

Windmill 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

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

Windmill Pre-School opened in 1999. It is a committee-run pre-school operating from premises in Kettering, Northamptonshire. The pre-school children have use of two ground floor rooms with associated toilet facilities. There is a staff room and adult toilet on the first floor. It is open each weekday from 8.30am to 5.30pm all year round, offering out of school care in the holidays.

The pre-school is registered on the Early Years Register and the compulsory part of the Childcare Register. A maximum of 50 children between the ages of two and eight years may attend the setting at any one time. There are currently 55 children aged from two to under five years on roll, some in part-time places.

There are eight members of staff, all of whom hold early years qualifications. The setting provides funded early education for three- and four-year-olds.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

A well-developed knowledge of each child's needs makes sure that staff are successful in promoting children's welfare and learning. Children are safe and secure, they enjoy the positive interaction from the staff and they are learning about their local area and the world around them. The partnerships with parents, local schools and other agencies are strong. These are significant in making sure the needs of all children are met, along with any additional support needs. This means that children make good progress, given their age, ability and individual starting points. The setting has begun to consider implementing processes for self-evaluation to ensure they continue to respond to the needs of the children and their families.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- develop further the systems for observation and assessment to demonstrate how the different observations and the tracking document link together and how the identified next steps are re-visited to clearly show children's progress in their learning and development
- develop further the processes for self-evaluation in order to identify areas of strong practice and the pre-school's priorities for future development.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children's safety is given high priority in this well-organised and friendly setting. The staff and committee are committed to ensuring a safe and enjoyable

experience for all the children in their care. For example, the entrance is secure and all parents and visitors are greeted by the staff. The committee is actively involved in the daily operation of the setting and there are two supervisors who share the role of being in charge of the children. They work on split shifts with a period of overlap in the middle of the day. This effective organisation and involvement of the committee contribute to good communication within the setting. Effective procedures are in place to ensure the recruitment and retention of suitably cleared and qualified staff. Most staff have the required clearances and there are procedures in place to ensure that unvetted staff do not have unsupervised contact with the children. Effective documentation and detailed risk assessments that are reflected in the staff's activity with the children ensure that hazards are reduced. For example, during the daily outings to the park the children wear high visibility waistcoats, the staff work to a ratio of one adult to two children, and they are very aware of safety during the walk to and from the park, as well as carefully checking the play equipment and surrounding area before the children arrive. The children enjoy being able to move around freely in the pre-school, which is attractively decorated and has lots of displays of their art and craft work. Children move between their chosen activities and they are encouraged to make their own choices and decisions. For example, they can access a range of mark making and art and craft materials, they can choose resources and books from low-level units and shelves, and they choose when they have their snack.

The pre-school demonstrates a good capacity for continuous improvement. They have taken appropriate action on the recommendations made at the last inspection under the previous registration. They have sought the views of parents on specific issues through the use of questionnaires and they are enthusiastic in their discussions about their future plans for the group. The children are sometimes involved in the planning of activities through discussion with the staff. The setting describes itself as now feeling secure in its new premises and that the staff team work well together. The committee, management and staff team demonstrate that the significant changes made over recent years to their practices have had a positive impact on the outcomes for children. However, the management team have identified the implementation of self-reflective practices as a priority for their continued future development.

The very effective partnership working with parents, other providers delivering the Early Years Foundation Stage and other agencies promotes children's sense of consistency. Parents are welcomed into the premises to visit when settling their child in and when dropping off and collecting their child each day. Parents have access to numerous notice boards in the setting displaying relevant information, and the staff ensure they introduce themselves to new parents and continue to keep them well informed through daily verbal feedback about their child's progress and their daily routine. The staff try hard to increase the links between the children's homes and the pre-school. For example, they have a library system where children can choose a book to take home and read with their parents. The key workers keep parents up to date about their child's progress in their learning and development. Each child's achievement folder is sent home three times each year and parents are invited to record their own comments about their child's progress. When children start attending, they complete information about their child's achievements at home, which the staff use to begin the planning of

activities. The staff have developed effective relationships with the local schools to assist with children's transition to school. The setting works closely with the area Special Educational Needs Coordinator in order to support or monitor children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. This effective partnership working contributes to a smooth transition and a consistent approach for each child.

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

Children enjoy attending this welcoming and well-resourced provision. The staff team clearly demonstrate their commitment to each of the children who attend. They sit with the activities and the children thoroughly enjoy their positive and gentle interaction with them. They talk to the children about what they are doing, know them as individuals and are sensitive in their dealings with each of them. For example, children who are less confident are skilfully engaged in interesting and enjoyable activities, and children who have just started attending are supported to try new experiences and to become familiar with the daily routine. Each child is treated as an individual and with respect. The staff are sensitive to children who speak English as an additional language and to those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. A system of card fans are in numerous positions accessible around the room and have words and pictures for emotions and practical issues, such as 'toilet' and 'play', to assist these children with their communication. The staff give lots of praise and encouragement through their positive tone of voice and facial expressions, which reassure the children. A good range of resources and play materials are in place that celebrate diversity, such as, books, puppets, dolls, displays and dressing up clothes. This awareness of diversity develops children's feelings of belonging in the provision and an awareness of the wider world.

Children are able to be independent. They choose some of their own activities, they have their snack when they are ready for it and opportunities are used during snack time to develop independence skills, such as recognising their name and photograph, collecting their own cup and plate and pouring their own drinks, as well as making choices about what they eat. Children are developing an awareness of how to manage their own personal hygiene. They wash their hands before snack and lunch time and they are supported to be independent in the bathroom. A good range of healthy snacks are provided by the pre-school and any allergies or dietary needs are carefully discussed with parents and displayed in the kitchen area.

Children demonstrate that they feel safe in the setting. They separate happily from their parents and are confident to move around and choose which activities they want to participate in. The staff actively support the children to feel safe. They notice if children are not joining in or feeling confident and ably assist them to do so by suggesting different activities they may like to try. Although the pre-school has no outside play space of its own, the staff and management team work very hard to ensure the children have daily opportunities to play outside. Small groups of children are taken to the local park each day, both morning and afternoon. They have weekly visits to a local pet shop and monthly visits to a farm centre. Children

are also taken on spontaneous outings to the local shops. The staff have compiled a folder of information and photographs to show parents the opportunities their children have to play in the fresh air.

Each child's progress in their learning and development is recorded in individual files that contain a variety of observations, photographs and samples of their work. Each child has a key worker who is responsible for keeping their file up to date and for recording some of the observations. However, all members of staff record observations as they see the children engaged in their activities. The staff record children's 'wow' moments and observations linked to their awareness of shapes, numbers, colours and their friendships. Individual next steps are identified and are incorporated into the planning process for each child. Parents are involved in this process and are encouraged to record their child's achievements at home and display them on the notice board. The key workers make weekly plans of activities that cover the six areas of learning. If any changes to the planning are prompted by the children, these are recorded on the planning record. However, the key workers do not currently cross-reference the different written observations or clearly identify how they are revisiting each child's next steps in order to link all aspects of the observation and assessment systems to clearly demonstrate children's progression. The staff work very well as a team and with the children, who are developing close relationships with them. Children respond to their suggestions to extend their play and they are learning about the boundaries and expectations for behaviour. This consistent approach by the staff contributes significantly to children's feelings of well-being.

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	3
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	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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