

The Saplings Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspector ISP Inspection

Setting address Burnham Copse Primary School, Newchurch Road, Tadley,
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Type of setting Childcare on non-domestic premises

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Introduction

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Description of the setting

The Saplings Pre-School opened in 2005. It operates from a purpose built pre-school unit within Burnham Copse Primary School in Tadley, Hampshire. There is an outdoor area and grounds, kitchen, toilets and office. It serves families from the local community, surrounding areas and villages.

The pre-school is registered on the Early Years Register to provide care for 26 children, aged from two to five years. The pre-school receives funding for 34 three and four year old children. The pre-school is able to support children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and also children who speak English as an additional language.

The pre-school opens five days a week during school term times. It is open from 9am until 3pm on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday and from 9am until 12 noon on Fridays. Children can attend a variety of sessions.

Ten members of staff work with the children. Eight members of staff have a recognised early years qualification. The setting receives support from the school in which it is sited as well as an advisor from the local authority and the Pre-School Learning Alliance (PLA).

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is outstanding.

The Saplings Pre-School makes outstanding provision for the children. There is a highly effective team working with the manager, which ensures that individual children's needs are met. There are many exciting and stimulating activities, covering all areas of learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage, ensuring that children's learning and development are outstanding. The pre-school has sustained the outstanding provision that was identified at the last inspection and continued to drive forward. There is an excellent focus on monitoring and evaluating practice and staff are actively involved in developing their expertise and adding to their qualifications. There is an outstanding capacity for further improvement.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To further improve the high quality early years provision the registered person should consider:

- ensuring that observations and assessments consistently identify next steps in learning

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Safeguarding procedures are extremely comprehensive and rigorous and there is a great emphasis on ensuring that children are kept safe at all times. All procedures for ensuring that staff are suitable to work with children are fully in place and staff have first-aid and child-protection training. At the start and end of each session, the inside and outdoor areas and equipment are thoroughly assessed for risks and the assessment sheet displayed in the office.

The manager is skilled and very experienced. A well qualified and established team of key workers all contribute to the excellent day-to-day practice. The self-evaluation is of high quality and clearly outlines how the pre-school plans to develop further. For example, it is hoping to establish a Friday afternoon session in the summer for children moving to school in September in order to aid transition. Planning is of high quality and demonstrates extremely well how more able children can be extended and support provided for those who find things more difficult. Regular staff meetings mean that practice is evaluated on a regular basis and all are committed to improvement. Training programmes are very well targeted to meet the needs of the staff. The reflection of the week is an excellent document clearly showing key achievements and what can be further built on.

Equal opportunities are promoted extremely well and the pre-school is fully inclusive. Diversity is celebrated and discrimination not tolerated in any form. Partnerships with parents and carers are excellent. Parents and carers receive regular newsletters and a wide range of information about activities taking place. They are extremely happy with the provision for their children. Parents and carers are invited to share information about their child's learning and development at home by contributing to the 'learning journeys' which record the child's achievements. Parents receive regular feedback about their children and staff make themselves available to speak with them at any time. There are more formal opportunities to discuss their child's progress and next steps in learning and development at regular intervals. Parents willingly help with new developments. The digital photo frame which provides a delightful slide show of children at pre-school was set up with the aid of a parent.

The pre-school has very close links with the school and with other nursery settings. The pre-school utilises links with public services, such as the fire brigade to re-enforce key learning so children understand better how to keep themselves safe.

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

The children settle quickly in the morning and are very well cared for and happy. They enjoy their early morning activities as other children arrive and happily wave off their parents and carers. Those who are a little slower to settle are sympathetically cared for by their key worker. After a whole group session children rapidly become absorbed in a wide variety of activities which enable them to

develop and learn effectively. Children are very sociable. They gain confidence and learn how to share and work together. They cooperate willingly with other children and adults.

Children freely access equipment both indoors and out and take responsibility for their own learning. The environment is stimulating. Maximum use is made of the space available and children are constantly reminded how to move around the room safely. Activities are imaginative and exciting, so that children really enjoy their time at pre-school and make excellent progress across all areas of learning and development. Great attention is paid to ensuring that the needs and interests of all children are met. Children were happily making collage pictures of Clifford the Big Red Dog, and discussing the different textures of the papers and materials provided. Staff took every opportunity to discuss with the children what they were doing. While playing musical instruments with their key worker children learn to playing softly – 'like the rain beginning to fall' and gradually build up to the huge crescendo of a 'thunderstorm!' They love it, but also benefit from the opportunity to develop an early understanding of comparative language such as 'louder than', 'softer than'. Mathematical activities are made fun. Children spend time weighing out sugar into the balances until the two sides were level. The snowman had circles for buttons and eyes, rectangles for arms and scarf. When cooking children count the raisins they use as buttons on the gingerbread men.

The enclosed outdoor area for the children is well equipped. They enjoy riding bicycles, playing in the sand and wheeling the wheelbarrow around. They have the opportunity to ride up and down a 'real' road. The opportunity is taken to teach road safety using the zebra crossing.

Planning shows coverage of all areas of learning and specific activities planned for the week, based on the children's interests and needs. It clearly indicates what knowledge and skills are to be gained from the activities, particularly those planned and led by adults. All children have an individual learning plan. Regular observations are made of children's progress in all areas of learning and these are recorded in their profiles, which are enhanced by photographs. However, they don't always identify what the next steps in learning could be.

Children enjoy a range of healthy snacks and through discussions with adults gain an excellent understanding of healthy lifestyles. Children have plenty of exercise and fresh air in the outdoor environment. All activities are well planned to ensure children understand the need to stay safe. They all fully understand the importance of playing safely together and moving around the premises sensibly. Behaviour is excellent and children respond well to consistent use of positive praise. Relationships are very good and children support each other well and share resources. They enjoy taking responsibilities, such as giving out the drinks and snacks. Self-registration and making choices of the activities they wish to pursue means they learn to take responsibility for their own learning and make excellent progress towards achieving the necessary skills for the future.

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?	1
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	1

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	1
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	1
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	1
The effectiveness of safeguarding	1
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	1
The effectiveness of partnerships	1
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	1

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
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Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	1
The extent to which children feel safe	1
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	1
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	1

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