

Cootham Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspector Christopher MacKinnon

Setting address Cootham Village Hall, Chapel Lane, Cootham, Pulborough,
West Sussex, RH20 4JX
Telephone number 07722501416
Email coothampreschool@googlemail.com
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.

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Description of the setting

Cootham Pre School has been registered since 1999 and is situated in the village hall in Cootham near to Storrington. Children use the hall and also have access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area. The pre-school is open each week day from 09:15am - 3:30pm during term time, providing extended afternoon sessions.

A maximum of 24 children from two years to the end of the early years age group may attend at any one time and there are currently 44 children on roll. The Pre School receives nursery education funding for children aged three years and older. Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities are supported, as well as children who have English as an additional language. There is a staff team of seven, and most have level three early years qualifications.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is outstanding.

The pre-school provides high quality care and learning and skilled and experienced staff successfully promote individual children's development. Children benefit greatly from a highly stimulating learning environment that includes excellent opportunities for outdoor play. A fully planned play programme is presented for children, with additional learning initiatives also being considered. A comprehensive system of observation and assessment is in place and children's progress and achievement is exemplary. Staff maintain close partnerships with other carers, and parents are fully included and engaged with their children's learning. The setting's capacity to improve is excellently maintained by highly consistent self-evaluation systems.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- consider the further development of sounds and rhythm within the play programme

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The pre-school is a long established childcare setting, with a well trained and experienced staff team. The organisation and management of the provision is highly effective and provides an excellent programme of play and learning that successfully promotes children's progress and achievement. The staff team is effectively led by the owner/supervisor, and all staff demonstrate a particularly

high level of knowledge and understanding of the Early Years curriculum. Children are effectively safeguarded within the pre-school, through consistent staff vigilance and well organised security procedures. Staff are also fully trained in safeguarding, with access to clearly produced policies and guidance.

Staff also show a strong commitment to maintaining and improving the quality of the play programme. For example, a range of well planned development initiatives are currently ongoing within the setting, which provide additional emphasis to specific aspects of learning and also widen the scope of children's experiences. To effectively support and link with the improvement initiatives, the pre-school has produced a detailed and well written self-evaluation document. This includes the continual appraisal of all aspects of the setting's practice and identifies a range of possible development areas, taking into consideration the requirements of the six areas of learning and the organisation of the play environment.

The pre-school has many notable strengths, and an outstanding feature is the presentation of a highly engaging and stimulating range of play and learning resources. Children make excellent use of a rich and highly diverse range of materials and play items, particularly the wide range of choices provided that promotes a high level of child led learning and creative thinking. For example, the setting's generous and extensively resourced role play area encourages a lot of excellent exploration and imaginative play. The quality of the visual learning material displayed is also outstanding, and has a considerably high impact on children's sense of inquiry, and the development of their interests and ideas. The pre-school makes excellent use of its outdoor play area, to provide a wide range of tactile, sensory and physical play opportunities. It also serves children well in the successful continuation of planned learning themes and larger scale play project outdoors.

The pre-school is highly consistent in its support for inclusion and diversity. Children's individual progress and achievement is successfully monitored and promoted through the setting's highly organised key person working and children are successfully helped to make progress across learning gaps through highly organised and effective individual planning. The setting also provides excellent support for children with disabilities. Staff offer well considered and close care and work supportively with outside agencies. The promotion of diversity with the setting is also highly consistent, with many references to other cultures evident within the play resources and play environment. Staff also present a well planned range of festivals throughout the year to ensure children develop a positive awareness of the wider world.

Staff maintain strong links and partnerships with other settings. Teachers from several local schools are regularly invited to the pre-school, to meet their future intake. Key staff also arrange school visits for the older children, to familiarise them and assist with transition. Staff key persons also successfully liaise with local childminders who have children attending. Parents benefit from a wide range of links and contact with the pre-school. They meet frequently with their children's key person and are invited to attend meetings where their children's progress is fully assessed and discussed. The setting also has its own secure web site for

parents where information can be shared with parents.

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

The pre-school provides excellent planning that successfully supports children's enjoying and achieving. A range of featured learning themes are used, such as colours or animals to provide a strong general lead to play programme. Key staff then make highly effective use of observation and assessment and each child's recorded next steps in learning to set focused activities across the six required learning areas. An excellent rotation system is also in place to ensure every child has a full period of individual planned learning. The pre-school has several learning initiatives in hand and staff are currently introducing a plan to increase the amount of 'sounds' based activities and opportunities for children to learn rhythm. As this is an ongoing aspect of development within the setting it is noted as an area where further improvement may be considered.

The quality of teaching to support learning within the pre-school is exemplary. Staff show considerable skill and confidence in the high quality of their interactions with children. For example, many questions are asked by staff during the children's play, which extends their awareness. This is particularly strong in the exploration of children's personal and social development and learning about feelings. Many excellent opportunities to widen learning are also consistently explored by staff as they expertly support children during role play, assembly projects and completing challenging art and craft activities.

Children feel safe at the pre-school, and show a lot of confidence, as they create their own child led play, and engage with the wide range of resources. The pre-school staff also take care to ensure children are kept safe and secure, with a full range of risk assessments, safety precautions and security arrangements are in place. Children are successfully helped to take part, and make a positive contribution to the provision. The pre-school has highly organised key person working, and staff demonstrate an excellent knowledge of their individual children. For example, set times are provided during the play session, for key staff to sit and develop activities with their key group; which successfully encourages good sharing, and listening to each other.

Children's health and welfare is consistently well supported, with many planned activities and project relating to food and healthy eating. Children have well organised snack times, where they learn to pour, and manage utensils and help each other. Children also benefit from being able to grow and prepare a range of foods from the pre-school's own garden. Staff successfully support children's physical development, with a wide range of active indoor games. Children particularly enjoy participating in songs and rhymes and have fun joining in with 'quiet and loud' expressive play. The ease of access to the outdoor play area also facilitates a considerable range of highly beneficial outdoor pursuits and confidence with physical games and skills.

The overall excellent quality of the activities provided ensures that children's future learning is highly supported. Children's communication and use of language is continually well maintained, through talking and conversing with staff about home and recent events. For example, children are inquisitive, and ask questions about where foods like cheese and apples come from. Excellent use is made of the pre-schools well stocked maths area to develop children's problem solving and numeracy. Memory game at circle time also helps to develop reasoning skills. A strong emphasis on creative development and child led play ensures children are inventive and highly imaginative as they build roadways and townscapes and invent their own small world play scenarios. Children develop an excellent knowledge and understanding of the world through projects such as learning about types of birds and listening to their different songs. The pre-school also has a children's garden with herbs and tactile plants and children learn about life cycles with a wormery which is a recent addition to their outdoor 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?	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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Annex B: the Childcare Register

The provider confirms that the requirements of the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are: Met

The provider confirms that the requirements of the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are: Met