

The Beeches Pre-School (Annexe)

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

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

The Beeches Pre-school (Annexe) is one of two privately owned settings run by the same registered provider. It opened in 2005 and operates from two rooms within the St John Ambulance Hall in Colchester, Essex. Children share access to a secure, enclosed, outdoor play area. A maximum of 16 children may attend the pre-school at any one time. The pre-school opens four days a week for 44 weeks of the year. Sessions times are from 9.15am until 12 noon and from 1pm until 3.30pm on Monday to Thursday with a lunch club operating between each session.

There are currently 33 children aged from two to five years on roll. Children aged two, three and four years receive funding for early education. Children attend for a variety of sessions or full day care. The pre-school serves the local community and surrounding areas. The setting supports a small number of children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities or who have English as an additional language. The provision is registered by Ofsted on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register.

The pre-school employs seven staff, of whom five of the staff, including the manager, hold appropriate early years qualifications. There is one staff with Qualified Teacher Status. There are two staff currently working towards a recognised early years qualification. The setting receives support from the local authority.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children make effective progress because staff offer a very inclusive setting and work closely with parents, other early years professionals and external agencies to meet individual welfare and learning needs. The environment and available resources are generally well used to achieve planned goals in learning and development. The management and staff team work together effectively to identify and plan future improvements and are committed to enhancing outcomes for children. Consequently, the pre-school is extremely responsive to the needs of the families who use the provision.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- extend the risk assessment to ensure that it includes sufficient detail about anything with which children may come into contact
- review the routine and how play equipment is presented to children in order to enhance the opportunities for them to select resources and make independent decisions in their learning both indoors and outside.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

All the essential regulatory documentation that supports the smooth running of the pre-school is in place. Well-written policies and procedures promote children's welfare and safety and the operational plan effectively explains how the setting operates. Children are safeguarded because the staff understand their child-protection responsibilities. They have attended up-to-date training and there is a very clear safeguarding policy with flowcharts to ensure that all staff know the procedures if they have concerns about a child's welfare. Relevant background checks through the Criminal Records Bureau are made to ensure that staff are suitable to work in the pre-school. A high priority is given to the security of the children. Entrance doors remain locked, CCTV systems operate and any visitors to the premises are closely monitored. Each day the staff check the premises and an annual risk assessment is conducted to ensure that children remain safe. However, there is potential for misunderstandings as staff do not always record sufficient detail in the risk assessment regarding how they minimise potential hazards.

Children are cared for by a dedicated and motivated team of staff that convey their enthusiasm. The required adult-to-child ratios and qualification levels are met or exceeded at every session. An appraisal system effectively identifies staff training requirements. Any new information about childcare or health and safety initiatives is cascaded at meetings. Self-evaluation accurately identifies the strengths of the pre-school and priorities for future improvement are regularly reviewed and moved forward.

Children are warmly welcomed and fully included in the pre-school. Their individual needs are well known and respected because the staff gather extensive information about each child right from the start, including useful details about the home language of each family. The linguistic diversity of the children is celebrated with books in other languages and play equipment is carefully selected so that children can explore each others' similarities and differences. Partnerships with others involved with the children works exceedingly well to help to meet children's individual needs. The staff are exceedingly proactive in seeking help for children from outside professionals such as speech and language therapists. Additional one-to-one support and equipment for children with special educational needs or disabilities is efficiently investigated and obtained. The staff liaise extremely effectively with many nearby schools and nurseries to aid transitions into full-time education and to ensure that there is continuity in children's care and learning.

Children thrive because the staff team work very closely with their parents. They get to know families well and strive to meet their particular needs. Children are well placed to continue their learning at home because parents learn about any achievements through conversations, the daily contact books and regular opportunities to look at children's assessment records. Parents speak positively about the care and education their children receive and appreciate the efforts the staff have made when settling the children into the pre-school.

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

Children benefit from a broad range of interesting activities that cover all six areas of learning each day, both indoors and outside. Staff use their knowledge of the Early Years Foundation Stage to provide learning experiences that centre on children's interests and capabilities. Children enjoy a good deal of individual attention and interaction between the staff and children are animated and friendly. They are very curious and are encouraged to think creatively and express their ideas coherently, for example, when they devise puppet shows that extend into picnics with their toys. Children are encouraged to be active participants in the decision-making and staff use their spontaneous ideas and enthrallments to extend learning. For example, they use changing weather conditions to investigate washing lines, experiment with paint and rainwater or explore mixing flour and water to make dough. However, there are times when the routine and presentation of play equipment is not conveniently organised to ensure that children can take full advantage when selecting resources and making independent decisions in their learning.

Children are making good progress towards the early learning goals given their starting points and capabilities. The staff are continually reviewing the methods of assessment and planning. Key persons frequently observe children in a variety of ways and their next steps in learning are continually identified. Progress and achievements are celebrated in attractive individual learning journey records, supported by many photographs and examples of the children's artwork. These development records are rigorously analysed to ensure that there are no gaps in learning and that 'wow' moments are displayed so that children really know that their efforts are valued.

A good variety of activities are planned to enhance children's future economic wellbeing through developing their problem solving, numeracy, literacy and technology skills. An innovative range of games are used to promote recognition of numbers, sounds and letters and children often choose to look at books for pleasure. Easy access is provided to the laptops each day and consequently children are very confident as they adeptly use the mouse to control movements on screen when they play educational computer programs.

Children effectively gain an understanding of the importance of behaving responsibly and use tools and equipment carefully and in safety. Fire drills are regularly practised so that children know how to swiftly evacuate the premises in an emergency. They develop a good awareness of health and hygiene through the daily routine. Individual wipes, towels and clean aprons are provided to prevent the risk of cross-infection. Children make healthy choices at snack time and enjoy preparing fruit and washing up their cups and bowls. Drinking water is freely available throughout each session so that children do not become thirsty or dehydrated. At lunchtime children learn to manage food and drinks containers and unwrap their sandwiches as they sit and eat with the staff. Physical play is actively encouraged as children enthusiastically use scooters, bicycles or the trampoline. Staff recognise when children become tired. They are offered cuddles and a

comfortable area is created where they can relax or sleep peacefully and undisturbed.

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	1
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	2

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	2
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	2
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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Annex B: the Childcare Register

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