

Charltons Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspector Janet Dinsmore

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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

Charlton's Pre-School has been established for over 20 years and operates from a mobile classroom, situated within the grounds of Charlton Mackerell Primary School. Children have use of a main playroom, integral toilet facilities, enclosed outdoor area and decking. They can also use the adjoining school grounds, playing field, hard standing playground and orchard area with static play equipment.

The pre-school sessions are from 9am until 12 noon with an option to stay for lunch club until 1pm, weekdays during school term time. The pre-school is registered on the Early Years Register for 22 children aged between two and five years, and there are currently 22 on roll, 18 receive early years funding.

There are four members of staff employed, three of whom have early years qualifications at level 3. The pre-school is run by a parent committee and is a member of the Pre-School Learning Alliance and receives support from the local authority.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Charltons Pre-School is a good provision where children's learning, development and enjoyment are promoted well. There are excellent relationships between children, staff and parents leading to a calm purposeful atmosphere. The bright, welcoming, well maintained indoor and outdoor environments are well resourced and there is a good programme of visits and visitors that contribute very well to children's learning. There are outstanding links with the neighbouring school and excellent engagement with parents and carers. Effective self-evaluation demonstrates a good capacity for further improvement.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- increase the proportion of time in the session for independent learning in freely chosen activities.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

All staff are well trained to ensure that safeguarding of children is a priority. All necessary checks are carried out on staff and records kept securely. Recruitment procedures are effective, ensuring that staff are appropriately qualified and experienced. Risk assessment is good, noted particularly for the outing to the library on the day of the inspection, where the visit was conducted with full regard for safety.

Very good staff ratios are maintained so children get good support with their learning and development. An interesting range of resources is used to promote good progress in all the areas of learning, particularly physical development, where children use equipment such as a balancing beam and trampoline. Although there is not a wide diversity of backgrounds and cultures represented in the setting the staff focus on promoting community cohesion well. Children celebrated Chinese New Year and enjoyed an opportunity to try Chinese food. Equality and diversity are promoted through good displays using photographs of families other origins and the use of a variety of resources. All children are valued and treated equally in the setting and have access to all it provides.

The pre-school leader and staff all contribute to self-evaluation taking into account the views of parents, carers and children. They have an accurate view of the pre-school and the areas for improvement. Recent developments to the outdoor provision have made it suitable for use in all weathers and extended children's learning opportunities. Recommendations from the previous inspection, to develop story time with puppets and props and to provide an opportunity for children to display their own work, have been implemented and children use these opportunities well.

There is an excellent partnership with the host school. The children join the Reception class each week, giving them access to more information and communication technology resources and ensuring a very smooth transition when joining the school. Excellent engagement with parents and carers is reflected in the very high level of support they provide for the pre-school, and their shared role in promoting children's learning and development.

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

Children really enjoy pre-school. They make good progress in all the areas of learning and development because of the well considered range of activities that are provided. They learn how to conduct themselves very safely and with consideration for others, especially on a range of outings throughout the year, including that to the local library. They know that high visibility vests help other people to 'see them because they are little', and that holding hands is essential so that roads and car parks can be crossed safely. Children enjoy selecting books from the library to take back to pre-school, joining in with the refrain in a story and recognising familiar words, titles and letters. During the whole of this visit they behave very well and gentle reminders from adults ensure that it is conducted safely.

Children play safely on large play equipment during the visit to the playground because they are considerate for each other. With good encouragement from adults that challenge their physical capabilities, they make their own assessments of safety. The toy tools and large construction kit are well used in the role play area. Children enthusiastically speak of their plans to construct a robot that transforms, drawing designs on a whiteboard and illustrating four precise wheels,

showing good number and drawing skills. They play well together and, as a large group, share an imaginative journey, using the good range of resources provided, including books, manuals and a camera placed in a vehicle they had been making in the role play area. They make shakers and 'guitars' to join with a singer visiting later in the session. Children enjoy watering the seeds and potatoes they have planted excitedly telling everyone about the shoots they are observing. They play in the sand, investigating how sand moves through funnels and whether sand and rice can be separated using a sieve.

Staff support children's learning well with discussion and questions about the activities, for example using a screwdriver to change the battery in the camera, promoting imaginative role play, and how to construct a shaker. Children and adults eat lunch together so promoting good social interactions and conversations about the morning activities. A healthy snack, water and milk are provided during the morning giving a good opportunity for key workers to talk to the children in their own group. This, along with very many opportunities for children to be physically active helps them to adopt healthy lifestyles.

Medium term planning gives an overview of the weeks of term with key events, visits and visitors providing a wide variety of learning experiences. Very good use is made of the local area, with regular walks. Parents support visits to the local library, allotment and garden. Planning and adult selection of activities ensures there is a balance of all the areas of learning and development during the week. However, planning for the morning session does not allocate sufficient time for children to develop their learning independently through self-chosen activities. Staff have good knowledge of the Early Years Foundation Stage and regular planning meetings review the activities offered to ensure that children are appropriately challenged. Adults make good observations of children's learning and development and these are reviewed each term and contribute effectively to planning for next steps of learning.

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	1

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	1
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	1
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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