

Child First Bicester

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspection date

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Inspector

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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

Child First, Bicester is one of five nurseries run by Child 1st Limited. It registered in 2006 and is situated on the outskirts of the town of Bicester. The nursery operates from four rooms on the ground floor of a two storey building and all children have access to an enclosed outdoor play area.

The nursery is registered on the Early Years Register and both the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. It is registered to accept a maximum of 166 children at any one time, all of whom may be in the early years age group. There are currently 82 children in the early years age group on roll and 33 of these receive funding for early education. The setting provides support for 10 children who have English as an additional language. The intake of children is from a wide area and children attend for a variety of sessions.

The nursery is open each weekday from 8.00 a.m. until 6.00 p.m. for 50 weeks of the year. There are 15 permanent members of staff and 10 of these have appropriate qualifications at level 2 or above. The provision receives support from the local authority.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is satisfactory.

Both staff and management are dedicated to raising standards and are successfully reorganising policies and practice to drive improvements. Progress with the younger age groups is clearly evident and plans are in place to raise standards and improve consistency within the toddler and preschool rooms. The standard of hygiene is high throughout the nursery and safety precautions successfully help to preserve children's well-being. The setting is building relationships with parents and children's other carers in order to meet children's individual needs but the quality of learning and level of challenge is mixed. Resources in some areas are quite well deployed and the key person system, while still evolving, is not yet fully effective.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- improve the learning and development programme for pre-school children by ensure each works towards specific goals in order to reach their full potential
- link learning to make it relevant and meaningful to the children
- develop the key person system to create better two way communication with parents and provide more consistent care and attention for children.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The staff have a secure understanding of how to safeguard children from harm and supervise children closely to keep them safe. They have effective risk assessments in place to maintain the nursery in a safe condition and most staff build close bonds with the children to help them feel secure. The standard of hygiene is high throughout the nursery and robust procedures are in place to preserve children's wellbeing. For example, all children benefit from outdoor play on a daily basis with older children having free access to outdoor space to enable them to take their learning outside. A chef prepares healthy meals and snacks, catering for special diets successfully to continue children's good health. A water cooler is provided to allow older children to help themselves to drinks whenever they are thirsty.

The staff allocate children a key person to help them settle and encourage a good rapport with parents but the system is not consistent and the success of the relationships is variable. As a result, younger children form strong bonds with their key person, follow a targeted development programme with increasing challenges and feel secure within their rooms. In other areas however, key person bonds are less effective resulting in a lack of focus and valuable learning opportunities being lost. The parents have access to their children's progress records and some information about the day when they drop off and collect. The manager has an open door policy and welcomes discussions about what the children do but the feedback for older children comes from whoever is available and therefore lacks specific detail about each child's day.

Staff working with the younger children work very well as a team to support each other and children's ongoing development effectively. They use resources well by, for example, lifting sand and water onto higher surfaces to assist the very young in pulling themselves up and strengthening their leg muscles as they cruise around the room. Most staff working with the younger children deploy themselves effectively to offer a consistent level of support and develop children's skills further.

Policies and practice are under review in order to raise standards and improve consistency. Staff training is encouraged and robust supervision and appraisal systems are in place to help maintain improvements. The management is very successful at identifying and addressing areas for improvement and processes are being formalised to clarify roles and responsibilities. Significant improvements have been made since recent staffing changes and the management continues to work with staff to raise standards further.

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

The standard of children's care and development is somewhat mixed with the younger children currently being better served by the nursery than those in the pre-school and toddler rooms. As a result, the babies and tots have a varied and stimulating day and form close bonds with the staff who care for them. The key workers have clear aims for each child to work towards and they offer a high level of support to ensure good progress. The older children however, have a range of unrelated activities to choose from that have no obvious links to particular goals or children's interests. As a result, some children find the activities mundane and uninteresting, opting out in order to develop their own games. This results in children becoming very independent and confident. Almost all are capable of organising their own time and confidently linking with others in order to share ideas. The children have a range of activities to sample covering all areas of learning and therefore they make steady progress. However, they do not consistently receive the support they need and an appropriate level of challenge to help them reach their full potential.

The children move around the room sensibly showing control over their movements. They confidently approach visitors and speak clearly to question what they don't understand. For example, several wanted to know the name of the visitor and what they were doing. One child questioned what she had found on discovering a pipe cleaner on the top of a storage unit. She bent the pipe cleaner between her fingers saying 'look, I've made an L', correctly identifying the letter shape she had made. The children enjoy sitting with staff for a story, briefly occupy themselves at the colouring table and examine a table top activity using rubber bands to stretch into patterns. Some linger to explore the resources but have little adult support to make the activity interesting and explain the purpose of the equipment. Some children confidently request scissors to adapt their colouring activity and receive instruction in how to hold the scissors correctly in order to clip paper into pieces. The activities are not routinely linked to make learning relevant and some children become easily bored or refuse to join in.

The young children follow their own routing from home in order to build on their feeling of security while older children adapt to a basic routine to ensure they know what to expect and develop their independence. Most children enjoy attending and mix very well with their peers to form a happy and considerate group. They behave well and enjoy helping staff to tidy away before meals and snacks, developing strong social skills to help them in the future. The staff encourage older children to find their own coats before playing outdoors and the children are beginning to take control over their personal care, using the toilet and washing hands with increasing independence. Some staff routinely include simple number work as children play and consistently try to support children. However, most take a reactive rather than a pro-active approach to children's learning and development. The staff observe what children do in order to plan for the day and young children work at their own level to help them reach their full potential. Older children continue to make steady progress, learning from each other and

intermittently with the support of the staff.

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?	3
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	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	3
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding	3
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	2
The effectiveness of partnerships	3
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	3

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
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Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	3
The extent to which children feel safe	3
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