

Bledlow Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	140865
Inspection date	20/10/2009
Inspector	Margaret Davie

Setting address	Bledlow Village Hall, Bledlow, Aylesbury, Buckinghamshire, HP27 9QF
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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

Bledlow Pre-School has been open for over 30 years and has been managed by a parents' committee since 1997. It operates from the Village Hall in Bledlow near Aylesbury, Buckinghamshire, and is open every week day from 9.30am to 12.00pm during term time only. A lunch club operates on Wednesday and Thursday from 12.00pm until 1.00pm. There is a fully enclosed garden for outside play which is linked to the village adventure play area.

The pre-school is registered by Ofsted on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. A maximum of 30 children may attend at any one time and there are currently 30 children between the ages of two and four years, on roll. Of these, 19 children receive funding for early education. Children attend from the local community and surrounding area.

Seven staff are currently employed; of these, five hold appropriate early years qualifications. The pre-school receives support from the local authority.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

The pre-school meets children's needs very effectively. They make excellent progress in their learning and development because staff know them very well and work in partnership with their parents and other adults involved in their care to ensure their needs are met. The manager and staff continually reflect on the quality of the provision and work effectively as a team with very good support from the committee, to promote continuous development and sustain the already high standards.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To fully meet the specific requirements of the EYFS, the registered person must:

- ensure there is a named deputy who is able to take charge in the absence of the manager (Suitable people) 27/11/2009

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

- review the snack arrangements to ensure that the spread of germs is minimised as much as possible and children are provided with plates, to develop their understanding of good eating habits.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Effective steps are taken to safeguard children. All staff and committee members are checked to ensure their suitability and a range of relevant policies and procedures are in place, such as how children's safety will be promoted in the event of an emergency evacuation. A designated member of staff takes responsibility for dealing with any child protection issues. Staff regularly update their training and are aware of their important role in keeping children safe. Very thorough risk assessments are carried out and the hall is well organised to ensure all potential hazards are identified and minimised. For example, an extended stair gate is used to prevent children accessing the stage area and staff ensure children are supervised as they pass through the kitchen to access the outdoor play area. The premises are secure and all visitors are requested to sign in.

The manager has high expectations and a clear vision for the setting. She and the staff work very effectively as a team to ensure that high standards are embedded across all areas of practice. Ongoing professional development is encouraged and this ensures skills and knowledge are up to date. Information from training is always discussed and used effectively to review the quality of the provision. Only one recommendation was made at the time of the last inspection, concerning the isolation of the oil tank in the garden, and this has been thoroughly addressed to promote children's safety. Rigorous monitoring, evaluation and self-assessment systems are in place and key priorities identified and swiftly addressed. Two members of staff step in to take charge of the setting when the manager is absent, however, neither of them wishes to take on this role formally and consequently there is no named deputy. This has limited impact on the outcomes for children because the staff are very knowledgeable and provide them with highly effective support, but is nevertheless a breach of the regulations that remains unresolved.

Partnerships with parents and other early years settings attended by children are outstanding and contribute significantly to children's excellent progress. The pre-school is highly committed to working with parents and there are well established channels of communication between them and the staff. Parents receive very detailed information about the provision through the excellent newsletters, notices and verbal communication. This ensures they are kept well informed about what their children are doing and how they can support their learning at home if they wish. Developmental records are always available for them to look at and there are regular formal opportunities for them to discuss their child's progress. Parents are very satisfied with the provision made for their children and report their children are very well known and supported by staff who obviously enjoy their company. Effective links are made with other early years settings attended by children and as a result their continuity of care and learning is fully promoted. Toys and equipment are of high quality and suitable for the ages of the children. Staff are very effectively deployed to ensure that children benefit from the variety of activities which are provided for them. For example, there are always staff in the garden so that children can play outdoors at all times. The promotion of equality and diversity is at the heart of the pre-school's work. Children are constantly observed and

assessed and their learning priorities identified. As a result, their development is very well supported.

