

Eaton Socon Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspector	Anna Davies

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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

Eaton Socon Pre-school opened in 1979. It operates from its own premises, consisting of two joined mobile rooms, in Eaton Socon, close to the town centre of St. Neots, Cambridgeshire. Children have access to an enclosed outdoor play area. The group opens five days a week during school term times. Sessions are from 9.00am until 11.30am and 12.30pm until 3.00pm. A lunch club operates from 11.30am until 12.15pm. Access into and out of the pre-school is via a ramp at the side the building and steps to the front door. There are disabled toilet facilities.

The pre-school is registered on the Early Years Register. A maximum of 44 children may attend the pre-school at any one time. There are currently 78 children aged from two to under five years on roll. The pre-school currently supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities as well as children who speak English as an additional language.

The pre-school employs nine members of staff, eight of whom hold an National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) Level 3 qualification. One member of staff holds an NVQ Level 2 qualification and the manager has completed an NVQ Level 4 qualification. 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 outstanding.

Children's care and welfare are exceptionally well-supported and they make excellent progress given their age, ability and starting points; they relish the time they spend in this pre-school. Staff pay specific attention to children's individual needs, are highly skilled in promoting children's learning and provide children with a very stimulating and extremely well-resourced environment. Inclusion of all children and their families is given high priority and effective partnership working with parents, other providers, outside agencies and professionals greatly contributes to this highly inclusive provision.

The committee, manager and staff team demonstrate an utmost commitment to continually monitoring, evaluating and further improving the provision to always ensure the best possible outcomes for all children and have very effective systems in place to ensure this happens.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To further improve the high quality early years provision the registered person should consider:

- ways to further extend partnerships with other providers also delivering the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) to further enhance children's learning

and development.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

All procedures in place to safeguard children are robust. All staff have attended safeguarding training and this is updated regularly to ensure knowledge and practice stays relevant and up-to-date. They have a secure understanding about the signs and symptoms of abuse and the procedures to follow should they have concerns about a child in their care. Recruitment and induction procedures are robust and all staff and committee members have been appropriately vetted. This ensures that all those working with children are suitable to do so. Children's safety is a priority. Risk assessments are thorough and a designated Health and Safety Officer oversees all aspects relating to safety within the setting and ensures that this remains a priority, for example, at staff and committee meetings. As a result, children play in a very safe and secure environment.

A wide range of documentation, records and policies are in place and well-organised to ensure that they fully underpin practice. Very high ratios of staff to children and the highly effective deployment of staff throughout the sessions, both indoors and out, ensure that all children receive high levels of staff support and interaction. Children benefit enormously from the highly stimulating environment. For example, displays adorn all available wall space within the pre-school and there are a wealth of toys, resources and equipment all freely accessible for children to use when they wish. The outdoor area provides excellent learning opportunities to cover all areas of learning and children freely move between indoors and out, which enables them to make independent choices about their play.

Staff place the promotion of equality of opportunity at the heart of all their work; as a result, they are highly effective in promoting inclusion for all families and their children. All children's needs are exceptionally well-met through well-established partnerships between staff, parents and their children. Parents are able to become highly involved in their child's learning. For example, children can take 'Bella' or 'Ben' the teddy bear home to share in family experiences, borrow books, 'Chattersacks' and equipment. Parents contribute what they know about their child at home on the 'communication and achievement tree' or in 'share sheets' in their children's assessment files. Home visits are conducted before a child begins, where a wealth of information is gathered to enable staff to meet children's individual needs straight away when they start. A settling in plan is drawn up and this is planned on an individual basis to ensure a smooth transition. Three parents evenings a year are offered to allow parents to find out about children's progress formally and staff and key workers make time to speak to parents and carers on a daily basis. Parents speak very highly of the quality of the pre-school provision, particularly the progress that their children have made since attending. Staff work very closely with many outside agencies, services and professionals in order to meet children's needs. They have excellent relationships with local schools to support children's transition between settings. Staff are currently working on further ways to encourage other providers to share information in relation to children's learning and development.

The committee, manager and staff team all share the same vision to continually strive to develop and improve outcomes for all children attending the pre-school. They have vigorous and highly effective systems of self-evaluation in place for all aspects of the provision; they continually reflect and evaluate all aspects of practice and their procedures. Many improvements have been made since the last inspection and these have all focussed on improving outcomes for children. For example, planning and assessment systems have been enhanced to ensure they promote highly individualised learning opportunities, the door between the two main rooms has been removed to enable children to move freely and make independent choices about where they wish to play.

