

Owlets

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspector Susan Parker

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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

Owlets Pre-School is a committee run group. It has been registered since 2002. The pre-school operates from a main hall in the Methodist Church building, Langford, Bedfordshire. The setting is open each weekday for during the school term and sessions are from Monday to Friday 9.15am to 11.45am. Afternoon sessions run on Monday and Wednesdays from 12.30pm to 3.00pm. The setting is registered on the Early Years Register to provide care for 24 children from two years to under five years at any one time and there are currently 47 children attending on a part time basis who are within this age group. The pre-school supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and children who speak English as an additional language.

There are seven staff members. Of these, four hold relevant childcare qualifications and one is currently working towards a qualification.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children's self-esteem and confidence are highly promoted in this setting. They make choices and decisions routinely and are making good progress towards the early learning goals. Regular information sharing and an effective self evaluation ensure that the good levels of learning and care for all children are successfully maintained.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- further develop effective links to promote coherence of learning across different settings and related to the children's experiences in home environments
- provide further opportunities for children to develop an understanding of everyday technology and use information and communication technology and programmable toys to support their learning.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children's welfare is promoted as there are robust safeguarding procedures. These are reviewed regularly and the good induction procedures for staff ensure that the setting's responsibilities are clearly understood. Staff keep up to date with training and guidance, reviewing this area of work regularly to ensure that all are able to effectively work together to protect children. Stringent checks are carried out to ensure that all staff are suitable to work with children. Thorough risk assessments and daily checks ensure that hazards are minimised. Good daily practice, such as

the provision of nutritious food and helping children to prevent spread of infection means that children's health is promoted and they routinely practise very good hygiene procedures.

The committee, manager and staff have a clear vision for the future, involving staff and parents in reviewing the setting's practice. Feedback is taken positively and the manager prioritises actions, introducing changes and reviewing the impact of these. Staff are supported in attending further training and gaining qualifications. This helps create a positive learning environment, where both children and staff thrive. Resources are used well to promote children's learning and development. For example, staff are deployed effectively and good use is made of toys, equipment and community facilities to offer children an extended range of opportunities. However, opportunities for children to develop an understanding of everyday technology and use information and communication technology and programmable toys to support their learning are limited.

Managers and staff have a good understanding of equality and diversity, enabling them to provide a service which is inclusive for all children and their families. They make sure that they understand each child's background, cultures and beliefs and encourage children to recognise and respect differences. Children's self-esteem is promoted as they are offered opportunities to choose activities, talk about their beliefs, families and recent experiences. The good use of resources, such as posters jigsaw puzzles and books, provides positive images and helps children to feel welcome and valued.

Good communication with all parents results in good partnership working. Parents receive thorough information about the setting, for example, through regular newsletters, daily talks with staff and a dedicated 'Open Days' where parents can view their children's assessment files and talk with key workers. Parents and carers are fully involved in the settings self evaluation process through regular letters actively asking for their views and ideas for improvement. The information gained is collated and effectively used to set realistic and challenging targets. The setting also works well in partnership with other professionals such as the local school and childminders. However, links with other settings are not so strong.

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

Children make good progress in all areas of learning and are supported in achieving because staff have a secure understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage. They observe and assess children as they play, using this information to inform activity planning. Staff respond effectively to children's developmental needs as planning is adapted to suit individual needs on a daily basis. This enables them to provide relevant activities to promote children's individual development.

The environment is attractive and generally accessible, enabling children to make independent choices. For example, children choose a creative activity and can extend their play as they choose additional resources from nearby containers. Children's experiences are further enhanced as staff take care when setting out

resources. They are aware of children's favourites but also change the resources frequently in order to offer new experiences. For example, children enjoy playing with a sand tray to which dinosaur models have been added. Children thoroughly enjoy discovering these creatures and choosing to play with these in the outside area.

Staff are very effective in promoting children's self-esteem. Children glow with pride when they are chosen to do a responsible job such as letting the parents and carers into the room at the end of the session and calculating the number of plates, chairs and beakers needed for snack time. Each child has the opportunity to do a job if they wish and they look upon it as a treat. Children show good levels of confidence and are developing positive attitudes to learning. Staff plan and provide picture boards showing which activities are on offer. Children show excitement as they discuss the pictures of the toys and choose what resources to play with.

Children show high levels of confidence and independence, they can choose when to stop for a snack and they can decide whether to play indoors or outside. Children's emotional development is promoted as they develop secure relationships with the staff. They show great pleasure on arrival, greeting friends and staff members by name and eagerly updating them on recent events. They show a great interest in books and the written word and have many opportunities to practise their own mark making skills in everyday play situations. Children's skills in problem solving and calculation are progressing well as they estimate or count how many plates and beakers are needed for snack time. The consistent approach to behaviour management enables children to feel secure and develop their understanding of appropriate behaviour. They show care and concern for each other, sharing resources, listening and taking turns in discussions. Staff act as good role models and encourage children to work together to sort out any issues. Children respond positively and demonstrate a good sense of responsibility for their behaviour. Their understanding of diversity is developed as they participate in regular discussions, access relevant resources and celebrate festivals that reflect their beliefs.

Children who speak English as an additional language or who have speech difficulties make good progress. They are appropriately supported in developing their communication skills through sign language and universally understood gestures. Staff utilise other forms of communication, for example, photographs of all resources, books and posters. The setting's good procedures for working with parents and other professionals mean that children are offered appropriate and consistent support to enable them to participate and make good progress.

Children's behaviour demonstrates that they feel safe. They are confident and are, therefore, actively involved in their learning, developing positive attitudes to this. They happily select resources and play independently or with other children and staff. Children are encouraged to be active learners and explore. For example, children use tools such as tongs to pick up bread and cheese for their snack, choosing when to eat and how to access their own drinks. Children develop skills for the future as they share ideas and work together. For example, children using a construction set discuss their models, comparing these to buildings they have seen. Children have opportunities to develop early reading and writing skills. They

enjoy making marks and learn to use paint brushes and play dough tools, whilst older children enjoy activities such as using pens and pencils, where they talk about the letters in their names and discuss each one as they write.

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

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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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