

Smarden Pre-School Group

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspection date 15/10/2010
Inspector Vicky Turner

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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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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

Smarden Pre-school has been registered in the current premises since May 2006. A committee, made up of parents, manages it. The nursery operates from a self-contained unit situated in the grounds of Smarden CP School in the village of Smarden. There is access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area. A maximum of 20 children may attend the pre-school at any one time. It is open Monday to Friday from 9.00 am to 3.00 pm term time only. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The group serves the local and surrounding area. There are currently 27 children on roll aged from two to four years. Of these, 20 children receive funding for early education. The group supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. The pre-school employs seven staff who all work on a part-time basis and two voluntary staff. Six staff hold appropriate early years childcare qualifications and one member of staff is working towards a Foundation Degree. The group receives support from the Local Authority and teaching staff from the school. The setting is registered on the Early Years Register and the voluntary and compulsory parts of the Childcare Register.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

This is an inclusive setting with good safeguarding arrangements. Excellent partnerships with the school, parents and carers and external agencies ensure that the children's learning and welfare needs are met. Those in charge have an accurate understanding of the setting's strengths and what needs to be improved. All recommendations from the last inspection have been fully addressed. The capacity for continuous improvement is good because of the manager's commitment to move the setting forward.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- provide more learning opportunities to develop children's calculation skills
- develop further the outdoor area so that it is accessible all year round.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The new manager is committed to continuous improvement and has made many improvements, successfully addressing all recommendations from the last inspection. Regular staff meetings enable staff to share information and ideas for improving the provision. The self-evaluation process at all levels has enabled the setting to identify its strengths as well as areas which need improvement. Staff are encouraged to reflect on their practice and individual training plans and annual staff appraisals ensure staff receive appropriate training to move the setting

forward. Staff are trained in child protection and understand the procedures to be followed should they have any concerns. Good vetting procedures are in place to ensure that the adults are suitable to work with children. Daily health and safety checks and termly hazard analysis ensure a safe learning environment. Regular fire drills help familiarise children with the procedures for safe evacuation. All staff are trained in first aid and medication and accident records are well maintained. Three members of staff can administer the epi-pen and four staff are trained in food hygiene.

Space is adequately organised with a wide range of attractive resources that are accessible to all the children. High adult-to-child ratios ensure children receive good support and supervision. The setting has a session for two to three-year-olds one afternoon a week to help them settle in quickly. Tuesday morning sessions for three to four-year-olds support the transition period. Children celebrate festivals from a range of cultures and participate in food tasting activities, dressing up and listen to stories about children from different cultures. Posters, puzzles and stories depicting positive images of children with disabilities, help children learn about differences. All children use Makaton sign language and a visual time table which supports children with communication difficulties.

Excellent relationships with the school, external agencies and parents and carers means that children receive the support that they need to make good progress. The setting has access to the school hall and joins in with the school's celebrations. Visits to the Reception class in the summer term and the Teddy Bear's picnic, facilitate the transition process. The setting also has close links with other settings that the children attend which ensures effective sharing of information. The setting is supported by an early years consultant, an advisory teacher, the child development officer and the Speech and Language Therapy service. The setting is run by a committee of parents and carers who are actively involved with the day-to-day running and decision making of the setting. Parents and carers are kept well informed through daily informal chats with the staff, monthly newsletters, parents' evenings and by telephone. Parents' and carers' views are sought through questionnaires. Parent helpers visit the setting to bake cakes, make pasta with the children and teach woodwork. Parents comment that the children 'absolutely love it', 'staff are really nice and very helpful' and 'transition is very smooth'.

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

Children happily engage in a range of interesting self-chosen activities such as role play, play dough, mark-making and puzzles. They share their news. For example, 'I've got some puppies at home – lots and lots' and 'I'm going to my nanny's house - she lives in a long blue road'. They sing songs and engage in sensory activities. They enjoy listening to the story of 'The Three Little Pigs', joining in with glove puppets. Children collect conkers and leaves and enjoy exploring different bird calls, using wooden sound percussion instruments. Good systems for observation, assessment and tracking are in place. The key workers observe their children; identify next steps and plan interesting activities incorporating children's interests. Children's scrap books include photographic evidence and observations of their

progress towards the early learning goals. These are shared with parents who are encouraged to make their own contributions. Children make good progress in all areas of learning except in calculating.

Children contribute to the rules for keeping safe and adults model how to use equipment and tools safely, for example, scissors and work bench tools. Visitors, such as fire officers and community police officers, teach children about fire safety, stranger danger and road safety. Children are aware of sun safety and ask an adult if they need a sun hat. They make healthy choices from cucumbers and sweet peppers at snack time and adults discuss the importance of healthy foods. Cooking activities are used to help children learn about healthy eating. The new outdoor play area offers good opportunities for daily physical activity where children can crawl, climb, ride, and slide. However, this is not accessible in all weathers. Weekly sessions in the school hall contribute to their physical development. They wash their hands before food and visual prompts in the toilet area remind them to wash their hands after using the toilet.

Children share a trusting relationship with their adults and as a result are very well behaved. They contribute to setting the rules emphasising 'kind hands'. They help lay the tables, count how many children are present and fetch the corresponding number of chairs to the tables. Children spread their own butter, jam or marmite on their crackers and tidy up after snacks. They attend the school's Harvest Assembly, listen attentively and make their harvest contributions. Children also learn to care for their guinea pigs named 'Chocolate' and 'Fudge'.

There are plenty of opportunities for talk through role play, news and daily interaction with their peers. Children re-enact stories in their own words using puppets, sing nursery rhymes and listen to stories. They are beginning to recognise familiar letters and sounds and experiment with mark-making. Daily counting activities, number rhymes and number puzzles contribute to their problem-solving and numeracy skills. Children have access to a computer, laptops, programmable toys, cameras and a CD player. The Discovery bus helps children learn how to look after the environment and to recycle. Visits to the play park, the church, the library and the butcher's shop help children develop a better understanding of the world.

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

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	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	1
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	1

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	2
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	1
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