

Biddenden PlaySchool

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspector

Elizabeth Dickson

Setting address

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Type of setting

Childcare on non-domestic premises

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Introduction

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Description of the setting

Biddenden Playschool is one of two nurseries owned by Bethersden Playschool Limited. It opened in 2007. The group operates from a mobile unit in the grounds of John Mayne Primary School in Biddenden, Kent. A maximum of 26 children may attend the preschool at any one time. The preschool is open from 9.00am until 3.00pm from Monday to Thursday and from 9.00am until 12.30pm on Friday, during term time. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area. There are currently 36 children aged from two to under five years on roll. Of these, 23 receive funding for early education. Children come from the surrounding area. The preschool currently supports some children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The preschool employs fifteen members of staff. Of these, nine hold appropriate early years qualifications. The group receives support from an early years advisory teacher and the local school.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

All children and their parents are made to feel welcome by the staff of this thriving village playschool. Changes and improvements since the last inspection are beginning to have a real impact on the outcomes for children and as a result they are making good progress in their learning and development. The positive relationship with parents and the excellent links with the primary school, ensure that children are well prepared for the next stage of their education. The setting efficiently evaluates the provision, and staff have a good understanding of their strengths and areas for further development. Consequently the playschool has good capacity to improve.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- develop the outdoor area to provide a stimulating range of activities that support all areas of children's learning and development
- develop strategies to engage all parents in their child's learning and development.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Biddenden playschool is well led and managed. Effective safeguarding measures are in place to ensure children's safety. These include good recruitment and selection procedures which ensure all persons working with the children are suitable to do so. Staff have a good understanding of the child protection issues

and there are clear procedures in place for them to follow should they have concerns. Within sessions, staff are conscious about ensuring children are well supervised, particularly during outdoor activities and at arrival and collection times. Risk assessments for the setting, including any outings, are in place and are regularly reviewed. Daily visual safety checks are carried out to make sure children can play in safety.

Children are cared for by dedicated staff who have a good understanding of the needs of the individual children. They work hard to make the environment cheerful and inviting. The shared nature of the premises currently presents staff with some challenges in setting out activities and resources, but the setting is soon to have exclusive use of the accommodation. The playschool leaders are making suitable plans to improve and adapt the facilities, as well as developing the outdoor area into a more stimulating and resourceful learning environment.

Staff continually strive to develop the service and improve outcomes for children. They are keen to undertake any relevant and appropriate training. All members of staff are involved in self-evaluating the setting, and feel confident in making suggestions for improvement. Parents' views are also sought through annual questionnaires. A wide range of toys and resources meet children's needs, particularly those which are used indoors.

Parents are pleased with the level of care provided for their children, praising the attention given to the needs of individuals and valuing the 'friendly family feeling'. Parents are encouraged to share information about children's home interests. They are invited to attend regular 'open afternoons' but the take-up for these is variable, and there is further scope to encourage some to contribute observations to their children's learning records. Excellent links with the primary school mean that children use school facilities, for example to do physical development activities in the hall, playing field and playground. Older children visit their future classroom every Tuesday morning, helping to make the transfer to the Reception class smooth and seamless.

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

Children are happy and settled, and are comfortable in their interactions with adults and with each other. They make confident choices about what they want to do, and play co-operatively together, as they negotiate roles in the role play area and share resources. Staff are interested and listen to what they say, offering praise and encouragement, which boosts children's positive self-esteem. Children concentrate well as they engage in a range of art and craft activities and strive to achieve the effect they desire, for example when making Christmas decorations from coloured card or when focusing on a fishing game, recognising colours and numbers. Children demonstrate competence in the use of ICT, for example, when playing computer games, taking turns to use the mouse. This supports children in developing good skills for the future.

Displays around the room aid children's recognition of letters and numbers, and

celebrate their work. Recent topics on autumn and fireworks have resulted in a colourful collection of exhibition of paintings, leaf prints and artefacts. The staff group have a good balance of experience and expertise which enable them to provide a range of challenging activities, mainly child-led, with opportunities for some more complex tasks for those soon starting school. Staff make regular observations of the children in their assessment records, identifying, and planning for, the next steps in their development.

Children know they are in a safe environment because staff explain to them about hazards. They learn to think about their own safety when staff, for example, teach them how to use tools such as scissors sensibly. Village walks are useful in teaching them road safety. They know the importance of hand washing before eating to prevent the spread of infection. Children learn about healthy lifestyles through choosing nutritious snacks and topics on dental health.

Children learn about other cultures through the topic on Diwali and celebration of Chinese New Year. They become familiar with their local area through walks in the woods and the village, and visits to the local shops and church. Within the playschool, children enjoy being the 'VIP' for the day, when they take responsibility for leading the group out to play and helping the adults. Photographic evidence shows children learning more about the wider world through visits from the local nurse, police, a new baby, and animals such as a puppy, guinea pigs and a bearded lizard. Books and mark-making equipment are continuously available, encouraging children to practise these skills.

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	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

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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