

Flitwick Pre-school

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspector

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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

Flitwick Pre-school was formed as a result of the merging of two former pre-schools in Flitwick, both of which had been registered for over 20 years. It is run by a voluntary management committee and operates from a single-storey building in the centre of Flitwick, Bedfordshire. 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 and sessions are daily from 9.15am to 11.45am, with an extended session until 3.15pm on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday. The setting is registered on the Early Years Register to provide 26 places and there are currently 23 children attending who are within this age group. The setting serves a wide catchment area. A small number of children attend other settings such as childminders and other pre-schools. The setting currently supports a number of children with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

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

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

The manager and staff maintain a positive approach to self-evaluation and have developed thorough procedures to support the ongoing review of their work. They, therefore, have a clear overview of the setting and efficiently prioritise actions and improvements, thereby providing a service which is responsive to children's needs. Thorough procedures for exchanging information with parents and carers mean that staff have a good knowledge of each child's needs. This enables them to ensure that these are consistently met and children are offered appropriate support to participate in the activities offered. Excellent procedures and daily practice relating to safety mean that children develop a strong sense of safety and security in the setting. This means that they can play confidently and happily, thereby developing positive attitudes to learning.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- provide further opportunities for children to increase their awareness of the ways of life, cultures and beliefs of other people
- develop partnerships with others providing care for the children.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children's welfare is promoted because the setting has robust safeguarding procedures. Staff regularly review this area to ensure that they are able to work together to protect children. Stringent checks are carried out to ensure that all staff are suitable to work with children. Comprehensive risk assessments and daily checks ensure that hazards are minimised. Excellent practice reinforces children's understanding of safety issues. For example, children take turns to help with the daily risk assessment of the outdoor area, completing information on their own clipboards and reporting back to the manager and then to other children during circle time. This also promotes their self-esteem and sense of belonging.

All staff have a clear understanding of anti-discrimination, enabling them to provide a service which is inclusive for all children and their families. They have developed good procedures for working with parents and carers, enabling them to understand each child's background and culture and thereby ensure that their needs are consistently met. Children's self-esteem is promoted as their interests, views and requests are included in the activity planning. Good ongoing communication with parents means that staff are able to work in partnership with them. Parents receive thorough information about the setting and their child's progress and activities, for example, through newsletters, open days and daily discussions with staff. The setting works well with other professionals such as speech therapists. However, they have not fully developed appropriate relationships with others providing care for the children in order to promote children's learning and development and consistent care.

The manager and deputy managers have a clear vision for the future, involving staff, parents and children in reviewing the setting's practice. A genuine desire to improve outcomes for children, along with the ability to prioritise actions mean that appropriate changes are made and their impact is monitored. For example, the re-organisation of the main play area means that children have improved access to resources such as the computer. Staff work well as a team and demonstrate their enjoyment of their work. This creates a positive environment, where children develop positive attitudes to learning. Resources are used well to promote children's learning and development. For example, good use is made of the setting's outdoor area to offer children an extended range of opportunities.

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

Staff's good understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage means that children are supported in achieving and make good progress in all areas of learning. Staff have developed thorough procedures for observing and assessing children. They actively use this information to inform activity planning, ensuring that children are offered activities that promote their individual development. Good use of the key worker system means that staff know the children well and can, therefore, provide appropriate support. Staff are confident as they encourage

children to explore and develop their own play, sensitively intervening to extend children's knowledge and understanding. This enables children to take an active role in their learning and develop positive attitudes to this.

The environment is attractive and generally accessible, enabling children to make independent choices. For example, children working at a craft table access further resources such as crayons, tissue paper and tubes from the nearby low shelves. The good planning and accessible resources mean that 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 equipment such as the computer, cash registers and telephones. Good use is made of the outdoor area to offer children an extended range of opportunities. They gain a knowledge and appreciation of nature and the environment as they help on the setting's allotment, growing and harvesting crops such as tomatoes, potatoes, onions and beans and helping to collect materials for the compost bin. Children's enjoyment is enhanced and their learning extended because staff join in appropriately with their play and discussions. For example, children explore the cash register before being joined by a staff member who encourages them to name the written numbers as they appear and discuss the different denominations of the play money.

Children's development is promoted because staff use their knowledge of each child to make the best use of their individual learning styles and interests. For example, children showing an interest in dinosaurs enjoy finding these in the sand and in the outdoor play area, happily incorporating them into their play and discussing this with staff members. The consistent daily procedures and ongoing explanations from staff mean that children develop a good understanding of appropriate behaviour. They readily help with tasks such as tidying up and all children are able to participate in this as they are given clear guidance and support from staff. They are also supported in working together to resolve any issues. Children's understanding of diversity is developed as they participate in structured activities, for example, to celebrate Diwali, Christmas and Chinese New Year. However, their wider awareness of the ways of life, cultures and beliefs of other people is not extended and fully promoted.

Children's behaviour demonstrates that they feel safe. They separate well from their parents and carers, confidently select resources and play independently or with other children and staff. They are encouraged to use their knowledge to solve everyday problems. For example, they use tape measures, play counting games, harvest potatoes and weigh these so that they can share them out. Children have opportunities to develop early reading and writing skills. For example, children of all ages complete the checklist for the risk assessment, taking note of the pictures and words that describe each item to be checked and making their own marks to tick these off. Children learn about the relevance of healthy lifestyles as they participate in activities and discussions, such as noting how their heart beat increases after exercise.

The good procedures for working with parents and other professionals mean that children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are offered appropriate and consistent support to enable them to participate and make good

progress. This is underpinned by the good use of individual play plans for each child. The good planning means that all children's learning and development is promoted and activities are planned in order to consolidate their learning. For example, after noting that children enjoyed the 'Gentle Giants Trail', staff include this in the planning for the following day; children participate animatedly in the discussion about the bugs and insects they found, and become engrossed in exploring the garden independently, digging for worms on the allotment, looking under the tyres, using magnifying glasses to examine the structure of spiders' webs and proudly showing staff their finds.

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	2
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

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
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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	1
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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