

# Potley Hill Community Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

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**Unique reference number**

EY411522

**Inspection date**

05/11/2010

**Inspector**

Debbie Newbury

**Setting address**

Frogmore Community College, Potley Hill Road, YATELEY,  
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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**

Potley Hill Community Pre-School has been in operation since 1980 and moved to its current location at Frogmore Community College, Yateley, in 2010. It is a committee run pre-school operating from a purpose built classroom within the grounds of the college. Children also have use of an enclosed outdoor play area, and suitable toilet and kitchen facilities are available. The pre-school serves the needs of families in the area and the local community.

The group is registered on the Early Years Register and also on the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. They may care for a maximum of 30 children from the age of two years nine months up to eight years. There are currently 46 children on roll, of whom, 27 are in receipt of nursery education funding. The pre-school welcomes children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and children who speak English as an additional language.

The pre-school is open term time only and operates Monday to Friday from 9 am to 12 noon and 1 pm to 4 pm. A lunch club operates each day between 12 noon and 1pm. Children attend for a variety of sessions. There are eight part-time and one full-time staff currently working with the children, seven of whom hold a recognised early years qualification. One member of staff is currently studying for a Foundation degree. The pre-school receives support through a teacher mentor from the local school and the local authority.

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

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Potley Hill Pre-school offers children an extremely stimulating environment for their care and early education, enabling them to feel safe and secure. Children benefit from the warm, caring relationships and the good levels of support they receive from staff, which enables them to progress towards the early learning goals in all areas of learning. Each child is valued as an individual and most aspects of inclusion and promoting children's understanding of difference are promoted very successfully. The partnership with parents works very well and, overall, there are very effective systems for establishing links with other providers. The pre-school's policies and procedures work effectively in practice to underpin the efficient management of the provision and to promote positive outcomes for children. A passion and commitment to ongoing continuous improvement, and thus an ability to build further upon already good quality of provision for all children, is clearly evident.

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

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

- develop further the partnership with other providers, such as childminders, to ensure information regarding children's learning and development is shared regularly and can be used to contribute towards planning and assessment
- provide positive images that challenge children's thinking and help them to embrace differences in special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- develop further opportunities for children to ascribe meaning to text and attempt to write for various purposes, for example, children being encouraged to name their own pictures, write shopping lists etc. in the role play area

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

Children benefit from the effective measures that are implemented to ensure they are fully safeguarded. Staff have a secure knowledge and understanding of their role and responsibility in respect of child protection issues and the action they must take if they have any concerns. Existing procedures are reviewed on an ongoing basis and new ones introduced as necessary. For instance, the pre-school is in the process of devising policies relating to whistle-blowing and the use of mobile phones and the new committee chairperson is attending a Safer Recruitment course. Such arrangements help to ensure children's ongoing safety receives the highest attention. Comprehensive risk assessments are completed for the building and garden area, as well as for the places children visit. Records relating to these are maintained in accordance with requirements. Robust systems are in place in respect of recruitment and vetting and for ensuring the ongoing suitability of the practitioners working with children.

There is an excellent shared culture of ongoing reflective practice, self-evaluation and informed discussion evident at this pre-school, which has led to the identification of clear and achievable priorities for development. Management, committee and staff work closely together, with the input of all valued. The pre-school moved to new premises during the summer term and a huge amount of effort has been put into developing the setting and expanding opportunities for continuous provision, so that children are more readily able to make their own decisions about what they do and follow their own interests. The majority of the staff team hold recognised early years qualifications, with two staff working towards their level three qualification, and the importance of ongoing training for continuous professional development is recognised. Adult:child ratios are maintained and the staff team works well together, with everyone aware of their roles and responsibilities. As a result, sessions flow smoothly and children receive good levels of individual support.

Staff value the uniqueness of each child attending and strive to meet their individual needs. Parents are encouraged to share their knowledge about their children and the key working system means that staff get to know each child very well. Children have opportunities to find out about different cultures and traditions, both their own and those of others. For example, parents are invited to come in and share their family celebrations with the children. Children are encouraged to

access all activities and resources that have been pre-selected. They have the opportunity of adding to these by self-selecting any equipment from easily accessible and labelled units. There are resources within the pre-school that reflect some aspects of social diversity, although there is less readily available to help children embrace differences in special educational needs and/or disabilities and challenge their thinking.

The pre-school seeks to ensure its parents are fully informed and consulted, and achieves this in a number of ways. Parents have easy access to a range of useful information in the reception area, including required documentation pertaining to registration and policies and procedures. A white board providing an overview of the session is completed and displayed daily so parents have an idea of what children have done. This also aids any discussions they may have with their own child about how they have spent their time. Parents chat to members of staff and they are invited to regular meetings with their child's key person to share information about their child's learning and any areas for development. Parents spoken to as part of the inspection indicated how happy they are with the pre-school. They are especially pleased with the new premises and the opportunities this offers their children. They comment that the staff and the way the pre-school is run is 'brilliant' and they feel well informed about their children and how they are doing.

