

Wollaston and Strixton Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspector Susan Marriott

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Type of setting Childcare on non-domestic premises

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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*.

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Description of the setting

Wollaston and Strixton Pre-School was established in 1965 and registered at its current premises in February 2009. The setting is run by a voluntary management committee. It operates from a mobile classroom at Wollaston Community Primary School. Children have access to the school playground and a secure garden area to the rear of the classroom for outdoor play.

The setting receives funding for early education. It is open each weekday during term-time and sessions are from 9am to 11.30am. The setting is registered on the Early Years Register to provide 22 places and there are currently 17 children attending who are within this age group. The setting serves the local and neighbouring communities. A small number of children attend other settings such as childminders and other pre-schools. The setting is developing links with the school on which it is sited and provides for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

There are three staff members, all of whom hold relevant childcare qualifications. The pre-school is affiliated to the Pre-School Learning Alliance and receives support from the local authority.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is satisfactory.

This is a newly established, friendly and generally inclusive setting where the children make acceptable progress in their learning and development. Children are purposefully engaged in enjoyable activities, although recently introduced systems for planning and assessment are not yet sufficiently embedded to fully support children's progress. Most aspects of children's welfare are promoted well and they are kept very safe and secure. The manager and staff effectively identify areas of strength and weakness and are proactive in taking action to improve the quality of provision, demonstrating sufficient capacity to improve.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- improve planning for appropriate play and learning experiences across all areas of Learning and Development, with particular emphasis being given to problem solving, reasoning and numeracy, for both the indoor and outdoor environment based on the children's interests and needs
- improve the frequency of observation and assessment, using the Practice Guidance criteria. Use the information gained to ensure that children achieve as much as they can in relation to their starting points and capabilities
- develop partnership working with parents and others to promote children's welfare and development. Enable parents to review their children's progress

regularly and contribute effectively to their child's learning and development record.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

All required documentation is readily accessible and effectively underpins the safe and generally efficient management of the provision. Children's welfare is promoted as the setting has satisfactory safeguarding procedures. Thorough risk assessments and daily checks ensure that hazards are minimised. Sound daily practice, such as ongoing explanations from staff, reinforce children's understanding of safety issues. For example, they understand why it is necessary to practice an evacuation drill. Security measures are appropriately robust and ensure the safety of children and staff. The setting is sufficiently inclusive and generally meets the needs of most children, including those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities.

Staff work well as a team and are supported in attending further training. This helps create a positive environment, where children feel secure and happy. Resources are used well to promote children's learning and development. For example, the outdoor play area is currently being developed and good use is made of community facilities, such as the library, post office and local shop to offer children an extended range of opportunities. The manager and her staff have a clear understanding of anti-discrimination, enabling them to implement appropriate policies and provide a service which is inclusive for all children and their families. They gather information from parents and carers to ensure that they understand each child's background and culture and are therefore able to meet their needs and promote children's awareness of individuality. Children's self-esteem is promoted as they are offered opportunities to talk about themselves, their families and recent experiences.

Children's care, learning and welfare is generally supported by caring staff and interested parents. Approachable staff help to promote effective communication with parents because they have created a welcoming atmosphere. However, partnership working is not fully developed. Opportunities to establish links with the school and others have not yet been developed. Staff encourage parents to discuss and comment upon their child's progress but systems are not yet effective and they are not sufficiently encouraged to contribute their own observations of their child's learning at home. The manager is inexperienced in leading a setting but is increasingly able to identify the setting's strengths and weaknesses. She is developing effective methods of reflective practice to monitor the quality of provision and secure the setting's capacity for continuous improvement.

The quality and standards of the early years provision and outcomes for children

Taken overall, children make satisfactory progress in most areas of learning because staff have an increasing levels of understanding of Early Years Foundation

Stage. Problem solving, reasoning and numeracy receives less emphasis and staff have already identified this as an area for action to be addressed. Staff gather basic information about children's starting points and capabilities when children begin to attend the pre-school but this information is not used effectively to establish plans to develop individual children's learning. Staff have developed appropriate procedures for observing and assessing children, although information from observation and assessment is not being updated with sufficient frequency to ensure that children achieve as much as they can in relation to their starting points and capabilities. Documented observations are not sufficiently linked to the Practice Guidance document to clearly demonstrate children's progress. This information is not always fed back into activity planning to ensure that children are consistently offered activities that promote their individual development.

Staff share the planning of the set activity each day and variable quality of planning means that children may not always receive enough challenge. However, appropriate use of the key worker system, means that staff know the children well and can therefore provide appropriate support. Children enjoy generally effective support from the staff in relation to their care and learning. Staff maintain sound levels of interaction with children of all ages and meet their daily care needs with care and dedication. Rising levels of confidence amongst staff enable them to encourage children to explore and develop their own play, sensitively intervening to extend children's thinking and understanding. This means that children take an active role in their own learning and develop positive attitudes to this.

The classroom is set out with a suitable range of play-based activities which the children enjoy. Equipment is generally accessible, enabling children to make independent choices. For example, children playing in the water tray in the garden extend their play by choosing to experiment with a ball scoop to collect and pour the water into different containers. The spacious garden area provides children with daily access to fresh air and plans include learning through outdoor activities. Activities are planned to fit into a main theme each week and cover most aspects of the early learning goals. Children's enjoyment is enhanced because staff join in appropriately with their play and discussions. Children are supported in gaining skills that will help them in later life. For example, children of all ages learn about the uses of information and communication technology as they use the computer, competently choosing and completing programmes. Staff praise children for achievements such as putting on their coats unaided. Children learn about health and hygiene through the daily routine, activities and discussions. For example, children playing in the garden blow their noses using a tissue and walk inside to place their tissue in the bin. They stop to wash their hands without needing to be reminded by staff, before returning to their activity outdoors.

Children develop a good understanding of appropriate behaviour as they use circle time to discuss their 'Dos and do not's', adopted as a behaviour charter for the new setting. They show care and concern for each other. For example, older children readily involve younger ones in their play, often taking them by the hand to help them join in. Children's understanding of diversity is developed as they participate in planned activities and discussions and in this way their awareness of the ways of life, cultures and beliefs of other people is extended and promoted. Children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are offered

appropriate and consistent support to enable them to participate and make sound progress. Children's behaviour demonstrates that they feel safe. They readily respond to the fire evacuation drill practice and confidently select resources and play independently or with other children and staff. Children develop further skills for the future as they share ideas and work together. For example, children find some magnets in the sand pit and staff encourage them to work together as they move around the room, exploring what items the magnets will stick to. Children have opportunities to develop early reading and writing skills. For example, young children enjoy making marks in the play dough mixture and having books read to them on request.

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

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

How well does the setting meet the needs of the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?	3
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	3

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

How effectively is the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	3
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding	3
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	3
The effectiveness of partnerships	3
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	3

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

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Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	3
The extent to which children feel safe	3
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	3
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	3
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	3

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