

RAF Wyton Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspector	Anna Davies

Setting address	Bennet Childcare Centre, Wiltshire Road, Wyton on the Hill Huntingdon, Cambridgeshire, PE28 2EX
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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*.

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Description of the setting

RAF Wyton Pre-School opened in 1969 and is managed by a voluntary management committee. It operates from a single storey, purpose-built building which is situated just outside of the base at RAF Wyton, Cambridgeshire. This building is also shared by Fledglings Day Nursery. All children have access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area. The setting serves the families of the RAF personnel who live on the base as well as residents living in the local area. It is open each weekday during term time only and sessions are from 9:10am until 12:10pm and 1pm until 3:30pm.

The pre-school is registered on the Early Years Register. A maximum of 25 children may attend the pre-school at any one time. There are currently 28 children aged from two to under five years on roll, some in part-time places. The pre-school currently supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities as well as children who speak English as an additional language.

The setting employs four members of staff, all of whom hold appropriate early years qualifications. An administrator is also employed. The setting provides funded early education for three- and four-year-olds and receives support from the local authority.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children feel safe and secure in the welcoming environment. They enjoy participating in a varied range of stimulating activities which allow them to make good progress in their learning and development. Staff have developed secure skills in observing and assessing children's progress. Good partnership working with parents and carers ensures that the staff know the children well and are able to effectively respect and meet their individual needs. Partnerships with other providers also delivering the Early Years Foundation Stage to children at the setting are less well established. Clear systems of self-evaluation have been implemented, identifying realistic areas for development and the manager, staff and committee are all fully committed to continually improving the provision for all children.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- re-consider the organisation of large group times to ensure that they meet the needs of all children
- develop further the assessment and planning procedures to identify specific next steps of learning for individual children and show how these are fed into

- the planning in order to provide highly individualised learning opportunities
- implement an effective system that provides a two-way flow of information with other providers who deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Staff are fully aware of their responsibilities towards safeguarding children. There is a safeguarding policy in place, which is clearly understood and shared with parents. Recruitment procedures are secure and all staff have undergone the necessary checks to ensure their suitability. It is fully understood that those waiting for checks to come back, are never left alone with children. Staff work well together as a small team. They deploy themselves effectively which means that activities such as outdoor play and snack time are very well supported and supervised. Children play in a safe and secure environment, due to staff's thorough understanding of assessing risks in the children's surroundings, both inside and outside as well as on outings. Written risk assessments are of good quality and are effective in identifying and minimising potential risks to children. A good range of policies and procedures underpin the good practice at the setting and these are implemented effectively by all staff. These are currently being updated to ensure that information contained in them remains up to date.

The setting is bright, welcoming, clean and safe. Space and resources are organised well to support children's learning in all areas. There is easy access to toys and resources arranged at a low level to encourage independent play. Children's work is displayed around the room and children independently add pictures that they have made to these displays. This demonstrates that they understand that their contributions are valued which gives them a strong sense of belonging. The garden has been further developed to include a wide range of play equipment to challenge children's physical skills. Children also enjoy the nature area where they can observe wildlife and smell the fragrant flowers. Sessions flow smoothly and children are very familiar with routines such as tidy up time where each colour group is given specific responsibility for an area to tidy. However, the organisation of large group times, such as when taking the register and storytime, are less effective. For example, some children become restless and disengaged which disrupts this time for others. Children help celebrate a range of multicultural festivals and use a good range of resources in their play which help them become aware of and explore diversity. For example, 'Look at me' displays with mirrors, encourage children to look at and discuss their differences and similarities. Staff promote inclusive practice well. Children who speak English as an additional language are effectively supported. For example, when children choose a book to share, staff use simple, clear language and gestures to convey the story. Visual flashcards are used to familiarise children new to the setting, with routines. Clear systems are in place to work closely with parents and any outside agencies in order to fully support children's additional needs.

Staff demonstrate a clear understanding of the benefits of working closely with parents. A good range of information is obtained from parents when they start so that staff are aware of children's likes, dislikes, welfare needs and abilities as well

as any concerns that the parent may have. Parents are given information about the Early Years Foundation Stage and learn about up and coming activities through newsletters. A whiteboard and informative notice board displays further information about activities and snack. Open mornings and daily discussions provide parents with opportunities to spend time with their child in the setting, look at assessment records and talk to the child's keyworker about the progress they are making. Parental involvement is highly regarded. For example, family friendly committee meetings have been implemented, 'Hero' the teddy bear goes home with children at the weekend and information goes home with children about how parents can support and further extend the topics being covered with the children at the setting. Parent feedback from questionnaires is very positive and any suggestions made are welcomed and actioned by staff. In the past, the setting has worked positively in partnership with other providers also delivering the Early Years Foundation Stage to children in their care. However, this has lapsed and the manager has yet to establish such partnerships to benefit children currently attending more than one setting.