The importance of partnership working to support children is fully recognised and embraced. The pre-school works alongside other professionals, such as Portage, and is building mostly very strong links with other providers who may also deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage to children attending this setting. This is particularly evident in respect of the systems that are in place to support children's transition into school. A collection book is used in instances where children are collected by childminders. However, arrangements for an exchange of information about children's learning in such cases are not yet fully developed.

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

Children are presented with a stimulating environment in which safety, healthy living, creativity, originality and expressiveness are valued. They receive a broad range of activities and experiences that take account of their current interests and reflect individual needs. Staff support children carefully through conversation, questioning that encourages them to think and by skilfully facilitating their play and learning. For instance, children's exploration of a selection of textured blocks, which they initially use to create a circuit on which to balance and explore the sensation of the different finishes on their feet, leads onto discussions about shape and colour. One child's observation that the shape could be a 'fish pond' results in several children deciding to make fish. They design these themselves and are encouraged to try and cut them out. This one activity engages different children throughout the morning and they build on their ideas. Thus, children search for something they can use for 'weed' and then use recycled materials to create boats. Staff help them to make fishing rods. Magnets are attached to the end of these

and paper clips added to the fish so they can 'catch' them. Children are encouraged to count and guess how many scoops of sand they need to fill up a bucket and to investigate floating and sinking as they play in the water tray. They use their imaginations as they create bonfire pictures using a variety of different materials. This activity is also used to gauge children's understanding of the dangers of fire and impart important messages about safety.

Arrangements for supporting children's personal, social and emotional development are very effective and a major strength of the curriculum. This is clearly evident in the way staff promote 'a can do' approach and encourage children to take responsibility for attending to their personal needs and developing their independence at every turn. Children manage their coats and wellington boots and those who attend the Rising 5 session take part in a PE session, for which they change their clothes. They explore mark making both indoors and outside. In addition to pens and pencils, children use chunky chinks and investigate the different shapes they can create on the glass windows using paintbrushes and soapy water. Although writing equipment is readily available, staff are not consistent in encouraging children to 'write' their names on their work and do not always make writing materials readily available in all play areas to encourage spontaneous writing for a purpose. An interesting variety of resources is provided to enable children to learn about information and communication technology; these include computers and an interactive white board. Children learn about nature and explore their local community during off-site outings and visits to a nearby pond and woodland area. The range of experiences offered is further enhanced because of the links the pre-school is establishing with other settings on the campus site. For instance, the children go to the college library to choose books and listen to stories read to them by Year 11 students or the librarian. Year 5 pupils from the nearby primary school have begun to visit as part of their work on citizenship. Thus, the pre-school children have opportunities to mix with older children. All members of staff observe children and the information gathered is then used by each child's key person to monitor their progress and plan for the next steps in their learning. The pre-school has identified the need to develop further its current planning and assessment systems and is in the process of addressing this.

Children benefit from an extremely clean and well-presented environment where scrupulous attention is given to minimising the potential for the spread of infection. Children are encouraged to play an active role in this. For instance, they understand the need to wear wellington boots if they want to play in the mud pit and also that they should change back into their shoes before returning to the activity room. Children also assist with loading the washing machine and dishwasher under supervision. They demonstrate secure understanding of the reasons why they need to wash their hands at certain times; it is very evident that this forms part of a well-established routine. Staff gather important information about children's dietary requirements and implement effective measures to ensure children are not placed at risk. Children make their own decisions about when they wish to have a snack. Parents are requested to supply healthy food items and the pre-school supplements this by offering toast, if children decide this is something they would like to have. The free-flow approach to outside play means that children benefit from lots of fresh air and those who learn better in an outdoor

environment have their needs catered for well. Children explore climbing apparatus, manoeuvre wheeled toys up and down the paved areas of the garden, parts of which are on a slope and therefore offer greater challenge. They display excellent levels of control and co-ordination as they come racing down the slope and turning at the bottom, often at speed.

Children behave generally very well with any minor issues, for example over sharing and turn-taking, effectively resolved by staff who act as good role models for co-operative behaviour. Everyone has a calm, gentle manner and their good use of praise and positive language fosters children's self-esteem and confidence effectively. Children are encouraged to help take care of the pre-school environment, for instance, by assisting to tidy up. They gain a strong sense of belonging because each child has their own special place to leave their belongings.

Arrangements to ensure children's safety and well-being are excellent. Staff remain vigilant but allow children the space to take risks within safe parameters. Children display complete trust in the staff, for example by their willingness to approach them to express their needs, which demonstrates how safe and secure they feel. Children learn how to behave in ways that are safe by following the simple safety rules of the group, of which they are reminded at the beginning of each session. They and are encouraged to inform an adult if they become aware of anything that could be harmful to themselves or another child.



## 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>The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	1
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	1
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	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

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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	1
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	1
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