

Sonning Common Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	403386
Inspection date	20/01/2009
Inspector	Aileen L King
Setting address	Grove Road, Sonning Common, Reading, Berkshire, RG4 9RJ
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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).

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

Sonning Common Pre-School opened in 1966 and moved to the current site in 1981. It operates from a temporary building, with a sloped access ramp and its own garden. A parent management committee runs the group, which is located on the primary school site in Sonning Common and serves the local area. The group opens five days a week during term time only. Sessions run from 09:00 until 11:30 and from 12:30 until 15:00. The group also offers a lunch club in the pre-school building.

The pre-school is registered on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. It may provide full day care for a maximum of 45 children, aged from two to under eight years, at any one time. There are currently 62 children on roll, 34 of whom receive funding for nursery education. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The setting supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

There are eight part-time staff working with the children. Six staff have relevant early years childcare qualifications, five at level 2 and one at level 4. Four members of staff are working towards a level 3 qualification, 1 member working towards a level 4 and 1 member working towards a level 5. The setting has links with the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) in the primary school.

Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

The pre-school is effective in providing a good level of care for the children and enabling them to learn and develop at a good pace. This is because the staff interact well with the children in their play, help them to develop their skills in language and use increasingly complex vocabulary. The provision is carefully planned and organised so that all children are included and have equal access to the range of activities provided, including outdoor activities, to develop their ideas and imaginative play. The partnership with parents and carers is particularly good and the staff have 'gone the extra mile' to ensure that parents are kept informed about their children's learning on a regular basis. The pre-school has good capacity to improve, because of the good teamwork and the commitment of the staff to build on the progress already made.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- develop the continuous provision to provide challenging next steps for children's learning, especially for those older and more able
- enhance the outdoor area to provide an increasingly creative curriculum, to promote learning and accelerate progress.

The leadership and management of the early years provision

The setting has begun the formal process of self-evaluation, but has already devised an action plan identifying areas for development to improve the provision further, including the outdoors. The staff work well together as a team and have a common purpose to make the pre-school as good as it can be. The teamwork means that staff are vigilant and are able to support the children as they select the different activities provided. The staff are particularly effective in communicating with parents, for example, about the benefits of outdoor play. The parents say they feel informed about what their children are learning and the 'strides' they make in their development. There are good procedures to keep the setting secure, for example, visitors are checked on arrival and there are systems in place to ensure the safe collection of children from the pre-school. Relevant information is kept to make sure the children's needs are properly met, and policies and procedures support this work, ensuring that good standards of children's welfare are maintained.

The quality and standards of the early years provision

Children enjoy being in the pre-school and one parent commented that her child would like to come at weekends! Children approach adults secure in knowing that their ideas and suggestions are valued and acted upon. They take full advantage of the outdoor area to develop their physical skills, by riding bikes and being active, and then are reminded to wash their hands before having a snack. The staff ensure that children are happy and settled, and any child who is distressed or anxious is treated sensitively. Parents are kept informed if staff have any concerns or worries. Staff interact well with the children as they play, participating in their games and ideas and supporting their learning. For example, they talk with them at the lunch time club and discuss what has happened during the morning and incorporate their suggestions into the songs at the end of the day.

The good use made of daily routines provides many opportunities for children to develop their knowledge of the sequence of the days of the week, describe the weather correctly and count the number of children present accurately. The children, although some are very young, respond well as adults take part in activities and encourage them to be creative, singing songs as they tidy up and creating their own musical accompaniment. There is a good range of activities for the children to choose and these are backed up with specific events such as the 'Wild Waste Show' to encourage awareness about the importance of protecting the environment. The way in which activities are presented means that the children can develop their skills in being independent. For example, at the 'Snack Cafe' they can choose from a selection of healthy snacks and also help themselves to drinks of milk or water. The children behave well, but sometimes they need reminding to listen attentively, particularly those who are older. The staff are still developing their skills and expertise in identifying and providing the next steps in learning to ensure progress is ongoing. However, the strength of the individual approach used is that children can access activities readily and develop their own interests and ideas as well as practising skills. Parents commented that they had noticed their

children's good progress in 'mark making' as they develop their early skill in writing, and also how much the children enjoyed cookery sessions. Children participate enthusiastically in group singing, with a good emphasis on number songs, such as 'Alice the camel', to promote an awareness of numbers and counting back. The pre-school benefits from a designated outdoor space, but it is not yet developed or utilised to its full potential to accelerate the children's learning in knowledge and understanding of the world, and their physical and creative development. The staff have recently started to record the observations of the children at play. Staff observe the children as they play and make notes on the learning that takes place. These systems for recording the children's progress are still relatively new and staff have still to refine their skills in identifying what needs to be done next to ensure children's progress, based on what they already know and can do, especially for the older and more able children. Staff make regular checks of the premises and the equipment to ensure the pre-school provides a safe and secure environment for children. Each member of staff has a particular group of children for whom they are specifically responsible and they know these children particularly well. Parents appreciate that there is a special person who has responsibility for their children in the pre-school and feel they are increasingly well informed about what happens and the progress their children make. There are formal occasions for the parents talk about their children's learning and also systems whereby the parents can share their knowledge of the progress their children make and any views they may have. Children are encouraged to be involved and make a contribution, looking after toys and equipment, and they are energetic participants in helping to tidy up at the end of the session.

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?	2
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?	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

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 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

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.