

Offley Pre-School Group

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspector

Fiona M Robinson

Setting address

Offley JMI School, School Lane, Offley, Hitchin,
Hertfordshire, SG5 3AT

Telephone number

01462 768606 or 07759 783269

Email

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

Offley Pre-School was first registered in 1972. It operates from a purpose built mobile unit with kitchen and toilet facilities within the grounds of Offley Junior, Middle and Infant School, in the village of Offley, Hertfordshire. There is ramped disability access to the pre-school. The pre-school serves the local community and surrounding area. All children share access to a secure, enclosed outdoor play area and have the use of the school playing field. The pre-school has provision for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and those who speak English as an additional language.

A maximum of 21 children may attend the pre-school at any one time. There are currently 34 children on roll, all of whom are within the early years age range. It receives funding for early years education. The pre-school opens each weekday during school term times from 9am until 12 noon and from 12 noon until 3pm. A lunch club runs between 12 noon and 1pm on Mondays and Thursdays.

The pre-school employs six members of staff who work with the children, most of whom have appropriate early years qualifications: one has a National Vocational Qualification at level 1; two hold level 2; one holds level 3; one has a National Nursery Examination Board qualification; and one holds a BA education degree, a foundation degree in early years and also holds a National Vocational Qualification at level 3. The pre-school receives support from the local authority. It is registered with Ofsted 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.

Children enjoy talking part in a wide range of activities and achieve well. There are excellent partnerships between staff, parents and carers, the host school and the community, and information is shared between them very effectively. Staff take into account children's individual needs and ensure that they are fully included in activities which are largely well resourced. A key strength of the pre-school is the children's excellent behaviour, which staff are skilled at reinforcing. The manager and staff clearly identify where their strengths and areas for development lie, and act on these with enthusiasm. There is a good record of continuous improvement.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- develop further the layout and organisation of the outside environment to incorporate more learning opportunities for the children.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Staff have an excellent understanding of safeguarding and child protection issues and are fully aware of their roles and responsibilities with regards to keeping children safe. They ensure that risk assessments are thorough and reviewed regularly to ensure children's welfare and safety. Comprehensive policies and procedures are precisely documented and fully implemented. Evacuation procedures are practised regularly, to familiarise staff and children with the routine and this information is recorded. Security within the pre-school is excellent and staff are vigilant at supervising the children at all times and ensuring that the resources and environment are wholly safe. There are robust systems in place for the collection of children, which are followed carefully by staff and parents. There are rigorous systems in place for staff recruitment and vetting. These procedures ensure that all adults working with or having contact with the children are suitable.

There are excellent partnerships with parents and carers, who are kept very well-informed about their children's progress by their key person. They say that staff are welcoming and approachable and keep them fully informed of their children's progress. They feel their children flourish and blossom at the pre-school. The children's 'learning journeys', which are records of their work and achievements, are frequently shared with parents. They attend more formal meetings twice a year and appreciate the detailed written reports staff provide for their children. They are also kept well-informed of special events and fundraising activities, such as the sponsored walk to the manor house, Sports Day and the pre-school Nativity. Parents regularly receive comprehensive information, through newsletters, the website, informal discussions and the parents' notice board. Links with the host school are excellent, because information is shared very effectively. The pre-school also benefits from the use of the outdoor environment, playground and the hall. There are outstanding links with the local community. For example children enjoy story sessions provided by the library service and are fully included in local celebrations of the Chinese New Year. There are excellent links with outside agencies and children with special educational needs and/or disabilities are supported very well in their learning.

The pre-school is well-led and managed. Staff meet regularly to discuss planning and assessment. They have regular opportunities to attend further training to enhance their knowledge and demonstrate a shared commitment to the development of quality provision. Good progress has been made in meeting the recommendations of the previous inspection. In particular, the monitoring and evaluation systems have been developed well. Staff work well as a team and use a wide range of resources to support children's learning. They value the views of parents and take these into consideration when identifying priorities for improvement. Staff are developing the layout and organisation of the outside area to include a planting and growing and sensory area. Currently, opportunities for children's free flow play, growing and problem solving experiences in the immediate outdoor area are more limited. This means that children are not always able to enjoy free flowing activities that can be moved outdoors. Staff work well as a team and make full use of a good range of resources to support children's

learning. The promotion of equality and diversity is excellent, as staff work hard to ensure that all children are fully integrated into activities and are sensitive to their individual needs, backgrounds and interests.

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

Children enjoy well-organised play and have access to fun-filled activities in a bright, stimulating environment. They are supported well in their learning by staff, who assess their needs carefully and include their ideas when planning activities. There is effective use of topics such as 'All About Me', 'Winter' and 'Pets'. Excellent support is provided for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. All children achieve well and make good progress across all areas of learning.

Children's behaviour is exemplary and they have excellent relationships with staff and one another. They are taught to show respect for others and know how to share, take turns and understand right and wrong. Children settle well and enthusiastically select their own activities. Staff are outstanding role models with high expectations of behaviour. Children have excellent opportunities to learn about other festivals and customs, such as Harvest, Diwali, Christmas and the Chinese New Year. Parents talk about their cultures and customs and children enjoy food tasting, dancing and listening to stories. Children talk excitedly about the Chinese Dragon dance and making Chinese lanterns, and the 'Chris Tingle' service held in the local church.

Children have a good understanding of keeping healthy and safe. They enjoy physical exercise and have valuable opportunities to develop their physical skills with large equipment, music and movement and parachute games in the school hall. They benefit from using the climbing equipment in the school playing field and ride their bikes and tricycles on the playground. Opportunities to grow their own fruit and vegetables are more limited in their immediate outdoor area. Children learn how to make healthy choices at snack time and help to prepare fruit salads and pizzas with healthy toppings. They learn how to use tools and equipment safely as they prepare a selection of vegetables for soup and understand the need to act responsibly when in the kitchen area. They learn about people who help us and benefit from talks on safety from the local police and fire services and the nurse. Staff promote their independence well and encourage them to move around the environment safely by ensuring they have a mature understanding of how to keep safe.

Children are keen to come to the pre-school and eagerly participate in the good range of activities. Their creative development is promoted well as they paint pictures and create colourful collages of autumn and winter. They enjoy drawing and painting pictures of themselves. Children are keen to build dens and go on bug hunts and look for hedgehogs as they walk in the local environment. They freely access their immediate outdoor area of learning; however the layout and organisation of this area can limit their choice of free flow play, problem solving and growing activities. The children's communication, language and literacy skills are developed well through role play and mark-making activities. They listen

attentively to stories about bears and are keen to talk about the characters in the story and speculate about what happens next. Most can count to ten and beyond and identify shapes such as triangles, circles, squares, rectangles and diamonds. They dance enthusiastically to the tune 'Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star'. They benefit from excellent links with the community and learn about France, Thailand, China and Brazil from parents and other children in the pre-school. Overall, they are prepared well for their next steps in learning and full-time education.

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	1
The effectiveness of safeguarding	1
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
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The provider confirms that the requirements of the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are:	Met
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