

Tiptree U R C Pre School

Inspection report for early years provision

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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

Tiptree URC Pre-School is one of three settings run by one committee. It opened originally in 1970, moving to the new site in 2003. It operates from rooms on the upper floor of a church building. It is situated in the village of Tiptree, Essex. A maximum of 22 children may attend the group at any one time.

The setting is open each week day. Tuesday to Friday it opens from 09.30am until 12.00pm, Monday from 09.15am until 12.45pm and Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday it opens between 01.15pm to 03.45 pm. The group is open for 38 weeks of the year. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 58 children aged from two years to under five years on roll. Children come mainly from the local catchment area and surrounding areas. The setting currently supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

The group employs 10 members of staff. Eight of the staff hold relevant child care qualifications to Level 2 and above.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

The provision effectively meets both the welfare and learning needs of children attending. Staff embrace the ethos of the Early Years Foundation Stage, providing a child-led approach to their learning through most opportunities. Staff work well together and provide a safe and caring environment for local families. The setting's committee has clear plans for future developments, which include further staff training and closer working with other settings.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- review the organisation of snack and meal times to ensure every child receives an enjoyable and challenging learning and development experience that is tailored to meet their individual needs
- ensure drinking water is available at all times.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children are appropriately safeguarded as staff within the setting have a good understanding about their responsibilities with regards to protecting children. Some staff have undertaken appropriate training and have cascaded their new knowledge to the rest of the team. All adults working with children are appropriately vetted and proof of their Criminal Records Bureau check is held on

site. Clear written policies inform parents and staff about the settings procedures for safeguarding children.

The pre-school is run by a voluntary committee who also run two other pre-schools in the local area. The staff team have remained a stable group for over three years, with some of the staff having worked at the setting for almost twenty years. The team work well together and spend valuable time every morning discussing the plan for the day and any specific areas they would like to focus on for individual children's development. The committee has recently appointed a coordinator who is going to look at future developments for all three settings, such as staff training, effective delivery of the Early Years Foundation Stage and forming closer links with other settings and local schools. The pre-school has recently achieved accreditation through the Pre-school Learning Alliance, which involved lots of reflective practice and evaluation of the setting's policies and procedures. The staff and committee have a clear action plan which they intend to follow to bring about further improvements for children.

The setting operates from a room on the first floor of a local church. The room is bright and welcoming and provides good natural light. Staff make the provision appear fun and exciting by placing posters and examples of the children's creative work on the walls. Toys and resources are easily accessible, enabling children to make some choices over their play. Staff deployment within the room provides a good amount of supervision and support for children. All children are valued and respected within this setting, their individual circumstances are known to their key person, who works effectively with their parents to gain and maintain a good two-way flow of information.

The setting works well with parents, providing them with a good amount of information about coming events and activities their children will have opportunities to participate in. They are able to meet with their children's key person on a formal and informal basis. Parents are asked to provide feedback and suggest ideas for improvements through regular questionnaires. The setting has good links with the local school and is currently working on systems which will enable them to liaise more fully with other settings providing for the Early Years Foundation Stage.

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

The quality of the provision for children's welfare, learning and development is good. Children enjoy their pre-school session and engage in a range of both adult-led and child-initiated play opportunities. When playing outdoors, they excitedly move from the real world into an imaginary game of dinosaurs, as they run away from the 'scary dinosaur' who is trying to capture them in it's plastic hoop. They listen intently as a member of staff sits with a small group of children and reads their favourite books. They knowledgeably talk about the pre-school pet fish, water snails and water lily plant, which is growing in their interest area. Children enjoy using the pre-school computer and wait patiently for their turn, watching the current user move around the software and access the selection of games and

learning programmes available to them. Staff are knowledgeable about children's starting points, as parents share comprehensive information with them about their children's interests, home backgrounds and home achievements. Staff use this to inform their individual planning and as a base for children's progress. A system is in place which enables staff to observe, record and assess children's progress, and their achievements are recorded in both written form and photographs. Staff are developing this system to allow them more opportunities to focus on planning for the individual child and to follow the child's lead.

Children's safety takes high priority within this group, for example, additional staff work at every session to assist children up and down the stairs to enable them to safely access the outdoor area. Daily safety and security checks ensure that the premises remain suitable at all times. Children appear to feel safe and comfortable in their surroundings, they wander freely around and clearly understand the setting's rules, such as holding another child's hand when getting ready to go into the outdoor area and holding on to the safety rail when moving up and down the stairs. Children gain knowledge and understanding about keeping themselves healthy as they follow the staff's lead. They wash their hands after using the toilet and clean germs away with antibacterial spray before eating their mid session snack. Whilst children have some daily access to the outdoor area, they are not currently able to make choices about whether they play indoors or outdoors, due to the pre-school operating from a first floor room. Children generally enjoy a healthy snack during the morning or afternoon session. They sit together in a large group with approximately six or seven children to a table. This part of the session is very adult-led, with staff preparing the majority of the snack, pouring children's drinks and giving out and collecting the children's cups. This provides few opportunities for children to develop essential skills and to build their independence. Some children bring a drinking water bottle to pre-school with them to freely access when they are thirsty. The procedure currently being used within the setting for the rest of the group is that they ask staff for a drink, whilst this happens, it is not entirely in keeping with the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage, which requires that drinking water is readily available at all times.

Children are settled and content within the provision. They form relationships with other children and freely approach adults. They are confident children who gain real enjoyment from their pre-school experience. Children behave well and have a good understanding of the importance of being kind to each other. They hold hands and provide a caring hug to welcome their friends to the setting. The range of free play and planned activities available provides opportunities for children to develop essential skills for the future. They learn pre-reading and writing skills through everyday activities, as well as some focused ones. They explore the world around them through topics and books and have some opportunities to participate in the celebration of festivals and special occasions to extend their knowledge.

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

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	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	3
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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