

Simmondley Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	206855
Inspection date	02/06/2009
Inspector	Zoe Smith
Setting address	High Lane, Simmondley, Glossop, Derbyshire, SK13 6JN
Telephone number	01457 860892
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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

Simmondley Pre-School opened in 1970 and operates from its own premises in the Simmondley district of Glossop, Derbyshire. Children have access to an enclosed outdoor play area. The pre-school is open each weekday from 09.15 to 11.45 and 12.45 to 15.15 during school term times. The pre-school is registered on the Early Years Register. A maximum of 16 children may attend the pre-school at any one time. There are currently 48 children aged from two years to under five years on roll. The pre-school currently supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. There are six members of staff, three of whom hold appropriate early years qualifications to at least National Vocational Qualification level 2. The pre-school provides funded early education for three- and four-year-olds. The pre-school is managed by a voluntary committee of parents. It is a member of the Pre-School Learning Alliance and is supported by a Early Years Improvement Officer employed by the local authority.

Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good. Staff use their very good knowledge of individual children to monitor progress and successfully plan for their learning and development needs. Children are making good progress, given their age, ability and starting points. Positive partnerships are fostered with parents and other Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) settings that children attend. This is enabling staff to provide coherence in children's care and learning. Effective steps are taken include all children and meet their individual and additional needs. Self-evaluation is at a formative stage, nevertheless the enthusiasm and commitment of the staff team and management committee ensure continuous improvements are made to the service provided.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- continually promote children's developing imagination by ensuring that they can engage in imaginative play and role-play based on their firsthand experiences by making resources and materials readily accessible
- help children learn they have similarities and differences that connect them to and distinguish them from others by increasing the range of resources and activities that portray positive images of culture, gender and disability
- further develop systems to evaluate practice and use to continually look for ways to improve the quality of the learning, development and care that is offered.

The leadership and management of the early years provision

The setting is led by two managers who have clear roles and responsibilities. They are well supported by a dedicated and enthusiastic staff team. Self-evaluation is not sufficiently well developed to help staff identify what they do well and what they could do better. However, the enthusiasm of staff and the management committee, and support from an Early Years Improvement Officer, is ensuring continuous improvements are made. Staff meetings and appraisals ensure staff work together to develop their practice and to plan for the individual needs of children. Regular attendance on short courses enables staff to continually enhance their skills in specific subjects, such as 'Reflective Practitioner' and 'Engaging Boys'. There were three recommendations to improve practice made at the last inspection. The setting has been proactive in taking positive action to resolve the weaknesses highlighted and promote the children's welfare.

Children are safeguarded because effective policies are in place and staff are well trained in and have a good understanding of safeguarding issues and their individual responsibilities. Robust recruitment and selection procedures are in place to ensure the suitability of staff to work with children. Risk assessments have been conducted and precautions put in place to reduce the risk of accidents. Effective partnerships have been fostered with parents and other EYFS settings. Individual diaries provide a useful tool to share information and help settings to work together to meet children's individual needs. Children's starting points and interests are identified in partnership with parents and used by staff to help children settle and to inform practice. Daily discussions, development records, parents' evenings and notices keep parents well informed about their child's learning and development.

The quality and standards of the early years provision

Children's learning is well supported and promoted by the staff team who have a good knowledge of the individual abilities and interests of children. For example, to extend a child's interest in castles they provided construction toys and junk modelling for the children to build castles. This encouraged lots of discussions on how to build a castle and where to put the turrets. Observations, planning and assessments are in several different formats; nevertheless they are used well to identify and plan for the next steps in an individual child's learning. A broad range of interesting, challenging and enjoyable activities are provided that cover the six areas of learning. Children receive lots of individual attention and skilful questioning techniques effectively support and help them to consolidate their learning. Children behave extremely well and are confident and kind in their interactions with each other and adults. They politely ask for scissors to use to cut the dough and they hold the hands of their younger friends to help them walk across the balancing beam.

Children are cared for in a language- and print-rich environment. They make good use of the well-stocked book corner, they enjoy looking at books on their own and listen intently when staff read them stories. Children know that print carries

meaning. They find their own name label and make recognisable marks and older more-able children label their pictures. They enjoyed writing letters and then posting them to their homes. Children show an awareness and keen interest in counting and problem-solving activities. They eagerly join in number rhymes and enjoy counting teddy bears and sorting them into different-sized boxes. Children have lots of opportunities to freely explore a good range of sensory, messy and creative activities. They use lots of paint, paper and glue to design and make interesting pictures. Children eagerly join in singing activities and play musical instruments. They mostly have good opportunities to develop their imaginations by playing with small world imaginative toys. Children are involved in choosing the theme for the role play area. However, during the planning stages they do not always have access to a well-stocked role play area for their imaginative and make believe play.

Children have enjoyable opportunities to learn about their own religious and cultural beliefs. They say prayers before eating snack and participate in a variety of activities to find out about Christian festivals and beliefs. They have some opportunities to learn about difference through discussions at circle time, activities on festivals and by playing with play sets that reflect the lives of people in other countries. However, they have little access to resources and activities that portray positive images of culture, gender and disability and that are designed help them learn about equality and diversity. Children enjoy learning about the life cycle of frogs and butterflies and find out about growing when they plant and tend flowers in planters and hanging baskets. Children are developing good self-help and independence skills. They confidently choose what they want to play with, manage their own personal care, help themselves to snack and pour out their own drinks.

Children are learning how to keep themselves healthy and safe through discussions, healthy snacks, good practice and interesting activities. They know they must wash their hands before eating because 'you might get germs on your food' and this could 'make you sick'. The children were enthralled when the firefighters came to talk to them about staying safe. They enjoyed being able to look at the fire engine, the firefighters' outfits and breathing apparatus, and holding the water hoses. Children get plenty of fresh air and exercise during their daily opportunities to play outside. They enjoy climbing up the climbing frame and sliding down the slide and carefully balancing on the beam.

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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