aged from two to five years on roll. Of these, 11 receive funding for nursery education. The provision is registered on the Early Years Register. The pre-school supports children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, or who speak English as an additional language. The children attending are representative of the local community.

The pre-school employs five members of staff; of these, four hold appropriate early years qualifications and the other is currently undertaking an appropriate qualification. The group receive support from the local Education Authority.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children are cared for in a warm inclusive environment where the staff are fully aware of their interests and capabilities. Relationships are warm and positive so that all children feel secure and develop confidence and independence. Key persons are allocated to children in the early years age range who attend. Individual needs are successfully met as staff work with parents and other professionals to support children with any additional requirements. The setting has a good capacity to maintain continuous improvement as they regularly evaluate and make positive improvements to the care that children receive.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- build upon existing systems for observations and assessments ensuring these are used consistently to identify each child's next steps in learning
- reorganise the clearing away of resources before the end of the session to allow children continuous free play opportunities

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children are safeguarded because effective policies are in place to ensure children's welfare. Safeguarding responsibilities are well understood. Staff are clear about the signs and symptoms that indicate abuse and are fully aware of the

procedures to be followed should concerns arise. This protects children from potential future harm. A full set of policies and procedures is in place and followed by all staff to ensure children's welfare is effectively safeguarded and promoted. The building and outdoor play area are secure to prevent uninvited visitors from entering and children are effectively supervised to ensure they play safely. Risk assessments, which are regularly reviewed, enable staff to identify and address potential dangers quickly. Careful recruitment procedures ensure that all adults working with the children are both suitable and well prepared for their role.

Effective partnerships with parents and carers are established during the supportive settling-in period. Positive relationships are established with parents. Staff make time to chat to parents on a daily basis keeping them informed about their child's day, their general welfare and learning. Communication systems including notice boards and newsletters extend informal information sharing and strengthen partnerships. Systems to assess children's progress are effective; the emphasis is on sharing these regularly with parents, positively impacting on children's care, welfare, development and learning. Links with other providers are effective and promote the integration of care.

Children use a range of good quality toys and resources; these are well maintained and appropriate to their age and stage of development. On the whole staff deploy themselves well and organise space, time and resources effectively to meet children's needs. However, the clearing away of resources before the end of the session limits children's choices. Good systems are in place to evaluate the provision for children's welfare, learning and development. The staff meet weekly to reflect on their practice and provision. The views of parents, children and other professionals are meaningfully sought. This feedback is used to inform the ongoing development plans. The pre-school has fully addressed all the recommendations made at the last inspection enhancing children's health, learning and development.

Staff have a positive attitude towards equality and diversity; they regularly plan activities which help to develop an understanding of a range of cultural backgrounds. Children feel good about themselves as staff treat them with respect. They develop self-esteem and confidence as they voice their opinions and make choices and decisions. All children are highly valued as individuals. Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities thrive because staff work closely with outside agencies and obtain funding for extra staffing, when this is necessary, to provide the best support for children's individual needs.

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

Children arrive happy and eager to participate, enjoying their time at the pre-school. They are confident and enthusiastic learners because of the good relationships they enjoy with staff and their peers. Children are allocated a key person who skilfully observes and assesses their progress. While the systems for observation and assessment of children's achievements are well established, they do not consistently identify the child's next steps in learning. However, children make good progress towards the early learning goals in all areas of learning. They

also make good overall progress in developing the personal qualities that enable them to take responsibility for small tasks and develop skills for the future. Children respond very positively to adults as they listen to advice or guidance and often include them in their own imaginative play experiences, for example, when toasting marshmallows around the camp fire during out door play. Their speech and language skills are very well promoted. Staff are skilled in engaging children in lively conversation which helps to extend and promote their vocabulary. They develop good counting skills through a variety of activities and daily routines, such as, counting how many pieces of fruit are needed for their table at snack time. Topic work and practical activities arouses children's natural curiosity and develops their exploration and investigation skills. Children express themselves creatively using all of their senses to actively explore a stimulating range of new experiences. Imagination is well fostered through interesting imaginative play areas, such as the 'Pirate Ship,' in the outdoor area. Children move confidently showing a good awareness of space and others. Free flow between the indoor and outdoor areas is not possible due to the layout of the building and grounds. However, children enjoy being outdoors on a daily basis, in an area which is used extremely imaginatively to support all areas of learning.

Children's safety is given a high priority with areas checked on a daily basis to identify potential hazards and risks. They are encouraged to consider and recognise potential risks and dangers through role play, topics, stories and visits from police and fire officers. Children are polite, well behaved and learn to consider the needs of other people. Good hygiene practices are actively promoted and incorporated into the daily routines to encourage children to care for themselves. They have access to liquid soap and each child brings their own towel from home minimising the risk of cross infection. Snack times are social occasions when children talk and laugh with their friends and staff. They are provided with a range of healthy snacks including bread and fresh fruit encouraging them to develop healthy eating practices. Topic work and baking activities, such as making bread rolls, further enhance children's understanding of healthy foods. Children are extremely well supported by the enthusiastic staff team and consequently this encourages them to feel safe, secure and happy while in the pre-school. Children use a good range of safe and developmentally appropriate resources that are easily accessible to encourage their independence.

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

How effectively is the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	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	2
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	2

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

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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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