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

Children are very happy and confident in the pre-school. They make excellent progress in relation to their starting points because they are very well known and activities are tailored to meet their individual needs. A highly stimulating environment is provided for them both indoors and outdoors. Rich, varied and imaginative experiences encourage them to be interested and excited about learning. When children arrive at the beginning of the session, toys and activities are set out in an imaginative way and as a result they can hardly wait to start playing. For example, they are really keen to play with the dinosaurs because a realistic play scene has been set up using small tree stumps to make it more realistic. Children are inquisitive, active learners, confidently accessing toys and resources which interest them. They follow their own preferences as they play and choose whether they would like to stay indoors or play in the garden.

Children's social skills are very well developed. They share resources, take turns and gain an understanding of the needs of others as they play with puppets and discuss their feelings. They enjoy reading stories and remember the words and actions to simple nursery songs during group time. Labelling of resources is used effectively to help them with their early word recognition and they practise early writing skills on the large outdoor chalkboard. They show good levels of concentration as they thread large beads onto string and practise opening and closing various fastenings on the buckle board. Staff skilfully extend their learning as they use these opportunities to help them consolidate their counting and colour recognition. Children enjoy being creative as they paint, proudly showing off their rainbow pictures and experiment as they mix colours into the play dough. They successfully use a variety of small tools with increasing dexterity, such as paint brushes, small hammers, scissors and utensils. Children show very good levels of physical development, pedalling a car around the track or during daily visits to the adventure play area. Children are challenged to test their skills as they pull themselves up the ramp using the rope ladder, balance on the large beam while holding onto the chain and climb aboard the train to take an imaginative journey. They gain an understanding of technology as they play a range of appropriate games on the computer, very adeptly supported by staff to develop their skills through hands-on experience. They investigate why rainbows are formed and develop an excellent knowledge of scientific language as staff ensure they use correct terminology. For example, children mixing colours into the play dough are encouraged to remember they are using pipettes to add the droplets of food colouring.

All families are offered home visits before their children start at the pre-school and this provides excellent opportunities for key people to get to know them in their own environment. This combined with the excellent use which is made of information gained from regular observations and assessments ensures planned activities are very well suited to children's individual needs. The staff work very

effectively together to ensure children receive the support they need, for example, by keeping a list showing each child's learning priorities in their pouches, for easy reference. Additional needs are identified and effectively provided for. A balance of adult-led and child-led activities provides plenty of variety and opportunities for children to engage in activities which they find interesting and enjoyable. For example, children really enjoy making the play dough with the support of an adult, who helps them measure and mix the ingredients. Staff involve themselves fully in children's play and make excellent use of practical opportunities to extend their learning, such as when they are encouraged to make patterns in the dry ingredients used to make the play dough, while they are waiting for their turn to stir. Children show a strong sense of security and show they feel safe in the setting, readily approaching the warm and caring staff. They handle tools and equipment safely and use the outdoor play equipment sensibly to keep safe.

They adopt good personal hygiene routines and develop growing confidence in their self-care. They engage in a range of physical activity indoors and outdoors, increasing their understanding of the importance of regular exercise as part of maintaining a healthy lifestyle. Healthy snacks are provided and they have free access to drinking water at all times. However, no serving utensils or plates are provided at snack time and as a result there is an increased risk of spreading germs and children's understanding of good eating habits is not as well supported as it could be. Children show a strong sense of belonging within the setting. They display high levels of self-esteem and willingly help out at tidy up time, fetch snacks and drinks and help to change the date on the calendar. All children are valued and take part in a wide range of activities which help them to value diversity. For example, they play with toys which depict people of different cultures and with different needs. They celebrate a range of festivals and prepared and served Turkish food in the café. Children use their own initiative well, for example, fetching and using additional digging tools as they play in the outdoor sand tray and are well equipped with fundamental skills to support their learning.

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	1
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	1
The effectiveness of safeguarding	2
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	2
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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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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