

Little Explorers @ Pavilion

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	101506
Inspection date	10/02/2009
Inspector	Pamela Edna Friling
Setting address	New Barn Close, Prestbury, Cheltenham, Gloucestershire, GL52 3LP
Telephone number	0776 5436730
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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

Little Explorers @ Pavilion was registered in 1979 and was formerly known as Prestbury Pavilion Playgroup. The group operates from the Pavilion Cricket Hall in the residential area of Prestbury, on the outskirts of Cheltenham, Gloucestershire. The group has use of one playroom, the entrance hall, the kitchen and outdoor playing area and shares the building with other users. They have sole use of the building during their hours of operation. The group is open four days a week from 09:15 to 14:45 with a 'rising fives' session open on a Friday afternoon. Children attend from the local community and surrounding areas.

The group is registered on the Early Years Register to care for a maximum of 24 children aged from 2 years to the end of the early years age group. Children attend from the age of two years six months. There are currently 43 children on roll. The setting is in receipt of funding for nursery education. The group supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and children who speak English as an additional language.

The playgroup is managed by a committee of parents and is a registered charity. There are currently eight members of staff who work directly with the children, most of whom hold qualifications in childcare at level 3 and above. One playleader has achieved Early Year Professional status with a Post Graduate Certificate of Education in Early Years. The other playleader has completed a Foundation Degree. Three members of staff are working towards a level 3 qualification. Parent volunteers are used on a rota basis to support staff and children.

Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good. Very thorough evaluation of practice, recognition and successful implementation of identified areas for improvement lead to excellent continuous improvement in the outcomes for children attending the group. Children's unique qualities, interests and abilities are successfully identified through good initial and ongoing exchange of information with both parents and other settings attended. Children individually benefit from and have input into a well planned, wide range of interesting and meaningful experiences. Children are very well safeguarded through very effective policies and procedures and a knowledgeable and well trained staff team.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- maintain an appropriate temperature within the premises to ensure the comfort of the children
- develop systematic observation and assessment to ensure assessment records are dated to show a clear picture of children's progress and parental contribution to their child's assessment records is fully encouraged

The leadership and management of the early years provision

The group has effective leadership and management. All required policies, procedures and records are in place, clear and up to date. There is a settled, strong, motivated and very well qualified staff team with clear understanding of their individual roles and responsibilities. Children are safeguarded extremely well through staff training, knowledge and understanding of required procedures. Staff very confidently describe actions they will take to safeguard children.

Comprehensive risk assessments, including outings from the premises, are conducted and regularly reviewed. Robust systems for recruitment, induction and appraisal ensure staff development needs are identified and training opportunities offered. Staff demonstrate enthusiasm for attending training to improve their understanding of early years care and education. Very detailed evaluation of the provision clearly identifies strengths and targets areas for improvement and initiates changes to improve practice. Input into the process is welcomed from all staff, parents and children. Links have been established with other groups and carers to ensure individual needs are identified and contributions towards children's learning journeys welcomed.

The partnership between the group and the parents is strong. A range of good quality information is shared between the group and parents to promote an informed partnership in the children's learning and development. Parents receive regular informative newsletters and have both formal and informal opportunities to discuss their child's progress with a key worker. Parents speak highly of the quality of the care and education their children receive and the approachability of the staff. Good verbal and written communication is firmly established. However, routine parental contribution to their child's assessment record is not yet fully in place. A key worker system is firmly established with provision to allow children to form close and settled relationships with both a designated key worker and their chosen key person as they become settled at the group.

The quality and standards of the early years provision

Children arrive with enthusiasm and settle quickly to purposeful and meaningful play which stems from their interests and actively promotes their learning and development. Staff show excellent understanding of how children learn and develop. The planning system fully involves children in developing ideas based on their interests. For example, children decide on the role play theme and assist with designing and setting up the area. In addition, children discuss ideas based on the snowy weather as they build a group plan for activities. An enabling indoor and outdoor environment encourages children to extend their own learning as they play. However, available heating within the premises does not always efficiently maintain a suitable temperature for children involved in less active pursuits. Children access most play resources independently as they pack bags to take the dolls on holiday, use tools to mend the cars in the garage area and make a petrol pump to fuel the cars. Well planned experiences based on both individual interests and identified next steps in learning in conjunction with group topics are organised

to encourage exploration. For example, over time children plant, grow and harvest vegetables and explore the nature of snow and ice as they watch it melt. Observation and assessment of children as they play enables staff to identify and plan for next steps of learning. However, assessment records are not systematically dated to clearly demonstrate children's progress over time. Staff encourage critical thinking and problem solving through excellent interaction with the children as they play and effective open questioning.

Children are kind and well behaved in response to positive staff role models who show patience, warmth and affection to the children. Children work well together and help each other. For example, children patiently await their turn on the computer and share the task of making a petrol pump for the garage. Children actively use mark making equipment as they play, creating an office under the climbing frame and transporting telephones, writing equipment and paper into the area. Daily routines and free play experiences are used to positively develop children's counting and problem solving skills as they order numerals on the floor, create patterns with threading items and sort and count small toys. Children are competent when independently using the computer and enjoy printing their created pictures. Children further develop their understanding of technology as they take digital photographs. They develop their knowledge of the local community as they visit the local shop and school and interact with visitors to the group. Children are freely creative as they independently select items and tools during their art and craft activities. Role play areas are developed over time to extend both children's learning and their input into the planning process and to encourage children to play imaginatively.

Children are learning how to remain healthy. They take part in daily physical exercise, enjoy fresh air, benefit from nutritious food and develop good personal hygiene routines as they develop good hand washing techniques in response to the hand washing song. Children are able to rest within the busy daily routine. Staff successfully extend children's understanding of how to stay safe. They discuss how to walk sensibly in the snow, practice emergency evacuation from the building and question children about the possible results of throwing items in the setting. Children's individual specific needs are well met through staff knowledge and understanding of each child in their key group and input from additional chosen key people in helping children to feel fully included.

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.	1

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?	1
How well does the setting work in partnership with parents and others?	2
How well are children safeguarded?	1

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?	2
How well are children helped to stay safe?	1
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.