

# Castor and Ailsworth Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

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256756

**Inspection date**

14/07/2010

**Inspector**

Carly Mooney

**Setting address**

The Village Hall, Peterborough Road, Castor, Peterborough,  
Cambridgeshire, PE5 7AX

**Telephone number**

01733 380190

**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](mailto:enquiries@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*.

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## **Description of the setting**

Castor & Ailsworth Pre-school was registered in 1980. It operates from Castor Village Hall in the village of Castor, on the outskirts of Peterborough. The setting is open from 9am until 3pm on a Monday, Tuesday and Friday and from 9am until 1pm on a Wednesday and Thursday. A lunch time club from 12pm until 1pm is optional. The pre-school operates term time only.

The provision is registered on the Early Years Register to care for a maximum of 25 children in the early years age range. There are 39 children of roll. There are a small number of children attending who have special educational needs and/or disabilities or have English as an additional language.

The pre-school employs 10 staff to work directly with the children, of these, four have appropriate Early Years qualifications. The setting receives support from the local authority and is a member of the pre-school learning alliance.

## **The overall effectiveness of the early years provision**

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children feel safe and secure in the welcoming environment. They enjoy participating in a varied range of stimulating activities which allow them to make good progress in their learning and development. Good partnership working with parents and carers ensures that staff know the children well and are able to effectively respect and meet their individual needs. Staff demonstrate a firm commitment to improving and continuously developing the provision and have implemented effective procedures for self-evaluation to improve outcomes for all children.

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

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

- further develop the system for making observations and assessments with regard to the frequency of observations carried out and the balance across the six areas of learning.

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

Children are safeguarded well by vigilant staff who are fully aware of their responsibility to protect children in their care. Recruitment procedures are robust and all staff have undergone the necessary checks to ensure their suitability. Staff work very well together as a team, undertaking clear roles and responsibilities and all have an active involvement in ensuring the pre-school operates effectively. Children play in a safe and secure environment, due to staff's thorough

understanding of assessing risks in the children's surroundings, both inside and outside. Written risk assessments are of good quality and effective in identifying and minimising potential risks to children. Sufficient staff are trained in first aid and are well informed about children's medical needs. They ensure clear procedures are in place to protect children with severe allergies. Comprehensive policies and procedures underpin the good practice at the setting and these are implemented effectively by all staff and shared appropriately with parents.

The setting is well organised so that children have independent access to a range of age-appropriate play experiences and staff are deployed efficiently to ensure children are safe and well cared for. The pre-school is fully inclusive for the children attending and staff ensure no child is disadvantaged. There are clear systems in place to support children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language. For example, books and labelling around the room in French and Dutch. Children engage in learning some basic French, such as counting to three before starting their lunch. Staff liaise with other agencies, such as speech therapists in order to develop some children's skills.

Staff demonstrate a clear understanding of the benefits of working closely with parents. A good range of information is obtained from parents about their children's individual care needs and development levels prior to starting, which helps children to settle. Parents share in their children's learning and development through their records of achievements and daily conversations with staff. Events such as 'dad day' means staff build trusting relationships with parents, which contributes towards children's sense of security. Parents comment positively on the 'fantastic pre-school'. Staff have established clear partnerships with other settings to support children's achievements and a strong liaison with the village school helps older children to gain confidence in being ready to move on.

The setting is led and managed well. There is a positive commitment to professional development for all staff so that they have opportunities to improve their knowledge and increase their qualifications, which helps to improve the outcomes for children. Systems for self-evaluation and effective monitoring of the practice have been established and realistic areas for development identified. For example, feedback from parents in regular questionnaires is analysed well and issues raised acted on immediately. As a result, staff's capacity to maintain continuous improvement is good.

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

Staff demonstrate clear knowledge and understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage through a range of teaching methods, which enables children to make good progress in their learning and development. Children are happy and settled and clearly enjoy their time at the pre-school. A secure key person system benefits the children attending. They are supported well in their chosen activities and are developing good self-esteem because staff are attentive and value their contributions. For example, through show and tell time. Planning is clear and

based on individual children's learning. Records of achievements in general are a good account of the children's time in the setting and includes parental involvement. However, staff should ensure they are regularly monitored to ensure there is a good balance of observations over all areas and the frequency of those recorded.

Children display a good sense of belonging. For example, they have their own named coat hooks, place mats for snack and photographs of themselves for self-registration. Children have many opportunities to be independent, they move freely between the inside and outside environments and learn new skills, such as cutting up fruit for snack with a knife under close supervision and washing their own bowl and cup. Children's language skills are supported well through effective conversation from staff, who regularly introduce new vocabulary and ask meaningful questions to make children think, such as 'what will happen if I tip it this way?' when supporting a water activity. The setting has also recently taken part in the pilot for the Every Child a Talker (ECAT) scheme to further support and develop children's language skills. Older children in particular chatter willingly with adults and each other and show they are confident communicators. Children appreciate books and enjoying being read to in a small group or one to one basis. Older children demonstrate their emerging writing skills by asking to write their own name on their work, forming many recognisable letters.

Children develop their counting skills in everyday situations, such as counting the spoonfuls of cereal they scoop into their bowl for snack and learn to problem solve logically. For example, after trying on a pair of wellington boots which are too small, a child puts his own shoe against the bottom of another boot to compare the size. Children have good opportunities to participate in physical activity, both large and small. They ride their bicycles and scooters with confidence, participate enthusiastically in Jabadeo sessions and use their hands and fingers to manipulate play dough by rolling, pushing and squeezing. All the children enjoy a range of craft and messy activities using a variety of materials, such as water, cotton wool and sticky tape.

Children's welfare is effectively promoted. Records which safeguard children's health are appropriately maintained and children are cared for in a clean environment. They learn effectively at a young age about maintaining their own personal hygiene, such as washing their hands before eating or preparing food. Routine procedures such as lunch and snack times enable children to share a relaxed, social experience with each other and staff. Drinks are available at all times to ensure children remain hydrated. Children feel safe and secure and this is demonstrated through their contented, happy and confident disposition. They are generally made aware of how to keep themselves safe through procedures, such as practising fire drills. Children behave well and are effectively learning to share and take turns during their play, receiving lots of praise and encouragement from staff for their efforts.

## 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

<b>How well does the setting meet the needs of the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?</b>	2
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	2

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

<b>How effectively is the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?</b>	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	2
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### Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

<b>Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	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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