There is a good commitment from all staff to attend training on a regular basis in order to consistently update their learning and skills. Systems for self-evaluation and effective monitoring of the practice have been established and realistic areas for development identified. As a result, staff's capacity to maintain continuous improvement is good. For example, staff have addressed recommendations raised at the last inspection which has improved the organisation of snack time and children's knowledge, understanding and appreciation of diversity. The setting has also sought funding and fundraised themselves, to purchase a wide range of resources and new equipment which has particularly benefited children's physical development, imaginative play and information technology skills.

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

Children are very happy and settled in the pre-school. A good range of age-appropriate activities and experiences are offered to children, both planned and child initiated. This ensures children are for the most part, actively engaged in their learning. All staff support children's learning well. They have good knowledge about individual children and children appreciate this as they discuss family events or hobbies such as dancing. Staff make effective use of routine activities such as snack time, to promote learning. For example, children taste a wide variety of fresh fruit, discussing where it comes from and what it tastes and feels like. They take a keen interest in the stone in the middle of the mango; shaking it to hear the seeds rattle. Staff ask lots of questions such as 'what could it be inside?' and 'how can we look inside?' This gives children lots of opportunities to explore, investigate and solve simple problems. Staff offer good levels of challenge. For example, a member of staff notices that a child can ably write her own name and is beginning to form the letters correctly in the word 'mummy' so she extends this, supporting the child to attempt to write the word 'daddy'. This proves more challenging but the child perseveres and the member of staff ensures that she praises the child for her efforts which boosts her self-esteem.

Observation, planning and assessment arrangements continue to evolve. Each child has an assessment folder which contains regular observations once the child has settled into the setting. Staff are just beginning to use longer observations to increase the range of information gathered about children's learning. Next steps are identified. However, these tend to be very general and not always specific to the aspect of learning that they wish to promote next with the individual child. Planning covers the six areas of learning so is well balanced across the curriculum. Key activity planners give more detail about specific learning intentions. However, planning does not demonstrate how children's individual next steps will be incorporated into the activities provided. Despite this though, children still make good progress in their learning because staff use their secure knowledge about individual children, to support and effectively challenge children in their learning.

Children are confident and independent; they pour their own drinks, wash their own cups and see to personal needs such as toileting and wiping their own noses. They share warm relationships with each other and staff, working together, for example, to construct train tracks or to spontaneously share resources at the play dough table. Children are confident to ask for help and demonstrate pride when they are supported in achieving things for themselves such as doing their own zip up. They learn to take responsibility such as when asked to tidy specific areas so that they can go outside to play. Children enjoy mark-making with fun activities such as using water and a variety of implements to draw shapes and their names on the patio. They confidently talk about and describe their ideas. For example, one child makes snips with scissors along a piece of paper and describes how he is going to make it look like a piano keyboard. Children understand that print carries meaning. For example, they point to text in a book and ask 'what does that say?' a good range of books supports children's early love of reading and this is further extended by borrowing books to take home to share with their families. Children confidently use number language in their play. They count the number of children present and count backwards as they describe when the cheesy biscuits they have made will be ready. They are encouraged to calculate. For example, a member of staff asks children 'if we have four knives and five children, how many more knives do we need?'. Children learn about nature as they enjoy the wildlife in the garden, bird watching and looking at bugs with microscopes. They learn about caring for other living things such as their pets, through topic work and activities. Children enjoy using a good range of equipment and resources that supports their developing information technology skills. This includes a computer, programmable toys, digital camera and resources such as torches which they use in the 'black hole' den they have created. All of these activities help to lay secure foundations for children's future economic well-being.

Children learn about healthy lifestyles through action songs such as 'The bean game' where they learn to move their bodies in different ways. Children notice changes in their body during activities like these saying 'my heart is beating' or 'I am hot' which staff use as a learning opportunity to discuss the effect that exercise has on their bodies. Healthy eating is fully promoted through snack time provision and discussions as well as activities such as shopping for healthy foods. Children enjoy regular exercise and fresh air in the outdoor play spaces. Play equipment in these areas offers lots of physical challenges which children enjoy and benefit

from. Children have good opportunities to be creative through a wide range of art and craft, imaginative and musical activities. For example, they create their own stone pets using paint, cellophane for hair and wiggly eyes. Other children prefer to spend long periods of time mixing the different coloured paint and this choice is fully respected by staff.

Children are cared for in a safe, clean and hygienic environment. They are learning about keeping themselves safe through gentle reminders such as keeping their slippers on so that their toes do not get trodden on as well as planned activities covering road safety and stranger awareness. Children and staff follow good hygiene routines. For example, children understand the importance of washing their hands before snack and know how to access and dispose of tissues to prevent cross-contamination. All staff hold valid first aid qualifications which ensures that minor accidents can be dealt with effectively. Records of accidents and any medication needing to be administered are well maintained. Children's medical needs are well documented and close working with parents ensures that children's health is fully protected. The pre-school provides children with a healthy and nutritious range of snacks and water is freely accessible to children at all times. Children behave well during most parts of each session although the organisation of some large group times does not always help children to behave positively. Some children regulate their own behaviour, taking turns independently and reminding each other of good manners. Pre-school rules have been devised by staff and children and children remind each other of these if they feel it is appropriate.

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	3
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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