

Pumpkin Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspector

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Setting address

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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.

Please see our website for more information about each childcare provider. We publish inspection reports, conditions of registration and details of complaints we receive where we or the provider take action to meet the requirements of registration.

Description of the setting

Pumkin Pre-School is privately owned and was registered in 2002 . It operates from St. Lawrence's Church Hall in Abbots Langely, Hertfordshire. The pre-school serves the local area and has strong links with local schools. It is accessible to all children. There is no outdoor play area.

The pre-school opens Monday to Friday during school term times. Sessions are from 9.15am to 2.30pm. Children are able to attend for a variety of sessions. A maximum of 24 children may attend the pre-school at any one time. There are currently 33 children attending who are within the Early Years Foundation Stage. The pre-school 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 and a half, 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 members of child care staff. Of these, five hold appropriate early years qualifications at Level 3 or above. Three of these staff members are working towards higher qualifications including the Early Years Foundation Degree. Two further members of staff are working towards a Level 3 qualification. The pre-school receives support from the local authority.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

The manager and her staff are well trained and committed. They take positive steps to ensure children are safeguarded, welfare needs are met and progression towards the early learning goals are mostly well delivered. They valued individual children and inclusion is positively promoted. Partnership with other professionals involved in the children's learning and development is a key strength of the provision. Monitoring of the provision involves most parties and some areas for development have been identified.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- review the planning and organisation of systems to ensure every child receives an enjoyable and challenging learning and development experience that is tailored to meet their individual needs with particular regard to daily outings, large group sessions and providing further opportunities for writing for different purposes
- review the culture of reflective practice so that it includes children's views and that of their parents or carers and use this to identify the setting's strengths' and priorities for development that will improve the quality of

provision for all children.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The pre-school leader and her staff have a good understanding of safeguarding issues which promotes children's welfare. Safe recruitment ensures all adults are suitable to work with children. Robust procedures for arrival and departure ensure children are handed over safely to a known adult and effective steps are taken to ensure children have a clear understanding of how to stay safe. Risk assessments for all areas including outings within the local environment ensure risks to children are minimised. The pre-school leader is in the process of taking steps to ensure the uncovered radiators do not pose a hazard to children.

She has a clear sense of purpose about what she wants to achieve. For example, she has almost completed an Early Years Foundation Degree and is keen to progress knowledge gained even further. She is a good role model and regularly shares information with the staff. In addition, a quality assurance scheme is being considered for the future so that effective monitoring of the outcomes can take place. Staff training is very well supported and many of the team are attending further training to acquire further child care qualifications. All staff and the owner are fully involved in the self-evaluation process and some areas have been identified to improve the outcomes for children such as the development of resources. Although children's and parents views are welcome these are yet to be used in the self-evaluation process.

Staff are clear about their roles and responsibilities including key person duties. They are mostly well deployed and interact positively with children at all times. Regular staff meetings and appraisals ensure skills such as first aid and safeguarding are refreshed. They work very hard to ensure the environment is interesting and accessible to all children. For example, attractive displays of photographs of children engaged in a wide range of activities and relative information such as policies and procedures ensure that children develop a secure sense of belonging. Children are occasionally taken on outings within the local environment so that they learn about the world around them. For example, they post letters at the post box or visit the church. Staff are in discussions regarding the development of the outdoor area so that outcomes for all children are enhanced.

The pre-school actively promotes inclusive practice. For example, there is an extremely good partnership with outside agencies such as play specialists, speech therapists and the area special educational needs co-ordinator to effectively support and meet children's individual needs. In addition, health visitors and teachers from children's proposed schools to ease transition times. Parents speak highly of the pre-school and they are happy to recommend the provision. They are encouraged to be involved in their children's learning through daily discussions and by joining the parent rota. Some documentation has been translated so that parents of children with additional languages are effectively supported. The pre-school leader is in the process of reviewing procedures on the sharing of children's

records so that parents are fully aware of their children's achievements and the next steps in their development. Parents and carers regularly take part in fund raising activities such as a 'Teddy Bear's Picnic'.

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

The committed pre-school leader and her staff have a secure knowledge of the Early Years Foundation Stage. Children make very good progress towards the early learning goals and one to one support is provided to ensure that an inclusive practice is provided. Advice from supporting agencies is effectively used to ensure all children are able to fully participate. Children's starting points and ongoing interests are well known through the use of key worker groups and a good induction system. This means that children are effectively valued, settle easily and are happy in their play. Planning and assessment are linked to all areas of learning and are easily available. These systems are being reviewed so that children's ongoing interests and preferred learning styles are incorporated more fully into planning. A systematic approach is used to make sensitive observations of the children during the adult and child-led activities. These are evaluated and shared within the team to inform further steps in the children's learning.

Children arrive happily and are keen to start playing as soon as they can. There is a good balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities that fosters learning across all areas ensuring children are always well occupied in purposeful tasks. For example, they love imaginative play in the home area or office. Resources are generally well set out to create interest and stimulation. They play well independently and in groups becoming active, curious and inquisitive learners. They confidently select resources such as books, construction and painting where they enjoy experimenting with colour to create butterfly effect pictures. They enjoy creating models from play dough which is often varied so that children can engage all their senses during their play. For example, the addition of mint essence and glitter creates added interest and provides ample opportunities for discussion.

Children self register so that they learn how to recognise their own names, they have daily opportunities at the 'graphics table' to mark make and older children confidently write their own names and are eager to develop their emerging writing skills. However, there are few opportunities in all other areas for children to engage in mark making. Since the last inspection staff engage children in more effective mathematical language during their play such as construction, cooking and the completion of jigsaws. Some of these reflect various expressions and are effectively used with children so that they can express their feelings. This means that children develop good levels of self-esteem. Other jigsaws show various people from different cultures so that children learn about diversity and how different people live. In addition, festivals are celebrated through a range of activities such as dressing up in various costumes and the sharing of celebration food. Parents are invited to share their experiences and family backgrounds so that children learn about other cultures.

Children's language and communication skills are effectively promoted through the

sharing of books. This means that children learn that print carries meaning. Circle time provides children with opportunities to share news. They talk about the weather, days of the week, count each other and sing favourite songs. However, the organisation of this large group time means that potential learning such as challenges for some children is missed. The safe use of tools such as scissors, rolling pins and the free-flow snack procedure all contribute effectively to the development of children's skills for the future. They enjoy the freedom to play with tunnels and ride on wheeled toys which contributes to their good health. Social skills such as turn taking are encouraged throughout children's play and the successful use of a sand timer supports this.

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	1
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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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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