

Rettendon Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspector Deirdra Keating

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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

Rettendon Pre-School is run by a volunteer management committee. It opened in 1984 and operates from two rooms in the Rettendon Memorial Hall. Children have access to an enclosed covered outdoor play area and a secure grassed area. The pre-school is situated in Rettendon, Essex. It is open on Monday from 12.30pm to 3.00pm and Tuesday and Wednesday from 9.30am to 12.00pm.

The pre-school is registered on the Early Years Register. A maximum of 25 children may attend the pre-school at any one time. There are currently 19 children aged from two to under five years on roll, some in part-time places. The pre-school currently supports a number of children with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

There are five members of staff, three of whom hold appropriate early years qualifications to at least NVQ Level 2. The setting provides funded early education for three and four-year-olds.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children's welfare and learning is promoted well by dedicated staff who have a highly developed knowledge and understanding of each child. Children are safe, secure and motivated, they enjoy learning about their local area and the world around them. Effective partnership working and good local knowledge enable staff to work very well with the school, parents and other agencies. This ensures the pre-school is inclusively able to meet all children's individual and differing needs given their abilities and starting points. A strong commitment to improvement is evident and documented using a self-evaluation of the setting that takes into account the views of parents staff and children.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- ensure the risk assessment identifies all aspects of the environment that need to be checked on a regular basis
- provide more freely-chosen or child-initiated activities, delivered through indoor and outdoor play.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children are very well safeguarded and their welfare and safety are effectively promoted. There are clear and robust strategies and procedures in place, including a specifically designated member of staff who is responsible for safeguarding. All

practitioners are clearly aware of their roles and responsibilities to protect children at all times. The recruitment procedure ensures that staff are checked and qualified to work with young children. Children play in a safe and secure environment that has been risk assessed and these assessments are recorded to meet the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). However, there are some aspects of the environment that have not been identified which could potentially compromise children's safety.

The pre-school is run by a dynamic and long serving manager and supported by a management committee made up of parents of children at the pre-school. The manager leads a team who share a common sense of purpose and work well together to ensure that all groups of children have the opportunity to achieve as well as they can. The cohesive staff team have high ambitions for the pre-school and regularly attend training workshops to drive practice towards further improvement. There is a good self-evaluation system in place to monitor practice and all staff contribute to this. Additionally, staff have actively sought the views of parents and children to target areas for improvement, parental questionnaires are extremely positive and parents feedback correlates with this. Staff truly recognise the value of parental involvement and invite parents regularly into the pre-school for meetings about their child's progress. This gives them an opportunity to talk to children's key workers and establish each child's focus for the term. Additionally parents and prospective parents join in for weekly music mornings. This gives prospective children a chance to visit with their parents and enables parents of children currently attending to join in with the music session. The staff have also developed good partnerships with the local school and visit regularly with children. Staff have created photographic picture books with a time line of school activities to give children a visual reminder about what to expect. This partnership working ensures that children are prepared well for a smooth transition into school.

Staff promote equality and diversity actively, they remove barriers to participation and support children's language, communication and social skills to enable all to participate and communicate their individual needs. Resources are used adequately to enable all children to participate and provide a range of activities from which children can make choices promoting their independence and decision making. Staff are considered and reflective, they have a good commitment to continuous professional development to strengthen and develop their knowledge and skills and therefore continually improve outcomes for children.

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

Children are settled and secure in the small rural pre-school where consistently high staff to child ratios ensure that they are given good support tailored to their individual needs. Children are made to feel welcomed and special, there is a key-worker system and children's birthdays are celebrated with cakes and songs. Children arrive and choose from a range of activities that are laid out in the hall. Staff actively involve children in the choice of resources which have to be set out daily, using simple coloured pictures of resources which enable children to choose what they would like for the next session. Consequently, children are engaged well

in activities that interest and stimulate them.

Children are provided with many experiences that help them to develop a positive sense of themselves, respect for others and a strong disposition to learn. This is because the staff support the children very well and encourage their developing independence. Children are encouraged to manage putting on coats, shoes and their own personal hygiene. Children make a positive contribution both within the pre-school and in the local community. The pre-school is an integral part of the small community and staff enable children to gain knowledge and understanding of the rural landscape and the local amenities. Children attend traditional church services and visit the local primary school. Additionally, children explore the woods behind the pre-school where they observe seasonal changes and bring back items of interest to discuss and compare. Children are consistently given lots of praise and encouragement by enthusiastic and lively staff who truly value and celebrate children's effort. Consequently, children feel confident to try out new activities and take an active part in the session, for example, young children competently tidy away resources at the end of the session and enthusiastically take part in local outings. Children are taught to be safety conscious, for example, they learn about road safety as they go out in the community and regularly practise the fire evacuation procedure with staff. Children feel safe in the setting and on visits in the local community as staff ensure adult ratios are high and children are closely supervised at all times.

Children are encouraged to have healthy lifestyles, they bring in snacks from home which staff oversee to ensure they are nutritious. Children are encouraged to develop their personal care and hygiene, they regularly clean their hands with anti bacterial gel and cover their mouths as they cough. Children spend long periods outside in the fresh air, an all-weather canopy enables them to play outside in the winter months. There is also a grassed and spacious outdoor play area and ample room in the hall for larger scale physical activities such as ring games, climbing equipment, balls and wheeled toys. This gives children plenty of opportunities to get exercise, run around and develop their physical abilities.

Children develop skills for the future as they work on number recognition. They count objects and find the corresponding number counting reliably up to four and beyond. Children show a good understanding of agreed group rules at story time and show care and consideration for one another as they sit on the floor. Skilled staff promote the use of books well, they ensure that all children are able to interact using props and ask children to clarify the events in the story using language and finding new words to express themselves. Books are an important part of the pre-school and children regularly take books home to share with their families. Parents are actively involved in all areas of children's learning and development. Staff ensure they are given detailed feedback at the end of the session and parents are invited to join in with nature walks and traditional events and celebrations.

Children make good progress as staff are aware of children's next steps and observe them closely to find ways of incorporating these steps of learning into their play. The planning and organisation ensure that every child is suitably

challenged by the learning experiences provided. Activities are planned, based upon accurate observation, however, there is not always an even balance of free-choice and structured activity resulting in some children becoming restless after several structured activities.

Good effective partnerships are built with parents, including those for whom English is not their first language and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Staff use the trusting and professional relationships they have developed with children and their families to ensure they have ample information to assess starting points, plan activities and record progress for each child. This promotes an inclusive environment where all children can progress well given their individual starting points.

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?	2
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	2

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

How effectively is the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	3
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding	2
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	2
The effectiveness of partnerships	2
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	2

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	2
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	2
The extent to which children feel safe	2
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	2
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	2

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