

Little Oak Pre-School (Witney) Limited

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	EY421302
Inspection date	20/06/2011
Inspector	Gillian Little

Setting address	Queens Dyke Community School, Burwell Drive, Witney, Oxon, OX28 5LP
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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.

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Description of the setting

Little Oak Pre-School (Witney) Limited is run by a private company of the same name. The pre-school re-registered in 2011, having operated as a committee run provision since 1983. It operates from a self-contained building within the grounds of Queens Dyke Community School in Witney. The premises include a main play area, separate quiet room with computer, an office, kitchen and toilet facilities. The pre-school has its own self-contained, hard standing outdoor play area, and has use of the school hall, playground, playing field and adventure play area. Children attend from the local area and from families working within the area.

The pre-school is registered to care for a maximum of 27 children under eight at any one time, all of whom may be in the early years age range. It currently cares for 52 children in the early years age range. The pre-school is registered on the Early Years Register and the compulsory part of the Childcare Register. The pre-school supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and children who speak English as an additional language.

The pre-school is open each week day, during school term times, from 8.30am until 11.15am, and from 12.30pm until 3pm. A lunch club operates from 11.15am until 12.30pm.

The pre-school is in receipt of funding for the provision of free early education for children aged two, three and four years. It has close links with the on-site school, and staff work in partnership with Foundation Stage Unit staff, such as attending meetings and training together. There are also arrangements in place during the summer term to help children transferring up to the school, to become more familiar with the school staff and premises. The pre-school also works in partnership with other local schools to support this transition arrangement.

The pre-school employs six staff, five of whom hold relevant qualifications, including Early Years Professional Status.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is outstanding.

Children thrive in this safe, highly stimulating and nurturing environment where they all make significant gains in their learning. An exceptional commitment to equality and diversity ensures that all children, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and those who speak English as an additional language, are fully integrated within the setting. Staff demonstrate a high commitment to working in partnerships, which results in very positive relationships with most parents, very well established links with external agencies and strong links with some other early years settings that children attend. Staff carry out rigorous monitoring and searching analysis to identify areas for further development. This results in outstanding practice in most areas and demonstrates

a very high commitment to continuous 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:

- develop innovative ways to encourage other early years settings which children attend to share relevant information about children's education and care.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Staff demonstrate a comprehensive awareness of safeguarding children procedures and receive regular training. Their commitment to working with external agencies is exemplary and results in very positive outcomes for vulnerable children. Staff implement comprehensive policies consistently and robustly, ensuring that the premises and people within it provide a very secure and safe environment.

The setting provides an extensive range of high-quality, stimulating resources and very well-planned activities, both indoors and outdoors, which children can access freely throughout the sessions. The outdoor play area is an integral part of the educational provision, with activities covering all areas of learning and an extensive canopy area for poor weather.

Equality is at the heart of the setting and staff are highly successful in taking steps to close identified gaps in achievement. Rigorous monitoring systems identified that boys were not engaging in writing activities as much as girls. As a result, staff volunteered to join a 'Boys' Writing' project and now use innovative ways to encourage writing. For example, they provide rucksacks with maps, pencils, paper and binoculars to encourage safari expeditions so that children can record their findings. The staff's commitment to working with children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language is exceptional. For example, they explore every possibility to keep children integrated in the setting, providing two members of staff to support one child where necessary, and taking the lead in tailoring a programme of attendance to suit individual needs.

Staff have highly positive relationships in place with most parents, who state that they are very happy with the setting and very much appreciate their key person's excellent knowledge of children's individual needs. Each key person is available on a weekly basis specifically to meet parents to talk about their children, and they offer alternative times or phone calls if parents cannot attend. Key persons actively encourage parents to contribute their own observations of children's progress at home, and to add these to their development profiles.

The setting works very well in partnership with outside agencies, and has very well-established channels of communication to support vulnerable children and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. The setting takes a lead role in linking with other early years settings that children attend, although they do not always receive the information they require about children's education and care elsewhere.

Staff's commitment to continually developing practice is excellent. Morale is very high and they are an ambitious team, with three of the six staff qualified to degree level. Each member of staff takes responsibility for a different aspect of the setting and their high expectations result in outstanding outcomes in many areas. They are quick to address any areas of weakness and take full account of the views of parents and children to further enhance practice.

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

Children show a strong sense of security and high levels of confidence in this nurturing environment. They develop close and genuine bonds with their key person and other staff, and they make friends easily. They have a very positive approach to learning, playing well both independently and cooperatively. Most children show good levels of behaviour and a clear understanding of how to stay safe. They respond well to staff when reminded to be careful, to line up sensibly and to be kind to each other.

Children relish their time in the setting, eagerly exploring the extensive range of stimulating activities and resources on offer. Staff are readily on hand to support and guide their learning through high-quality interactions. Children take part in a 'floating and sinking' activity after making their own boats the week before. They consider the effect of the weight of stones on different shapes and sizes of boats, and staff ask thought provoking questions to encourage them to make connections in their learning. A maths activity encourages children to find the correct number of shells, matching these to the numeral given; staff very effectively extend this activity to challenge children's understanding of early calculation, such as asking, "You added one more and that made?? Children enthusiastically respond, "That made five!"

An innovative writing activity in the canopy area outdoors, uses 'gel boards' to encourage boys to practise mark making skills. A mixed group of boys and girls eagerly join a member of staff in drawing pictures of boats, which allows them to practise drawing lines and circles and to express their own ideas. Highly effective discussions with the member of staff help sustain children's attention as they enthusiastically talk about submarines and the seabed.

Children who speak English as an additional language receive excellent support from their key person who is the setting's equality and diversity coordinator. Her training and experience have a very positive effect in ensuring that such children

are fully integrated into the setting. She is very proactive in finding out about their backgrounds, individual interests and capabilities, using this information to plan activities and experiences relevant to each child. Other staff are equally successful in supporting such children, taking time to extend their conversations and to clarify their attempts at communication.

Children develop an excellent understanding of the importance of healthy lifestyles. They have continuous access to the outdoor play area in all weathers, and also use the school hall for focused physical development activities. As well as challenging their physical skills, such as sliding, climbing and jumping, they take part in thought-provoking discussions about the effects of physical activity on their heart rate and body temperature. They also demonstrate a very good understanding of healthy lifestyles through enthusiastic discussions about healthy eating, keeping clean, brushing their teeth and having a good night's sleep.

Key persons monitor individual children's progress towards the early learning goals exceptionally well. They continuously observe their development and clearly record their next steps in learning, keeping records in individual files. They use this information very effectively to guide their planning. They take responsibility for planning different areas of the setting and within this they include specific activities for individual children to help them achieve their next steps. This exceptional organisation provides rich and imaginative experiences to meet the needs of individual children exceedingly well.

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	2
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	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	2
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	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