

Charlton with Cropthorne Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspector Rachel Wyatt

Setting address The Old School Room, Ryden Lane, Charlton, Pershore,
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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

Charlton with Crophorne Pre-School has been running for over 30 years and re-registered as a committee run pre-school in 2002. It operates from the Old School Room behind the local church in the village of Charlton near Pershore. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area. The pre-school serves the local area and has strong links with the local school in Crophorne. The pre-school is open each weekday during school term time. Sessions are 9.15am until 12.15pm, followed by a lunch club until 1.15pm. On Monday, Tuesday and Thursday the session finishes at 2.45pm.

The nursery is registered on the Early Years Register. A maximum of 20 children may attend the pre-school at any one time. There are currently 28 children from two to under five years on roll. Children attend for a variety of sessions. Support is available for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and for children who speak English as an additional language. The pre-school is also registered by Ofsted on both the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register.

There are six members of staff who work with the children. Of these, five staff hold early years qualifications to National Vocational Qualification Level 3. The pre-school is a member of the Pre-school Learning Alliance and provides funded early education. The group holds a parent and toddler group on a Wednesday morning from 10.00am to 11.30am.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children are nurtured and thrive at pre-school. They are recognised and valued as individuals and enjoy varied, rewarding activities and experiences which reflect their interests and needs. Strong links with parents ensure they are actively involved in pre-school life and contribute to their children's care and learning. There are generally sound procedures for promoting children's health and safety and to ensure they are safeguarded. All those involved in the pre-school have an accurate understanding of the strengths of the provision and areas to develop and take effective steps to implement and sustain changes which are relevant to, and really benefit the children and families who attend.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- improve procedures to ensure committee members Criminal Records Bureau checks are completed promptly
- improve consistency in making observations and assessments of children's achievements, interests and learning styles.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children are effectively safeguarded. The pre-school's clear policies and procedures are clearly understood and followed by the manager with designated responsibility for safeguarding and her colleagues. Effective induction and training mean that staff have an up-to-date knowledge of how to protect children from harm and to take prompt, appropriate action if they have any concerns about a child's welfare. Committee members are offered safeguarding training and parents have copies of all policies. Robust recruitment, checking and development procedures ensure managers and staff are suitable, and have the relevant knowledge, skills and experience to work with children. However, although Ofsted is notified of changes to the committee, there have been delays in the completion of some new members' checks which potentially compromises children's welfare. In other respects, the pre-school obtains all required agreements and information about children and their families, so staff know who may have legal contact with a child, who has parental responsibility for them, and who can collect them.

The outcomes for children are consistently improved as the manager, staff, and increasingly the committee, consistently monitor and evaluate how effectively the pre-school meets regulation and promotes children's welfare, learning and development. Identified targets for improvement are relevant, regularly reviewed and effectively addressed. They take account of parents' views and children's ideas and needs. A priority for the setting is to ensure every child and their family feel welcomed and fully included. As part of their development plan the group has successfully introduced home visits to help children, parents and staff to get to know each other. Each child's delightful 'All about me' pictorial record has further enhanced home and pre-school links with regular exchanges of information and photographs between parents and staff. These have all helped staff to have a good understanding of each child's starting points, interests and characteristics. The ongoing development of the garden area and the group's outdoor provision also very much reflects children's needs and preferences. Opportunities to be outside for much of the session have enhanced children's enjoyment and their confidence to initiate their own play, and helped staff to fully reflect children's differing learning styles. In all aspects of the setting, children relish the varied, stimulating books, toys and resources which are used well to enrich their understanding and to promote their purposeful play.

Children benefit from the pre-school's strong partnership with parents and others. The group has well-established links with the local school which extends children's experiences and prepares them for moving into full-time education. The group have been proactive about forging links with other settings children attend to ensure consistency and continuity, such as, initiating exchange visits by staff. Parents' and carers' contributions to the life of the pre-school and to their child's care and education are highly valued, and it is clear families really appreciate what the pre-school offers their children and themselves. New families are well-informed about how the pre-school operates. They can attend a weekly parent and toddler session; help to settle their child and are given a comprehensive welcome pack,

including a prospectus and copies of all policies. Thereafter, parents are kept fully up-to-date as a result of daily exchanges with staff, informative newsletters and a wealth of information on displays and notice boards. Parents and carers make valuable contributions to their children's care and learning, for example, by following up activities at home, sharing their knowledge of their child with staff, serving on the committee, helping in sessions, and supporting each other.

