

# The Centre Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Unique reference number</b>	650148
<b>Inspection date</b>	11/01/2011
<b>Inspector</b>	Moira Oliver
<b>Setting address</b>	Straight Road Community Centre, 329 Straight Road, Colchester, Essex, CO3 9EF
<b>Telephone number</b>	01206 573 341
<b>Email</b>	
<b>Type of setting</b>	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

The Centre Pre-school, Colchester opened in 1973. It operates from two rooms in Straight Road Community Centre, Colchester. The pre-school serves the local area and there is a fully enclosed area available for outdoor play.

The pre-school opens Monday to Friday during school term times. Sessions are from 9am until 12pm every morning and from 12.30pm until 3.30pm on Wednesdays and Fridays. There is a lunch club on Mondays, Tuesdays and Thursdays which runs after the session from 12pm until 12.45pm. Children are able to attend for a variety of sessions. A maximum of 26 children may attend at any one time. There are currently 55 children on roll, all of whom are within the Early Years Foundation Stage. The setting is registered on the Early Years Register and on both the voluntary and compulsory parts of the Childcare Register. The pre-school provides funded early education for two, three and four-year-olds. The group supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and children who speak English as an additional language.

The pre-school employs seven staff members to work directly with the children, all of whom hold appropriate early years qualifications at Level 2 or 3. The setting receives support from the local authority.

## The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

A team of dedicated staff and committee ensure that children make good progress in their learning and development through the Early Years Foundation Stage. Children are happy, settle well and form close bonds with the staff. Their welfare is promoted and effective systems ensure that they are safe and secure at all times. Strong, trusting relationships are built with parents and they have some opportunities to be involved in their child's learning at the setting. The leader has begun to use self-evaluation and the setting has a good capacity to make the necessary changes and to maintain continuous provision.

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

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

- update the record of risk assessment to include any assessments of risks for outings
- extend opportunities for parents and others across different settings to share what they know about the child and become involved in identifying the next steps in their learning and development
- lead and encourage a culture of reflective practice, self-evaluation and informed discussion to involve all staff in identifying the setting's strengths

and priorities for development that will improve the quality of provision for all children

- provide further opportunities for children to self-select toys and activities that motivate and interest them, to include a range of craft and writing materials.

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

The setting has clear and effective procedures in place to ensure that all children are safeguarded and appropriately protected. Staff are aware of the procedures and confident to follow them. The staff are aware of the inter-agency links in place to protect children due to the training they have attended. All staff are employed through robust recruitment and vetting procedures and relevant documentation evidencing their clearance is held on file.

Thorough risk assessments are carried out on the premises, including the outdoor area, and daily checks take place to ensure children are safe. Risk assessments take place for outings and major points are displayed on a poster to ensure all adults are aware of their roles and responsibilities. However, outings are not included in the written risk assessment and therefore there are no records of any action taken following a review or incident.

The staff work as a dedicated and motivated team, sharing areas of responsibility including health and safety, special educational needs, behaviour and inclusion. A good start has been made in self-evaluation and views from parents, in the form of questionnaires, have been used. For example, suggestions for accessing information about the setting online has been addressed and the group now have a social networking site. Developing the outdoor area is an ongoing project and staff endeavour to plan outdoor activities which cover all areas of learning. However, self-evaluation is not fully effective as it is not yet used as a working document to ensure all priorities for development are identified and addressed.

Staff set out an inviting range of toys and equipment for the children as they arrive. They provide some areas of choice, for example, on the floor area where children choose the equipment from photographs. However, there are limited opportunities for children to self-select, such as, writing and craft resources to provide more choice and extend their play opportunities.

Staff are attentive and the high staff ratios ensure all children receive individual attention when needed. Staff know the children very well and plan relevant activities around the children's interests and abilities. They have an effective key person system and have developed close bonds with the children, getting to know each child's family and home setup. All children are valued and their individuality recognised and respected. They use resources, activities and celebrations to promote discussions about similarity and difference and to increase awareness and understanding of diversity. Partnership with parents is good. Parents are very happy with the care and education their children receive within the setting and find the staff approachable and friendly. They receive clear and well-presented information and posters and wall displays ensure that parents are well informed

about the Early Years Foundation Stage. Parents are invited to annual open days to talk to their child's key person about their progress and to share their child's development book. However, parents are not encouraged to share their child's records on a regular basis or to be involved in the planning for their child's next step in their learning. Some links have developed with the schools that the children will attend and teachers visit the children in the setting before the children start school. Some children attend other early years settings and information is shared verbally. However, systems are not in place to ensure this is consistent.

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

Children are happy, settle well, and confidently select their chosen activities. They manage self-help skills such as hand-washing and some manage their own coats. They play well together, involving the other children as well as the adults in their play and firm friendships have developed. Children are involved in record keeping and have ownership of their books. For example, they help to stick photographs and pictures in their books and chat happily about the photographs as they recall the activities. Children enjoy sharing books in small groups and laugh as they point out and discuss the pictures. They know how books work and turn one page at a time.

Lots of opportunities are provided to encourage children's numeracy and problem solving. They sort colours and shapes and use mathematical language in their play. For example, they compare size and shape and use positioning as they build with construction toys. They count the buttons on the snowmen pictures and work out how many eyes and arms their snowman needs. Children are becoming confident in using computers and move the mouse with skill to position items and to change the programs. They enjoy looking through binoculars and laugh as they see the other children appearing larger. Children learn about their local community as they go on regular trips to the library and invite people from the community to their setting. For example, train drivers, fire fighters and the 'zoo lab'. They learn about their own and other cultures through celebrating a range of festivals throughout the year.

Children enjoy role play and take orders with pencils on notepads as they serve pretend tea, pizzas and ice-cream. They dress up in a range of outfits and use their imaginations as they cook for each other. Opportunities to express themselves through paint and other media are available and children enjoy mixing colours with the brushes. Saucepans hanging outside provide opportunities for children to beat out rhythms and dance. They have opportunities to listen to a range of music during snack times and enjoy singing as a large group.

Children's welfare is promoted well and they are healthy and safe within the setting. They learn about healthy eating through a variety of snacks which include fresh fruit and vegetables. They have daily opportunities for fresh air and exercise as they play in the outdoor area. Children ride bicycles, cars and scooters along and some can manage the pedals. They enjoy a balancing activity as they try to walk along a line and run, jump and hop. Children use their fingers to pick up small

wooden sticks to make arms on their snowman pictures and use a range of items such as scissors, brushes and rollers. They learn to keep themselves safe through simple rules and by taking part in fire drills. Children behave well and learn to take turns by playing simple board games. They learn to share the resources and are encouraged to be kind to each other. The staff use pictures of happy and sad faces to help the children to understand the consequences of their actions. Staff are calm and provide high levels of individual attention to support the children to manage their behaviour effectively. They treat them with kindness and respect providing good role models for the children to follow.

## 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	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

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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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## **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