

Dalton Pre-School Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspector Tracy Bartholomew

Setting address Block 104, Dalton Barracks, Abingdon, Oxfordshire, OX13
6JB

Telephone number 01235 543640

Email

Type of setting Childcare on non-domestic premises

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

T: 0300 123 1231
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*.

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

Dalton Pre-School Nursery was established in 1993 and is managed by a committee made up of staff, parents and army personnel. The nursery operates from accommodation on the Dalton Barracks, close to the town of Abingdon. The group has the use of a unit that consists of two large playrooms, portacabin, kitchen, office and toilet facilities. There is access to an enclosed outdoor play area. Most children attending have parents serving in the armed forces.

The nursery is registered to care for a maximum of 60 children under eight at any one time, of these, not more than 30 may be in the early years age group. It is registered by Ofsted on the Early Years Register and both parts of the Childcare register. It is open on weekdays during school term times, from 07.45 to 17.15. A play scheme operates in the school holidays for children up to eight years. Children may attend for a variety of sessions. The nursery currently has 78 children on roll, all of which are within the early years age range. Staff provide support for a number of children who speak English as an additional language. The nursery is in receipt of funding for the provision of free early education. The nursery employs 19 staff altogether and of these 13 staff have appropriate early years qualifications.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is satisfactory.

Overall, the quality of the provision is satisfactory. Children appear happy and are making sound progress within their learning and development. Their experience at the nursery varies throughout the provision, due to some inconsistencies within staff's practice and health and hygiene procedures. The nursery reflects on their practice accordingly, but overlooks every day practices which results in children's health being put at risk and the deployment of staff. Due to this they are demonstrating a satisfactory ability to self-evaluate.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- prevent the spread of infection by ensuring children do not eat spilt food off the floor and share each other's meals (Promoting good health) 01/04/2010
- ensure that staff are deployed to meet the needs of the children at all times especially in relation to meal times (Staffing arrangements) 01/04/2010

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

- ensure that assessment of children's development is sufficiently rigorous to further enable staff to make informed decisions about the children's progress and the next steps in their learning
- reappraise existing policies in relation to hygiene practice to further promote the good health of children, especially in relation to the carpet areas

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The nursery has a sound understanding of how to reflect on their practice, the manager ensures she appraises staff and uses this combined with regular observations of staff practices to highlight areas for further development. The staff team has undertaken a vast amount of additional training to ensure that staff are aware of childcare practices and first aid; as a result this is evident in some areas of their practice. These improvements are not however consistent, and have a significant impact on children's time at the nursery depending on the room they are within.

Safeguarding is a particular asset and strength of the setting. Staff are all fully aware of child protection procedures and how to manage any concerns they have about the children. The setting itself is very secure and staff are vigilant about protecting children at all times, they regularly update risk assessments and review their practices to consider how to overcome problems such as, the open ramp area used to escort babies out into the main playing area, for example.

The nursery has sound awareness of inclusion; the staff are skilful at engaging with children and parents with English as an additional language and have vast amounts of documentation and welcoming boards to ensure that all feel included in nursery life. The nursery has a special educational needs coordinator and she ensures all children with identified additional needs receive the required additional support. She liaises well with other professionals to ensure the nursery has the most up-to-date information regarding each of these children.

The nursery has introduced a variety of good methods to include parents and carers in the day-to-day life at the nursery. Parents receive regular newsletters and have opportunities to talk to their child's key person. Partnership with parents is a particular strength of the setting, it is clear that all staff have a good connection to the parents, they liaise well together, working in partnership and importantly communicate to ensure that all children receive the individual care that they require. Parents report positive experiences of using the nursery. Parents explain that they are very well informed with regard to their child's progress and nursery events, others extend huge gratitude to the setting and individual staffing. All parents spoke to explained that their children love the setting and that they receive a wide range of beautiful created masterpieces. Overall, the nursery is well resourced and these are utilised well within the nursery.

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

Children's experiences and learning opportunities vary greatly depending on which staff are working with them. Some staff are skilled at forming relationships with the children and encouraging their involvement in activities. Other staff lack some of these skills and therefore, some groups of children do not understand why they are undertaking a painting theme activity, as communication is minimal, which as a result limits their progress within learning and development. Most children have developed close relationships with their key person and staff work with their key children to support their learning, care and individual needs accordingly.

Children experience an enjoyable amount of activities, babies enjoy exploring with sand and are encouraged to communicate how this feels, they are given additional resources to experiment with, which aid their concentration, senses and communication well. Throughout the other rooms children are developing their physical skills well, for example they enjoy interlinking guttering tubing together, which enables them to communicate and consider how they can design a tunnel for their cars to whiz down. Most staff are skilful at offering encouragement without jumping in to offer solutions to the problems, which as a result supports children's critical thinking skills well.

The nursery is developing the records they use to plot children's development. These records are inconsistent depending on their base rooms. Some clearly show how children are progressing, whereas others have mediocre details, which does not consistently show how children's stage of development is tracked. In addition some records do not show children's next steps of learning, which as a result makes it tricky to link into children's next steps of ongoing learning. Regardless of this, observations are individual and capture the uniqueness of the children.

Children are encouraged to be considerate to the needs of others and to share resources, with many children reminding their peers of the need to share and to say please and thank you. Children are generally well behaved, the consistent praise and encouragement that they experience throughout the nursery, develops and expands on children's self-esteem and confidence. Children are clearly confident and at ease with the staff within the pre-school room, they have solid learning experiences throughout the day. For example, all children were actively involved, engaged and enthralled to be at the story time of 'Jack and the bean stalk'. Staff use active learning throughout the story, which involved the use of visual props, to fully engaged and involved all the children for a sustained period. This effective practice is just one way in which this room is particularly good at developing children's active learning and continued development.

Children's self care skills are well fostered throughout the setting, the staff are attentive at ensuring children gain a sense of self-respect and concern for their own personal hygiene and care. They use gentle reminders and develop children's independence consistently within the nursery. Although the children have a clean and safe environment to play within, aspects of the setting, for example the carpeted areas in some rooms are dirty, therefore the need to reappraise the

cleaning methods is required to further promote and sustain the good health of children.

Children are provided with a well-planned and balanced diet which is consistent to the children's dietary requirements and preferences. Snacks are provided by the nursery with parents providing children's individual lunches, which can be cold buffet or meals requiring heating. Parents are given a good amount of information to promote the nursery's ethos of a healthy diet, which as a result ensures that the children receive lunches that constitute a healthy meal. Mealtimes are social occasions with the children eating together in their base rooms. However, at times a lack of supervision and deployment of staff during mealtimes, in some rooms, results in children eating from each other's plates and picking up and eating spilt food from the floor. This results in the quality of infection prevention varying depending on which rooms the children are based in. Babies and toddlers have plenty of opportunities to rest, staff are on hand to comfort and ease children to sleep soothingly and calming to enable them to rest accordingly. The outdoor areas are well resourced, with children benefiting from the continued free flow of outside and indoors. Staff utilise the outside environment well, providing flexible resources that can be used in many different ways to facilitate children's play and exploration.

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?	3
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	3

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

How effectively is the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	3
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding	3
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	3
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Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	3
The extent to which children feel safe	3
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	3
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	3
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	3

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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

The provider confirms that the requirements of the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are: Met