

Bushmead Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	155768
Inspection date	30/03/2009
Inspector	Kelly Eyre
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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).

Description of the setting

Bushmead Pre-School opened in 1991 and is managed by a voluntary management committee. It operates from one room in a community centre in the Bushmead area of Luton, Bedfordshire. A slope to the main entrance means that the premises are accessible. Children have access to the fully enclosed outdoor play area.

The setting receives funding for early education. It is open each weekday during term-time only. Sessions are on Monday to Thursday from 09:30 to 12:00 and 12:45 to 15:00 and Friday 09:30 to 12:00, with the option of a lunch club each day from 12:00 to 12:45. The setting is registered on the Early Years Register to provide 26 places and there are currently 44 children attending who are within this age group. The setting serves the local catchment area and wider community. A small number of children attend other settings such as childminders.

There are nine staff members, all of whom hold relevant childcare qualifications.

Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall, the quality of the provision is good. The secure procedures for ensuring that children are offered a balanced range of opportunities to initiate their own play throughout the day mean that they become confident in making choices and are active in their own learning process. Staff know the children well and can, therefore, provide appropriate support, ensuring that they are always included and can participate meaningfully in all activities and daily routines. The manager and staff have a positive approach to self-evaluation, realistically identifying the setting's strengths and weaknesses. They implement clear plans for ongoing improvements, helping to make sure that the setting is responsive to the needs of the children attending.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- develop further the assessment and planning procedures to include an initial assessment and ensure that next steps are planned for each child and are fed into the activity planning
- develop further partnerships with others providing care for the children.

The leadership and management of the early years provision

Children's daily experiences are positive because the manager supports staff well, offering clear direction throughout the session and encouragement to attend further training. The implementation of appropriate policies and procedures supports the efficient running of the setting, ensuring that children are offered a safe, secure environment. Practical risk assessments cover all areas and outings

and staff carry out daily safety checks of the main room and outdoor play area. Children are gaining a good understanding of safety issues through ongoing explanations from staff and associated activities, such as visits from the local police and the use of road safety resources. Thorough procedures for safeguarding children ensure that their welfare is promoted and they are protected at all times.

The comprehensive procedures for evaluating daily practice and using this information to inform the development of clear plans for the future demonstrate the setting's good potential to continuously improve the outcomes for children. There is a positive attitude to feedback and this is actively sought from staff, parents and children. Examples of recent improvements include the provision of a portable wash basin so that children can wash their hands independently and the addition of a secure entry system to protect children and staff.

The setting works well with parents, ensuring that there is a thorough exchange of information in order to promote children's learning and development. For example, parents are well informed of their children's daily activities and progress through ongoing discussions with staff, regular letters and parents' evenings. However, this area is not fully promoted as the setting has not fully developed links with all others providing care for the children.

The quality and standards of the early years provision

The provision of a wide range of activities and play opportunities means that children are able to make good progress in all areas of learning. Daily activity planning is flexible and is securely based on children's requests, daily evaluations of activities and information from children's assessments. This helps to ensure that children's individual development is promoted and they are offered appropriate activities that capture their interest. However, their development is not promoted to the optimum as the planning and assessment methods do not consistently show details of initial assessments and the next steps to feed into planning.

Children's learning and understanding are promoted because staff play alongside them and offer gentle support and encouragement. For example, children exploring the farm set are joined by a staff member who encourages them to name the animals, build enclosures for them and talk about the differing habitats they require. Children are actively encouraged to explore and understand their environment. For example, they go on nature walks, collecting items to take back, research and use for collage-making. Children's natural curiosity is encouraged as they participate in experimental activities such as determining what makes objects float or sink and exploring with magnets. Staff also make use of incidental learning opportunities to extend children's knowledge. For example, when they discover some insects in the outdoor play area, children eagerly fetch magnifying glasses in order to examine them more thoroughly.

The thoughtful planning of the environment means that it is stimulating to children, with many attractive displays and accessible resources. Children are, therefore, encouraged to explore and make choices about their play. For example, children thoroughly enjoy exploring a large box of jewellery and accessories,

helping each other to put these on and extending their play to incorporate a 'hairdressers' role play scenario. The thoughtful provision of additional resources and opportunities further extends children's knowledge. For example, children eagerly watch a rabbit that has been brought in, discussing the different types of rabbit, what they like to eat and going on to talk about their own pets at home.

The easily accessible, creative resources also mean that children have many opportunities to develop their imaginative play. For example, they create their own school, opticians, fruit and vegetable shop and igloo. Their creativity is further encouraged as they have many opportunities to explore a wide range of media such as sand, soap flakes, bubbles, dried pasta, shredded paper, jelly and junk modelling materials.

Children are offered opportunities to learn about the relevance of healthy lifestyles. They explain why they need to wash their hands before eating and have covered topic work to explore the effects on the body of exercise and healthy eating. They are gaining a good understanding of the uses of information and communication technology as they access resources such as a laptop computer and compact disc players.

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

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