

Sunbeams Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

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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*.

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Description of the setting

Sunbeams Pre-School opened in 2002. It is one of three Sunbeams groups in Stevenage, Hertfordshire. The pre-school operates from the Bedwell Community Centre. A maximum of 26 children may attend at any time. The pre-school is open on Monday and Friday each week during the school term, from 9:15am to 12.15pm and 9:15am to 3:30pm on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday with a lunch club. The group have use of one of the main halls, a small kitchen with storage areas and toilets. All children share access to a secure, part-covered enclosed outdoor area.

There are currently 32 children on roll within the Early Years Foundation Stage. The pre-school is registered with Ofsted on the Early Years Register.

The pre-school employs four members of staff, who all have appropriate childcare and first aid qualifications.

The pre-school supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and also supports children who have English as an additional language.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children are happy and settled in this welcoming pre-school. Good observations of children's individual achievements and well-planned challenges and choices enable children to make good progress towards the early learning goals. Staff ensure that parents are informed about what their children are doing and effectively share information about their needs and routines.

The manager and staff are motivated and have a positive approach to self-evaluation. They fully risk assess all areas and ensure that most of the resources are in good condition.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- ensure that toys are safe and suitable for their purpose.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children's safety and welfare are actively promoted. The pre-school has robust safeguarding procedures and all members of staff are vigilant in their risk assessment and observations. Staff responsibilities are clearly understood and stringent checks are carried out to ensure that all staff are suitable to work with

children. Thorough risk assessments and daily checks ensure that hazards are minimised. Staff have taken active steps to improve safety, for example, moving the gate of the outside area to a more suitable position to enable the children to evacuate the premises safely in an emergency. Good daily practice, such as the provision of nutritious food and helping children to adopt good hygiene routines, means that children's health is promoted. For example, the Sunbeams pre-schools have adopted a 'snot station' where all children learn to wipe their own nose, dispose of the tissue and clean their hands with anti-bacterial gel routinely. They discuss daily good hygiene practices and how to prevent germs from getting inside their tummies, making them unwell.

The owner, manager and staff have a clear vision for the future. All staff and parents are involved in the self-evaluation process, children's ideas and comments are also valued and respected. Staff are supported in attending further training and gaining qualifications. This helps create a positive learning environment, where both children and staff thrive. Most resources are used well to promote children's learning and development. For example, staff are deployed well to allow children to choose to play indoor and outside whatever the weather. The outside area is used very well with children planting flowers, fruit and vegetables and making their own, home grown potato salad. Children notice the water in the tyres has frozen which leads to a discussion about melting. Very good use is made of the children's interests and ideas. The children enjoy dressing up and have a huge basket of dressing up shoes. They choose to wear these, pair them up and learn about size when they are too big with socks and too small if they put them over their own shoes. Most resources are in good condition and fully support children's development. However, some of the pedal bikes only have one pedal each. This may impede children's developing physical skills as their feet can not fit properly on the metal rods.

Very detailed observations and assessments ensure that each child's needs are well met and their next steps are incorporated into the detailed planning. Staff are very observant, and provide additional accessories to encourage children to explore. Spades, plastic insects and mini beasts encourage children to dig in the garden to plant seeds and to search for worms. The pre-school staff have a good understanding of equality of opportunity, enabling them to provide a service which is inclusive for all children and their families. They make sure that they understand each child's background, cultures and beliefs and encourage children to recognise and respect differences. Children's self-esteem is promoted as they are offered opportunities to talk about their beliefs, families and recent experiences. This enables all children to feel welcome and valued.

Good communication with all parents, including those who speak English as an additional language, results in good partnership working. Parents receive thorough information about the setting. They receive regular information and have daily talks with staff. Parents and carers are encouraged to view their children's learning journeys and to complete formal observations at home. The setting also works well in partnership with other professionals such as childminders and other settings that the children may attend, further promoting consistent, appropriate care for children.

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

Children make good progress in all areas of learning and are supported in achieving because staff have a secure understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage. Children are acquiring good skills and attitudes towards learning as a direct result of the good input from the staff team. They observe and assess children as they play, using this information to inform activity planning. Staff can respond quickly to children's developmental needs as adaptations to planned activities can be carried out on a daily basis. This enables them to provide relevant activities to promote children's individual development.

The environment is attractive and accessible, enabling children to make independent choices and select their own resources. This promotes children's confidence and self-motivation. For example, children choose when to play outside and when to come back in. They participate in the preparation of the snack, cutting the apples with safe knives, learning to use tools safely. They also access drinking water when they want from a water dispenser and pour their own milk at snack time.

Children display their feelings of safety as they confidently move from one area of play to another, accessing their own resources to develop their own play. They routinely learn how to keep themselves healthy and safe, for example, adopting a healthy routine at the 'snot station' where tissues, a bin, anti-bacterial gel and posters enable children to establish very good habits. The children show care and respect for each other, for example one child helped another with her boot zip. Children work cooperatively, as when one child is sitting on the see saw alone, another child realised there needs to be two children and joined her.

Children are rewarded with lots of praise from staff, which further promotes their self-esteem. Stickers for kind deeds and good tidying up give the children a sense of pride. Children have secure relationships with the staff, whose consistent approach to behaviour management enables children to feel secure and develop their understanding of appropriate behaviour. They show care and concern for each other, sharing resources, listening and taking turns in discussions. Staff act as good role models and encourage children to work together to sort out any issues. Children respond positively and demonstrate a good sense of responsibility for their behaviour. Children's understanding of diversity is developed as they participate in daily discussions, access relevant resources and celebrate festivals that reflect their beliefs and those of their friends.

Children who speak English as an additional language are well supported and make good progress. They are supported in developing their knowledge of English but staff also value the children's own language, using key words and picture clues.

The pre-school has good procedures for working with parents and other professionals. This means that children who have more than one main carer are provided with appropriate information sharing and consistent support to enable them to participate and make good progress across all settings that they attend.

Children's behaviour demonstrates that they feel safe. They are confident and therefore are actively involved in their learning, developing positive attitudes to this. Children are encouraged to be active learners and explore. For example, children are very competent and skillfully use the selection of computers and programmes, working together and also independently. Well thought out activities challenge the children's thinking. Children develop skills for the future as they share ideas and work together. For example, children using a train track set discuss how to do it and which trains fit on the track. Children have opportunities to develop early reading and writing skills. Young children enjoy snuggling up with a member of staff and sharing a book. Children regularly make marks with paint, crayons, pens and pencils as part of an activity as well as in their chosen activity. They enjoy exploring musical instruments and the different sounds they make, this enables them to learn about rhyme and to create their own music in a creative way.

All children, based on their starting points and abilities, make good progress towards the early learning goals in this welcoming pre-school.

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	2
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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