

## **Beeches Pre-School**

Inspection report for early years provision

**Unique reference number** 304973 **Inspection date** 03/12/2009

**Inspector** Rachel Ruth Britten

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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**

Beeches Pre-school was registered in 1983. The setting is committee-run and operates from Edge Village Hall in Malpas, Cheshire. Children are cared for within one main room, which is accessed via a step. There are secure areas available for outdoor play. A maximum of 20 children aged two to under five years may attend the setting at any one time. The setting is open each weekday from 9am to 12.30pm Monday, Tuesday and Friday, and 9am to 3pm Wednesday and Thursday, term time only. Children attend from the local community and surrounding areas.

There are currently 29 children on roll, aged from two to four years. All of these are within the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). The setting receives funding for nursery education. The setting is not currently supporting children with special educational needs and disabilities or children who speak English as an additional language.

The setting employs five members of staff including the manager. Three staff are qualified to level three in early years. The remaining two staff are working towards a recognised early years qualification. The setting receives support from the local authority early years advisory team and is a member of the Pre-school Learning Alliance (PLA).

## The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

All staff fully recognise the uniqueness of each child and successfully support each one to make good progress in their learning and development. They provide well for children with a range of individual needs and safeguard all children well. Partnerships with parents are generally good but partnerships with other childcare providers are underdeveloped. The whole staff group works cooperatively to provide diverse resources and great opportunities for learning based on children's interests. Overall, the manager's commitment to good team working and organisation supports good standards of review, information and practice.

# What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- extend key worker time with children and parents so that there are genuine bonds and sharing of information to promote the child's learning and welfare
- utilise the learning record more actively to promote progress, including information about starting points, summative assessments, next steps plans, documentation and plans from any involved others
- extend links with other providers of the EYFS so that there is joint working to promote individual children's progress when children attend more than one

setting.

# The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children are well safeguarded because the setting is well organised and prioritises safety, despite a village hall environment that is old and in poor condition. The long-standing staff team is suitably vetted, trained and aware that they must disclose anything which could call into question their suitability. They are all confident to implement safeguarding procedures according to the up-to-date policy, and have safety policies for photographs, use of phones, and arrival and departure, which safeguard children and are clearly communicated to parents. Adult-to-child ratios are suitable, and most staff are first aid and hygiene trained. Risk assessments are used daily to adapt routines so that children's health and safety indoors and outside are assured, including when necessary building works are taking place. Trips are always undertaken following specific risk assessments and parental consent. All staff teach children how to adopt safe practices, balanced with realistic risks; for example, as they use climbing or cooking equipment. Displayed notices and the parent prospectus contain full and relevant information, making the setting's extensive commitment to children very clear.

The manager is highly-committed, very well-organised and a skilled communicator. She is supportive of all staff and has a link with each child and family. Vision and ambition are shared with staff and parents through regular planning meetings, emails, newsletters and daily informal contacts. All policies are newly updated and freely available and an excellent prospectus explains all aspects of the pre-school and the curriculum. Parents and carers may come into the setting at the beginnings and ends of sessions and they are asked to give detailed initial information about their child's stage of development when they first start. Parents are highly satisfied with the information they receive about the setting and the interesting themes children are following. Parents know their child's key worker, but there is too little exchange of specific information about children's individual interests, experiences and progress. The learning record is not routinely shared and used. Working alongside social services, the local school and various specialists, there is a team approach to meeting the individual needs of children and families and promoting equality of opportunity for all. However, this does not extend to ensuring consistency of care and sharing of records and individual next steps plans with other provisions, such as nurseries, where children are also attending.

The manager, staff and committee make use of quality assurance documents which focus upon the government's 'outcomes for children' agenda and are working towards a move to more suitable premises. Clear intentions for review and well-targeted improvements are detailed on meeting minutes and visit reports from the early years advisors. The implementation of the EYFS and action on matters raised at the last inspection are beneficial to the outcomes for children. For example, the resources and session routine are now very accessible and flexible, allowing children time to follow their interests and create their own play choices. Themed activities are based upon children's favourite characters and interests, and

children have good opportunities to feel they belong and to look after themselves and their setting. A wealth of good resources and adaptable materials are available and are used creatively by staff and children to provide all the areas of learning in a captivating way. Half term-issued annotated photo record books illustrate to parents and children just how much children enjoy and achieve through themes and projects as well as providing an 'aide-mémoire' for children to refer back to and consolidate their learning.

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

Children enjoy their learning greatly and achieve very well in relation to their starting points. This is because the nurturing environment and simple routine provide children with time and opportunity to choose play materials and follow their individual learning styles. Staff support children's play with great skill, weaving in each of the areas of learning. On the inspection day, children are imaginative and creative, choosing to dress up; 'work' in Santa's workshop; role-play with the dolls' houses; and create decorative Christmas stockings to display. They are active all day, challenged and extended by staff to use and extend their problem solving, number and mark-making skills as they play. For example, staff use the children's name cards to help a child find her own name card, and then use it as a template because she wants to write her name on her letter to Santa. Children use both toy and real tools to increase their knowledge and understanding of the world and their physical coordination; for example, as they sweep up the split sand or hammer the boxes in Santa's workshop.

Children delight in following themed activities, which staff base upon their favourite story or television characters. For example, a child 'explorer' goes on a trip to find Santa during one half term and visits a number of countries. Children plot her journey on a map, find her letters hidden around the setting to move her on, try the food and dancing of each country she visits, and make models of the volcanoes she experiences. They feel the weight of carrying the water children in Africa carry from wells. They use computers, cameras and magnifiers to research, examine and play both indoors and out, enjoying the natural world as well as the local community. They examine the flora and fauna in the adjacent conservation area and visit farms. They groom and feed some animals, and visit and talk to the old people at the day centre, taking food parcels they have put together. Children's physical development is always high on the agenda, with a good range of balancing, climbing, running and riding equipment. Understanding how their bodies work and the benefits of exercise were also based around an active half term theme on a favourite sports-themed superhero. As a result, every child has a good understanding of the world and is engaged and interested.

Children are secure, healthy and safe in the setting. Staff ensure that they feel a good sense of belonging, with places to put their things, an understandable environment, and time to take part and be as independent as possible. There are ample supplies of coats, hats, gloves and Wellingtons to ensure that all weathers can be enjoyed outside. There are good opportunities to help sort the recycling, make the snack, tidy up, and be independent with hand washing and using the

toilet. Snacks are healthy and children are learning how to eat and manage a packed lunch before starting school. Adults give them time and attention to review what they have been doing, manage their feelings and learn to consider one another. Simple strategies to help children listen to one another in a group and solve 'clues' are well used to help children develop their senses of identity and feel that they and each of their friends are special. They feel safe and behave well, seeking emotional support and help, using good manners and being able to wait their turn and share. They have a good understanding of how to stay safe on the roads and in emergencies because they have rehearsed and discussed these regularly. For example, they have played out fire rescue scenarios, making and decorating a fire truck from a huge box, using a garden hose reel, collecting wood to make a pretend fire and chalking rescue ladders onto the playground. They also discussed and then practised the real fire evacuation again because they took too long last time and were playing about.

## 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	2
improvement	

## 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	3
The effectiveness of partnerships	3
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

## Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation	2
Stage	
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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