

Potton Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspector

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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

Potton Pre-school has been open for 45 years and has been re-registered in a purpose-built building in the grounds of Potton Lower School, Potton, Bedfordshire. It is run by a voluntary management committee. Children have access to a fully enclosed outdoor play area.

The setting receives funding for early education. It is open during term-time only and sessions are from 8.45am to 11.45am and from 12.30pm to 3.30pm, with the option of a lunch club from 11.45am to 12.30pm. The setting is registered on the Early Years Register to provide 36 places and there are currently 90 children on roll who are within this age group. The setting serves the local and neighbouring community. A small number of children attend other settings such as other pre-schools, nurseries and childminders. The setting maintains close links with the school on which it is sited. The setting currently supports a number of children with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

There are eight staff members, all of whom hold relevant childcare qualifications.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

The needs of all children are met and they are offered appropriate support because staff have good procedures for working with parents and are able to build a thorough understanding of children's needs and interests. They use this information to inform daily planning and to ensure that children are offered activities that promote their learning. The staff and management committee conscientiously evaluate all areas of their work, enabling them to build a comprehensive and informative overview of their practice and thereby develop practical action plans. This supports them in providing a service which is highly responsive to the needs of children and their families. Further strengths of the setting are their comprehensive safeguarding procedures, ensuring that children's welfare is promoted and they are offered a secure environment.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- consider the development of the procedures at snack time to offer further opportunities for children to develop and practise their independence skills
- provide further opportunities for children to express themselves in their creative activities.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children's well-being is significantly enhanced and their welfare promoted as there are highly effective safeguarding procedures. For example, all staff and some committee members have attended relevant safeguarding training and there are exceptionally robust procedures to ensure that staff are suitable to work with children. Thorough risk assessments and daily checks mean that hazards are minimised and children's safety is consistently promoted. Children demonstrate a very good awareness of safety issues. For example, they naturally incorporate the safe use of tools and equipment into their daily play. The consistent implementation of comprehensive policies further supports the provision of a safe, secure environment. Children's behaviours demonstrate that they feel safe as they organise their play, select resources independently and approach staff for help or to include them in their play and discussions.

The setting's voluntary management committee and senior staff demonstrate a genuine enthusiasm for their work and are successful in inspiring all staff to set and maintain high standards. Extensive and honest evaluation of all areas of work enable the setting to develop practical and exceptionally well-targeted action plans. These are meaningfully informed by feedback from staff, parents and children and mean that changes are clearly prioritised and sensitively introduced into daily practice, leading to improvements in the outcomes for children. For example, the ongoing development of both the indoor and outdoor play areas means that children are offered a wide range of activities and play opportunities. Staff work well together, supporting each other and helping to ensure that children's care is consistent and they are offered appropriate support. Space and resources are used effectively to promote children's learning and development. For example, the room is well organised to accommodate a wide range of play options.

Staff demonstrate a clear understanding of issues relating to anti-discriminatory practice. The ongoing review of their work helps to ensure that the setting's procedures are appropriate and are consistently implemented to support staff in providing a service which is inclusive for all children. Staff work closely with parents and carers to ensure that they fully understand each child's background and needs. They carry out home visits before children start in order to further support this. Children's self-esteem is promoted because their views are valued and their interests are reflected within the activity planning. Staff maintain good relationships with parents and carers, enabling them to exchange information and ensure that children are consistently offered appropriate support. Parents are kept well informed of their child's progress and activities, for example, through the good use of a daily communication board, newsletters and written reports. The setting also works well with other professionals. For example, they have strong links with the school and can, therefore, work in partnership with them to prepare children for this transition.

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

Children make good progress in all areas of learning because staff have a thorough knowledge of the Early Years Foundation Stage. They implement practical procedures for assessing children, using this information to inform activity planning and ensure that children are offered appropriate activities that promote their development. Children are encouraged to develop their own play and are always offered appropriate support. This enables them to play an active role in their learning and develop skills that will help them in the future. For example, children make independent choices about their activities and work well together, sharing ideas and thus extending their play and thinking. However, some of the setting's activity planning does not consistently support children in fully expressing themselves in their creative work.

The consistent approach to behaviour management reinforces children's sense of security and supports them in developing a good understanding of appropriate behaviour. Staff offer children ongoing explanations and encourage them to work together to resolve any disputes. Thoughtful daily procedures mean that children are offered opportunities to develop social skills as they express themselves and learn to appreciate the views of others. An example of this is group time, where children take turns to talk about items they have brought in, listening attentively to their peers and waiting patiently for their turn. Children's understanding of the world around them is developed as they access relevant resources such as books, puzzles and role play items, that provide information and positive images. They also participate in discussions and activities. For example, while covering a topic on trees, children look at trees from around the world, discussing the various locations and climates. The setting's good procedures for working with parents and others mean that they can offer appropriate support to children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language.

Good use is made of outdoor areas in order to offer children an extended range of opportunities. For example, a group of children explore and experiment as they paint the fence with water, whilst other children play with the 'builder's yard' resources and others choose to sit at a table and draw pictures of the nearby tree. The thoughtful provision of additional resources enhances children's time at the setting and helps promote their development. For example, in connection with the current topic of trees, staff have provided role play resources related to a garden centre; children become engrossed in buying and selling goods to each other and in making additional resources such as paper flowers. Activities such as these enable children to develop skills such as counting, imagination, communication and negotiation.

Children are offered opportunities to be active and understand the benefits of physical activity. They develop skills such as control and co-ordination as they use a wide range of equipment including ride-on toys, the climbing frame and balance beams and participate in activities such as keep fit and action rhymes. They are gaining a clear understanding of the relevance of good health practices. They wash

their hands before snacks and meals, help themselves to tissues to wipe their nose and discuss the importance of exercise and a healthy diet. However, the procedures at snack time do not fully support the promotion of children's independence skills.

Children gain skills for the future as they access a wide range of information and communication technology equipment. For example, they use digital cameras and compact disc players and competently choose and complete programmes on the computer. They have opportunities to develop early reading and writing skills. An example of this is group time, where children identify letters, compare these to other letters and enjoy thinking of relevant words beginning with their chosen letter.

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	1

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	1
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	2
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding	1
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	1
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

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
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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	1
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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