

Three Bears Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number EY312682
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Inspector Anne Mitchell

Setting address St George's Church Hall, Jumpers Road, Christchurch,
Dorset, BH23 2JR

Telephone number 07917 820040 or 01202 496163

Email

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).

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

Three Bears Pre-School has been registered since 2005. The pre-school operates from two rooms in St George's Church Hall in a residential area of Christchurch, and serves families in the local area. There is a large garden for outdoor play.

The pre-school is registered on the Early Years Register, as well as the compulsory part of the Childcare Register. A maximum of 26 children may attend at any one time. There are currently 70 children on roll, all of whom are in the early years age group. Of these, 36 are in receipt of nursery funding.

Children attend for a variety of sessions. The pre-school supports children with disabilities and/or learning difficulties, and children for whom English is an additional language. The pre-school opens five mornings a week during school term times, from 09:00 until 12:45, and from 13:30 to 16:00 on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday afternoons. There are a total of eight staff who work directly with the children. Of these seven hold relevant qualifications and one is working towards a qualification. The setting is a member of the Pre-School Learning Alliance and receives support from the local authority.

Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall, the quality of the provision is good. Children's individual needs are effectively met by staff who know them well and adapt play and activities to suit their abilities and interests. Children make good progress in their learning and are developing secure skills for the future. Management and staff have developed successful systems to ensure that outcomes for children are good and demonstrate a commitment to continued improvement.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- continue to develop effective systems to share information about children's progress with parents and other providers to provide the best learning opportunities

The leadership and management of the early years provision

All required documentation and risk assessments are in place to support children's safety and welfare. Policies and procedures are shared effectively with parents. These are reviewed regularly to ensure they are in line with current legislation and practice. Children are cared for by suitable adults because the systems to recruit and vet new staff are rigorous and effective. Staff demonstrate a commitment to continued training. They are eager to update their knowledge and skills in providing positive outcomes for children.

Children have use of a church hall, shared with other users, and staff work hard to set out the pre-school invitingly each morning. The environment is stimulating and child orientated, with low level storage, promoting opportunities for children to make choices in their play. Each member of staff is responsible for monitoring and organising one area of the hall each week. This works well and consequently, children use all areas of the setting equally and are focussed and engaged in well presented activities. A high staff ratio enables adults to be fully involved with children throughout the session. There are sufficient staff to prepare snacks for example, and enough to take older or less able children into the second room for small group sessions or individual learning. Good quality resources are available for children throughout the session.

There are clear systems in place to monitor and assess the provision's effectiveness in meeting the needs of all children. For example, the setting receives regular support from the local authority. Action plans from visits and staff meetings are addressed promptly by management and staff. Parents are involved in the setting's self assessment process through biannual questionnaires. Staff respond effectively to children's preferences and interests.

Staff use visual prompts and illustrated time lines with all children to support their language and concept development. The setting has established good links with schools and other professionals to promote consistency in children's care and education. Links with other providers are not yet secure. Children for whom English is a second language, and those with additional needs are well supported by skilled staff and through effective links with parents and other agencies.

The setting has developed a strong partnership with parents and carers. They are provided with clear and helpful information about the setting. Daily diaries provide a clear record of individual children's routines and interests. Parents are happy with the level of care and education provided and informal daily discussion provides good opportunities to share information. However, systems to share children's developmental records with parents are inconsistent.

Children are well protected from harm and neglect. Clearly written safeguarding policies and procedures are in place, and shared with parents from the outset. Many staff have attended safeguarding training and all are aware of signs and symptoms, as well as the correct procedures to follow in the event of any concerns. Staff are clear about their role in protecting children.

The quality and standards of the early years provision

Parents and their children are greeted warmly by staff at the start of the session and the children are eager to start their day. They look around at the broad range of resources available and quickly settle to their chosen activity. They eagerly find their friends and play well together. Staff use open ended questions to help children to think for themselves and solve problems. They ask 'What insect have you found? How many legs can you see?' Staff are skilled at noticing and including all children, and responding to their needs promptly. For example, if a new child is

quiet and a little upset, a member of staff quickly reassures her, gives her a cuddle and helps her choose an activity.

Children demonstrate high levels of confidence, as they make vehicles using construction equipment and wheels. One child says to a visitor 'Look! It has four wheels. Where is your car?' Children play with dinosaurs, and a member of staff extends their learning by asking them to find dinosaurs that match those in the book. A child replies 'That's not the same, because that one's big'. Children make mini beasts from plasticine, decorating them with eyes, cotton buds and gold gems. Some go into the garden with bug boxes to find real mini beasts such as snails and spiders, and staff help to put them in the bug box to study. Children are keen to see the progress of their sunflower plants and count how many have grown. They demonstrate good levels of concentration and are fully occupied throughout the session. The quality of observation, assessment and planning for individual children is good. There is a good balance of adult planned and child initiated experiences, both indoors and in the garden. All areas of learning are included in planned projects, and activities are effectively evaluated to ensure learning outcomes are achieved. Children's developmental records are beginning to show children's progress and include possible next steps for their development.

Children feel happy and safe in this environment because staff gently explain about the rules to keep children safe. Together they sing a song about using kind hands and feet. Children are able to take risks in a safe environment, for example, using scissors indoors, and climbing and balancing in the garden. They use child sized equipment when practising road safety in the car park, and staff talk to them about keeping themselves safe on outings. Children are emotionally secure in this environment. They are settled and confident, choosing resources independently from low level storage, helping themselves to water, and turning to familiar staff for emotional support and reassurance.

Children are successfully learning to adopt healthy lifestyles. They enjoy a selection of fresh fruit at snack time as well as toast. Children talk about other choices they have on different days such as crumpets, cucumber and carrot, adding 'It's good for you and helps you grow'. Children help themselves to drinking water throughout the session from a water dispenser, and willingly help younger children to pour a drink. Photo prompts at children's eye level in the toilet facilities remind them to wash their hands after using the toilet. One child tells a staff member, 'I need to get my hands clean. I've been in the garden!'

Children's behaviour and their attitude to learning is good because staff are consistent in using positive strategies to manage behaviour. They thank children for helping to tidy and praise them for their achievements. Children relate well to the staff and to each other. Older children are willing to help younger ones. All children are familiar with the simple rules. When a bell is rung everyone stops to listen. Children are given time to finish activities to their satisfaction and are very willing to help staff and one another. They are eager to learn from the beginning of the session. Staff are skilled at encouraging children to explore new experiences as they participate in their play and praise their achievements.

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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Annex B: the Childcare Register

The provider confirms that the requirements of the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are:

Met