

Central Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

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19/10/2009

Inspector

Rosemary Davies

Setting address

Central Community Centre, Emlyn Square, Railway Village,
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Telephone number

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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*.

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.

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Description of the setting

Central Pre-school opened in 1978. It operates a room in the Central Community Centre, in Swindon town centre, Wiltshire, serving the local culturally diverse area. An adjacent outdoor area is available for outside learning and a nearby park is used too. A voluntary committee manages the pre-school, which is a registered charity. It provides funded early education for three and four-year-olds. The pre-school opens for five weekdays during school terms. Sessions run from 9.00 am to 3.00 pm on Monday to Thursday and from 9.00 am until 12 noon on Fridays. Children attend either full or part time.

The pre-school is registered on the Early Years Register for a maximum of 24 children in the early years age range, at any one time. There are currently 30 children aged from three to under five years on roll. It is also registered on the Childcare Register, although no children on this register attend. The pre-school currently supports a number of children learning English as an additional language.

The pre-school has six staff who work with the children, four of whom hold appropriate early years qualifications to at least level 2. One staff member is working towards Early Years Professional Status and another towards a relevant foundation degree.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children make good progress overall in their learning and development in this small, friendly pre-school, including those learning English as an additional language. Staff offer an inclusive setting, meeting children's individual welfare and learning needs well overall, working closely with parents to do so. The senior management team work together effectively to identify and plan future improvements and are committed to furthering staff qualifications through training; consequently, the pre-school has good capacity to maintain continuous improvement.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- reconsider the content and organisation of times when children are altogether as a group, making sure these engage all children, including those learning English as an additional language
- continue to explore ways of implementing outdoor learning as frequently as possible.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The committee chairperson and manager work together well to guide the work of this pre-school. They understand their individual roles but are united in their determination to safeguard children well, which is the first priority. Robust appointment procedures mean that all persons working or volunteering in the pre-school are cleared as being suitable to be with children. The committee advertise posts openly through the local Surestart website to attract candidates from a wide area.

Use of the local authority's evaluation system helps the pre-school identify areas for development accurately, leading to a well-focused development plan. An appraisal system identifies staff training requirements. Staff use new knowledge well to improve outcomes for children; for example, introducing 'signing' to help those children who learn English as an additional language. The manager monitors children's progress against the early learning goals. All required policies and documentation are in place. Most resources are used well, with the exception of the outside area, which is under utilised.

The pre-school develops good relationships with parents; staff do their utmost to make all feel welcome, valuing their views and comments. The complaints system is clear and works effectively. Partnerships with others involved with the children work well to help meet children's individual needs. Parents comment positively on the work of the pre-school and value the staff's efforts in working with nearby schools to aid transitions, such as through the 'step to school' initiative.

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

Staff use their secure understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage to provide interesting, suitable activities that centre on children's interests and capabilities. Consequently, children enjoy learning through play, exploring materials freely and making their own decisions about what to do. They work well independently because staff set up the playroom to help them do so; they find their own aprons when painting, for example, knowing where to put their creations when they have finished. They behave well because they enjoy themselves and know what staff expect from them. Good relationships help this. Staff intervene quickly when minor disagreements arise. Children clearly trust the staff and feel safe in the pre-school. Their trust is justified as staff do all they can to keep the premises secure and minimise any potential hazards to children's safety. They know their individual responsibilities for protecting children and the procedures to follow should they have any concerns.

Children benefit from a broad range of activities that cover all six areas of learning daily; however, those that learn better outside, on a larger scale, have limited opportunity to do so, owing to the difficulties of using the outside area. This also prevents them from enjoying frequent exercise in the fresh air. Children do not

make their own decisions about when to play outside. Some use of the adjacent hall promotes their physical development appropriately, where children participate eagerly in such games as 'parachute play'.

Staff provide good role models to the children having upbeat, positive attitudes. They set the tone for a short theme on 'Pirates' by dressing appropriately, for example. They promote equality by making sure everyone who wants to has the opportunity to dress up. Reminders about use of 'swords' and 'hooks' help children behave in ways that are safe for themselves and others. Staff speak clearly too, which helps all children develop their language skills, including those learning English as an additional language. Children widen their vocabularies well, hearing words such as 'treasure' and 'sparkly'. Whole group stories captivate the interest of many children, who eagerly join in refrains, but these times are not suited to some learning English, although they benefit from other opportunities to look at books with staff individually. The high adult-to-child ratio means all children receive a lot of individual attention from staff, who question them well to encourage them to think and problem solve. Staff do not do all they might to encourage children to use their early writing skills.

Children use clean premises. They receive appropriate treatment should they become ill or suffer an accident when in the pre-school, as staff keep their first aid skills updated and act appropriately in emergencies. Children develop their personal independence skills well, helping themselves to water during sessions. They develop their understanding of healthy living suitably, learning that their hearts go beat faster after exercise and tucking into nutritious snacks. Parents receive advice on suitable lunchbox content.

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	3
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	2
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	3
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	2
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	3

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