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

The pre-school is a happy, welcoming place where children are well cared for, enjoy learning and make good progress. The manager and staff are approachable, enthusiastic and effectively support children so they soon settle, are keen to join in activities and discussions, and remain involved and interested. Adults work hard to create inviting indoor and outdoor environments where children choose from many interesting toys and resources, and relish worthwhile opportunities to explore, investigate, be active and creative. A successful key person system ensures close bonds develop between staff, children and families. The manager and staff get to know children well, clearly understanding their specific care needs, their learning and development starting points and their particular interests. Some inconsistencies in assessment mean it is not always clear what children's learning priorities are to share with parents or to include in planning. However, in general staff confidently observe children and monitor their progress. They promptly identify where children need additional support or more challenging experiences, and successfully reflect these and their individual interests in rewarding topics and activities which cover all areas of learning. Staff also readily adapt their approaches and resources to cater for children's differing abilities and interests, so that during sessions there is a good balance of rewarding adult-led activities and many opportunities for children to express their ideas and initiate their own play. Outings, visitors and regular exciting Forest School activities all enrich children's experiences and extend their learning. The pre-school's Special Educational Needs Coordinator and her colleagues work sensitively with parents and, where appropriate, other agencies to ensure effective individual planning and support for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

Children develop good skills for the future. There is a strong sense of community within the setting and children have positive relationships with each other and adults. They enjoy each other's company, make friends and play well together. Children are confident and resourceful because staff foster their choices and decision making. Adults also explain things well so children know what is expected of them and behave well. For example, children confidently select toys and equipment to develop their construction and role play. They negotiate and manage turn taking amongst themselves when playing with favourite toys and equipment. They competently assist with tidying away and getting ready for snack time. Through fundraising, gardening, recycling and Forest School activities they learn about helping each other and caring for their environment.

Children are sociable and articulate. Adults chat easily to them, developing

children's vocabulary, effectively fostering their understanding, and prompting their curiosity and thinking. Children happily recall events, for instance describing what they have been doing over the weekend. They readily ask questions and confidently respond to the staff's explanations. Large scale construction play prompts plenty of problem solving and conversation about different building techniques, and an unexpected aerobatics' display above the pre-school garden results in discussions about flying and the pilot's safety. Children love books and stories, sharing a favourite story with an adult in the cosy book corner, and they listen attentively during whole group story times. They relish rhyming words, and increasingly recognise individual letters and their own names. Inviting mark making areas indoors and outside are popular with the children. They readily practise emergent writing and express their ideas through often detailed drawings. Children confidently use numbers for counting and for problem solving. For example, they count out how many children there are at each table at snack time and how many cups and plates they need. During free-play, routines and activities they competently compare items according to number, shape, size and colour. Children have a wealth of opportunities to explore different materials. They delight in using the garden digging area and the many opportunities to explore sand and water. For example, they engage in sustained play, investigating sand, pebbles, shells, water and 'sea life' in the 'rock pool' area staff have created outside. Indoors they explore the varied contents of the water container, accurately identifying the different toy fish floating in the glittery water. Children are imaginative and creative. They proudly show their parents their colourful sand pictures, love dressing up in various costumes and happily act out scenarios during small world and role play.

Children's welfare is promoted well. Their individual care, health, dietary and cultural needs are clearly understood and effectively met. All staff have current first aid qualifications and ensure children have prompt appropriate treatment if they have an accident, become unwell or need medication. Appropriate records are kept of accidents and medication and parents are kept fully informed. Children develop a sound awareness of the importance of healthy living. They become increasingly independent in seeing to their personal care and in good hand washing. They have regular drinks of water and make healthy choices during varied and nourishing snacks. They take part in regular cooking activities, including eating potatoes they have grown. Children are physical active. They confidently manage a variety of wheeled toys; accurately throw and kick balls, and competently balance, climb and move in different ways. Children are kept safe as the premises are secure and free from hazards. They are well-supervised and robust risk assessments and regular safety checks are used to monitor overall safety, with prompt action taken to remove or reduce hazards. High priority is given to promoting children's emotional well-being and it is clear they feel happy and secure at pre-school. Staff are kind, caring and receptive to children's reactions and feelings and welcoming and supportive to families. Through well-planned discussions, activities and visits, children learn about how to behave in a safe and responsible manner, so they have a good understanding of road, fire and personal safety, and know what to do in an emergency evacuation.

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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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