

The Little Pennies 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

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Description of the setting

The Little Pennies Pre-School opened in purpose built new premises, situated within the grounds of Sixpenny Handley First School in Wiltshire, in September 2010. It is managed by a charity run committee of parents. The pre-School is on the Early Years Register and may care for a maximum of 20 children at any one time; the pre-school has links with the school on site. The pre-School is in receipt of funding for the provision of education for children aged three and four years of age. It operates during term time from 8.45am until 2.45pm on Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays; on Fridays, it runs from 8.45am until 12.15pm. The areas used include an outside learning area, a kitchen, an office and separate toilet facilities for children and adults. The children also have access to the school hall, field and playground.

During the summer term, children who will be going up to the reception class in the school form a special group. They are accommodated in the school building with familiar staff and enjoy extra sessions, helping them get used to the larger building and older children.

There are currently 20 children on roll who are aged from three to under five years. The setting welcomes children with special educational needs and who speak English as an additional language.

Four members of staff are employed. The manager and her deputy both have a Level 3 National Vocational Qualification and two other practitioners have a Level 2 qualification. The Pre-School is a member of the Pre-School Learning Alliance.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Provision is good and the pre-school meets the needs of all children well. All groups are welcomed warmly and nurtured very effectively by members of staff. The systems in place are efficient and mainly ensure that children make good progress. All routines to ensure the security and safety of all children are outstanding. The issues identified for improvement at the last inspection have been dealt with efficiently. The manager and all members of staff show a strong commitment to continuous improvement and the capacity to improve is good.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- ensure the self-evaluation form is completed and identify, through analysis, strengths as well as weaknesses that need improving.

- ensure that all key workers identify in their planning documents those very small steps in learning children need to take in order to make good progress.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Leadership and management are good at embedding ambition and driving improvement. All practitioners work exceptionally well as a team. The manager works closely with the Chair of the Committee. She is kept well informed by the manager and plays a valuable role in support of the pre-school as well as keeping parents informed. The training of all practitioners to ensure their professional development is a high priority. Required policies and procedures reflect the high expectations placed upon children's safety. Very efficient systems are in place for recruiting and checking the suitability of new staff; as a result, safeguarding is outstanding.

The manager is constantly evaluating her practice, however, a formal self-evaluation form has not yet been completed to aid further and quicker improvement. That said, actions taken by the pre-school to improve provision are carefully planned to meet the children's needs and their impact is evident in the good progress children make.

Good opportunities are given to Key Workers to concentrate on individual children to ensure their needs are being met. Children are observed closely to identify the next steps in learning they need to take to sustain good progress. In order to improve planning further, practitioners should focus more on the very small steps children need to take to sustain their progress and accelerate it further.

Resources are of good quality and are well deployed and displayed. They are used imaginatively and efficiently to support children's progress and achievement. All members of staff respect the diversity of the different backgrounds represented within the setting and are good at ensuring equal access for all; for example, practitioners fully understand the need to ensure that children identified as having special educational needs and/or disabilities are fully included and supported.

Links with parents and the host school are excellent. Parents are very enthusiastic; for example, a parent commented 'members of staff are very sympathetic and caring when my child doesn't want me to leave. They even telephone me to say he calmed down when I left'. Each half term a week is set aside for parents to 'stay and play', when they can share their children's experiences. In the summer term, children visit the host school for several sessions and are very well prepared for transfer to the Reception class in September.

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

The practitioners' good knowledge of the Early Years Foundation Stage requirements enables them to ensure the children progress well in their learning, both indoors and out. They know the children in their key worker group well and plan challenging learning opportunities for them. Children are happy and feel exceptionally safe. They actively engage with the very wide range of resources. All children, including those who find learning difficult, make good progress and achieve well because they are very well cared for and individually supported.

Adults play alongside the children and use questions well to encourage them to talk and extend their vocabulary. The children make good progress in their speaking and listening skills. During the early morning get together the children have opportunities to recognize numbers, to count and to solve problems; for example, they take turns in finding the number for how many children are present.

Sessions are organised every day to meet children's social and emotional needs. The sessions are well planned and imaginative resources are used. The staff use animal puppets to enact stories about relationships and how problems can be solved. The children are invited to give their own ideas about how to try and solve the problems. In this way, the children are learning to respect and help each other in a positive way. This is exceptionally good practice and contributes towards children's excellent behaviour and good manners. These skills will be invaluable for the children when they move up to reception class.

The pre-school is very well ordered with imaginative displays of children's paintings and craft work. The children enjoy going into the pretend 'store' to dress up and rearrange all the hats, shoes and bags for sale. Outside, the children wear wellie boots and paint the boards attached to the wooden fences using roller brushes. They enjoy watching the water slowly drip down the boards onto the grass. One child cleverly manages to 'plant' large plastic cylinders in the sand, filling them up with sand. These activities widen children's vocabulary and their understanding of capacity.

Children's creativity is supported through a wide range of activities, such as, learning sounds of letters and numbers through songs and rhymes. They learn to keep themselves safe, as they listen and carry out simple instructions. They are encouraged to follow appropriate hygiene routines, such as washing their hands, and have an excellent understanding of why this is important. There is a good balance between indoor and outdoor activities and children develop their physical skills well using a wide variety of resources and activities. The children eat healthy and nutritious snacks. They gain an excellent understanding of healthy eating while helping to prepare food for snack time. Children make a very positive contribution to the pre-school. They take turns to be the 'special helper' each day, when they actively check the pre-school for any possible risks using a clipboard. They also develop good collaborative skills by working together and solving problems.

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	1
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	1
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	2

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