

Bright Stars Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspector Sarah Johnson

Setting address Shelley Primary School, Milton Crescent, ONGAR, Essex,
CM5 0FF
Telephone number 07990 671 278
Email brightstarspreschool@rocketmail.com
Type of setting Childcare on non-domestic premises

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Royal Exchange Buildings
St Ann's Square
Manchester
M2 7LA

T: 08456 404040
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

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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

Bright Stars Pre-School registered in 2009. It is run as a community interest company, which is privately owned and managed. The pre-school operates from a classroom within Shelley Primary School in Ongar, Essex. Children access an enclosed play area for outdoor activities. During school term times, the pre-school is open each weekday from 9.00am to 12.00pm, with an additional afternoon session on Wednesday from 1.00pm to 3.00pm. A lunch club is also offered from 12.00pm to 1.00pm on Wednesday and Friday.

The provision is registered by Ofsted on the Early Years Register. A maximum of 20 children in the early years age group may attend the pre-school at any one time, none of whom may be under two years. There are currently 17 children on roll in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). Children live in the local area. Some children also attend early years sessions at other nearby pre-school and some are cared for by registered childminders. The pre-school provides funded early education for three and four-year-olds. The staff currently support a number of children with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and children who are learning English as an additional language.

There are four members of staff and one volunteer who work regularly with the children. All staff hold appropriate early years qualifications to Level 3.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children settle with ease in the welcoming and inclusive environment of the pre-school. They benefit from having their individual needs met effectively by staff who take time to form positive relationships with all children and their families. Children make positive progress in their learning and development as they engage in a wide range of play opportunities, some of which are planned in the outdoor environment. The manager effectively leads the team of well-qualified staff. Together they have a clear vision for the future of the pre-school and have identified areas for improvement, ensuring children continue to receive high quality care and education.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- review the planning of the outdoor learning environment to offer children a wider range of planned, purposeful outdoor play experiences covering all aspects of learning and development
- support children in writing their own names in everyday situations, and provide further opportunities for children to experiment with writing for different purposes in their role-play activities.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The staff demonstrate clear commitment to their role in safeguarding children and are effective in protecting children from abuse and neglect. Most staff have completed training relating to the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) procedures and their practice is guided well by the pre-school's concise written safeguarding policies. Well established recruitment procedures are implemented and therefore all staff and volunteers complete the required checks to ensure their suitability to be in contact with children. Children are cared for in a safe and secure environment. This is because the staff carry out thorough daily risk assessments of all of the areas that children access. In addition, risk assessments are completed and recorded before children are taken on outings in the local area, and staff are mindful to ensure children are well-supervised at all times.

The manager and staff work as a motivated and cohesive team, and together they have completed a wide range of training workshops to compliment their early years qualifications. They are keen to improve the provision for children, taking time to discuss their practice at the end of each session and during regular team meetings. Since registration, the staff have continuously trailed and adapted the pre-school routines and practices to establish the most effective systems to meet the needs of the children. They are continuing to formalise their self-evaluation processes to ensure all aspects of the pre-school are considered, but so far they have identified a range of realistic targets to enable them to bring about sustained improvements in the future. For example, the staff have ambitious plans to create a richer outdoor learning environment and to explore the possibility of offering children free access to outdoor play during each session.

All staff share a common aim of ensuring that all children are fully included and that their individual backgrounds are celebrated and valued at the setting. They work together with parents and carers to achieve this; inviting them in to share their experiences of celebrating Chinese New Year and encouraging them to bring in photographs so children can share these at the pre-school. Flexible settling in procedures ensure that children are well supported as they make the transition from home to the nursery, and when they move on to start full-time school. Each child benefits from a key person who takes time to understand their individual needs and routines in good detail, although it is also clear that all staff gain an overview of each child's needs so they can all be responsive to their needs during the session. Informative displays, monthly newsletters and termly parent consultation meetings are successful in ensuring parents are kept informed about activities, events and their children's developmental needs and progress. The pre-school is in the early stages of forming links with the other EYFS settings that children attend. For example, they have started to foster discussions with a local childminder regarding children's development, and to join up with staff at the local pre-school for training opportunities.

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

The combination of high adult to child ratios and an effective key person system ensures that children experience good continuity of care and are supported well during their time at the pre-school. Children are making effective progress towards the early learning goals, as the staff often ask them carefully formed questions that encourage them to think and extend their ideas further. For example, as children help to hand out cups during snack time, the staff extend their problem solving skills by stepping in to ask them how many more cups they need to make a total of seven. The staff produce detailed records of children's development including several positive observations clearly linked to the expectations of the EYFS, and assessments of what children have achieved with targets for future learning identified. Staff are mindful to review their planning to ensure adult-led activities are flexible enough to respond to and meet the needs of the youngest children at the pre-school. For example, they plan to provide more props and puppets to ensure younger children are able to sustain their interest and curiosity throughout group story times.

Children benefit from a bright, welcoming and child-friendly learning environment. They are able to make choices in their play as the main classroom offers a range of stimulating resources which they can reach easily for themselves. For example, they follow their interests as they sift through various books to find those that feature dinosaurs, and confidently head over to the labelled storage boxes to search for a magnifying glass to enable them to look more closely at the small model butterfly. Sufficient time is allocated during each session for children to enjoy outdoor play in the fresh air. They delight in walking down to the overgrown woodland area to search for the various minibeasts living under the logs, and they master their climbing and balancing skills when accessing the larger apparatus in the playground. Although the staff have ambitious plans to make better use of the outdoor area, at present their planning does not make the most of opportunities to promote all six areas of learning in the outdoor environment. Well-resourced imaginative areas are established to promote children's role play, for example, children play alongside each other as they dress up and try on the realistic spectacles, and replay their everyday experiences as they gather various fruits and vegetables in their baskets in the imaginary shop. As children sit together at the table to draw, they creatively bring meaning to their pictures by explaining that they are drawing monsters and fireworks. Children are developing good awareness of the names and sounds of letters, supported by the meaningful print used as labels in the environment and the daily routine of finding their name cards at the beginning of the session. However, opportunities for children to attempt to write their own names, such as on their finished creative work, are often missed, and as yet, there are few props provided to inspire children to practise their early writing skills in their role play situations. Support for children who are learning English as an additional language is effective as the staff clearly value linguistic diversity. Following discussions with parents, staff take time to learn key words and phrases in the Cantonese language, and ensure children have positive opportunities to use, hear and see their home language in the setting.

Good emphasis is placed on encouraging children to learn about aspects of a healthy lifestyle. The staff plan meaningful opportunities for children to talk about the positive effects exercise has on their bodies, and they inspire them to gain a deeper understanding of good dental hygiene as they provide props to allow them to practise brushing the crocodile puppet's teeth. Children manage their personal hygiene routines very well as they access the child-friendly facilities to wash their hands before snack time and after using the toilet, prompted by the colourful hand washing themed posters displayed. Children are also supported to develop a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe as the staff creatively address road safety scenarios using puppets, and arranging real-life opportunities for children to practise these safety rules during a walk in the local area.

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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