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

All staff are highly skilled in promoting children's learning and development. They question children effectively to find out what they already know before building upon this knowledge to further extend their learning. For example, as children work together to create a ramp for their toy garage, a member of staff asks them how they are going to make it, what will they need and how are they going to fix it to the garage securely. In this way, children become engrossed in their learning and highly effective problem solvers as well as critical thinkers. Staff skilfully use spontaneous opportunities to promote children's learning in all areas, including their knowledge of safety and good hygiene as well as other areas of learning such as early calculation and numeracy skills.

Planning and assessment procedures are robust. All staff have excellent knowledge of all children's next steps of learning. These are tracked effectively and incorporated into the planning and support of activities. This ensures that children are offered highly individualised learning opportunities and make rapid progress towards the early learning goals.

Children relish their time in the pre-school; most are very confident and articulate. They demonstrate high levels of independence and proudly share their achievements with staff. They show great respect for one another. For example, they spontaneously use manners and show concern as they ask how staff are when they notice they have returned after a period of illness. Children behave very well and are highly engaged in the activities on offer. They respond well to the high expectations of the staff who set clear boundaries, using many visual prompts such as sand timers and posters to promote aspects of behaviour such as taking turns and listening. As a result, children are learning to regulate their own behaviour, for example, using an alarm clock to explain to their friend 'when the hand gets to the one, it could be my turn then'. Children have high levels of self-esteem as they are praised frequently for their efforts and achievements. The environment is very rich in print, enabling children many opportunities to recognise familiar words as well as words in different languages. A wealth of activities enables children to practise emergent writing. Children confidently talk about their play and design ideas as well as their family experiences. Those not so confident in their communication skills are very well-supported by staff, and parents make

particular comment on the 'remarkable' progress some children have made in this area of development. Children enjoy the appealing story corner and talk enthusiastically about the Chattersack book bags that they are able to borrow to share with their family at home.

Children independently solve problems such as how many small building bricks they will need to build a 'flying car' and the colours, shapes and sizes that are required. Numeracy skills are successfully filtered into everyday activities such as calculating the total number of spoons of flour they have added to the salt dough recipe so far or how many chairs are needed to seat all of the children in the key working group. Children are highly involved in the local community; they visit many local places of interest and enjoy visits from key people to share their interests, skills and job roles. Children benefit from excellent facilities and equipment to enhance their understanding of information technology. As a result, they are able to navigate programmes using a mouse, keyboard or touch screen technology. Lots of natural resources are displayed at low-level to encourage children to use their senses to explore. The pre-school has achieved 'Cambridgeshire Healthy Setting' status and as such, provides for children's all round physical development very well. They grow their own vegetables and salad items and regular outdoor play ensures children get lots of fresh air and exercise, where they enjoy parachute games, ball games and running in the large spaces. Children access a wealth of creative activities where they enjoy the process of creating and designing. For example, they create individual models from recyclable materials, make salt dough decorations and roll tyres in paint outside to look at the patterns created. Themed role play areas enable children to use their imagination. For example, following on from a group trip to a local farm, the role play area further extends this experience, enabling children to enjoy riding the sit and ride tractor, sitting on a real hay bale and learning about where vegetables are grown.

All of these skills and high-quality provision ensures that children play a full and active role in their learning and are extremely well-equipped with fundamental skills to ensure their future economic well-being.

Children's welfare is highly promoted. All records kept in relation to medication and accidents are well-maintained. Staff have excellent knowledge and systems in place to support children with specific medical conditions. Records of accidents are regularly analysed to identify particular areas or equipment that maybe causing reoccurring incidents. A wide range of healthy and nutritious snacks are offered to children during a 'rolling snack' time, where they are able to access something to eat and drink when they wish. They have excellent opportunities to learn about healthy lifestyles through topics and frequent discussions. For example, a local chef visited to provide children with healthy foods and to educate them about healthy eating. Parents are given lots of guidance to ensure that packed lunches brought in for the lunch club are also healthy and nutritious, promoting children's growth and development. Excellent hygiene routines are followed by both staff and children to ensure the risk of cross contamination is effectively minimised.

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?	1
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	1

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

How effectively is the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	1
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	1
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	1
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	1
The effectiveness of safeguarding	1
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	1
The effectiveness of partnerships	1
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	1

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	1
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	1
The extent to which children feel safe	1
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	1
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	1

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