

# Courtyard Preschool

Inspection report for early years provision

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**Unique reference number**

EY425284

**Inspection date**

20/09/2011

**Inspector**

Jill Milton

**Setting address**

Courtyard Youth Centre, Launton Road, BICESTER,  
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**Telephone number**

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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*.

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## Description of the setting

Courtyard Preschool registered in 2011 under new private ownership. The pre-school has been on the current site in the Courtyard Youth Centre in Bicester, for over 20 years. The intake of children is from the local area and accommodation consists of a playroom and facilities within the centre. There is an enclosed garden for outdoor play. The pre-school is on the Early Years Register and a maximum of 21 children between two and five years may attend at any one time. There are currently 35 children on roll in the early years age range. The pre-school is in receipt of funding for the provision of free early education for children aged two, three and four years. The pre-school opens in school term times, on weekdays from 9.10am to 2.50pm. There is an optional lunch club and some children attend for the full day. Support is offered to children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Staff currently support children for whom English is an additional language. The pre-school employs five members of staff, who have an appropriate range of early years qualifications.

## The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is satisfactory.

Children are making satisfactory progress with their learning and development in a friendly pre-school environment. Staff have an adequate understanding of how to promote early learning, though some aspects of their support have weaknesses. There are appropriate partnerships developing with parents, which take into account the individual needs of the children and adequately promotes their welfare. Most documentation is in place to underpin the running of the pre-school. Staff are beginning to reflect on the service they provide and they show a reasonable capacity for continual improvement.

## What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- improve the use of observations of children's play to identify their interests and use the information to plan relevant and challenging learning experiences
- review the presentation of some resources to help children engage in play that promotes their early learning more effectively
- develop reflective practice and self-evaluation to identify priorities for development that will improve the quality of the pre-school for all children
- update the record of risk assessments to include those for outings and trips.

## **The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision**

The staff have a sound understanding of how to address any concerns they have for the welfare of a child in their care. Updates to training and alterations in procedures aid staff confidence in dealing with situations linked to child protection. Staff maintain a safe environment within the pre-school premises and they conduct daily visual checks to reduce obvious hazards. Adults working with the children undergo checks to verify their suitability, and the presence of visitors is recorded. Staff describe some sensible guidelines when taking children on outings, though they do not keep a written record of these risk assessments. During the day, staff check on the cleanliness of areas used by the children, and they develop routines to reduce the risk of infection. Staff wear, for example, disposable protective clothing when serving food or changing nappies. The pre-school has a large stock of suitable resources that cover all the areas of learning. The staff rotate items regularly to keep the children interested. However, some areas are not presented well and do not maximise the opportunities for early learning through play. Overall, the accommodation is suitable, and staff are updating displays to reflect the children who are currently attending.

The new manager of the pre-school is starting to reflect on practice and make plans to bring about steady improvements. One example is updating the policies to reflect current requirements. Staff respond to advice from other early years professionals and are working together to alter the way they plan the activities. The staff demonstrate a willingness to make improvements, though clear systems are not yet in place to underpin this. The staff share responsibilities for tasks fairly during the day and they have a useful ongoing dialogue about how to support individual children. They develop suitable working relationships with parents and encourage a two-way flow of information. This helps staff learn more about the children in their care and offer an inclusive environment. They encourage some parents to share their home customs, which shows their positive approach to diversity in the local community. Although some information for parents is out of date, the staff do try through newsletters, to share pre-school events and topics. Staff work positively with others, such as inclusion teachers, to support children with special needs and/or disabilities. They are beginning to make some links in the local community too, to benefit the children's welfare.

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

Children are making some steady progress with their social skills as they settle into pre-school routines. Many are familiar with signs that activities are changing, announcing to friends 'It is time to tidy up' when they hear a small hand bell ringing. Children who are new to the pre-school receive appropriate support and reassurance from staff. Children develop some sense of belonging as they identify their name cards on coat pegs and at snack time. They sit in small groups to enjoy their snacks and make choices about which fresh fruits they would like to eat.

Children may visit the bathroom independently, though most need reminders from staff to follow good hygiene routines linked to hand washing. Children are keen to play outside at the designated time during each part of the day. Outdoors they benefit from active play by climbing, running, and steering toys around each other.

Children generally behave in appropriate ways and staff intervene reasonably well to offer solutions to situations. Some children need reminding about how to keep safe, for example, by not climbing on the furniture. Children are learning about their community through visits to the adjacent day care centre for the elderly and with trips to the local park. They play with resources, such as musical instruments and dolls, which provide positive images of cultures different to their own. Children are developing some basic skills that are useful for their future lives. Many select to play with a computer, for example, and show confidence at matching similar objects using the computer mouse. Children use recycled materials to make new things and they engage in occasional activities like gardening. This helps foster a positive attitude to the natural world and using resources sensibly. Children access activities that promote their learning through play. However, at times the resources are not presented well to capture their interest, for example the book selection or the imaginative role play area. Children engage in basic mark-making activities, and a topic entitled 'All about me' encourages conversations about their families. Some are aware of their ages and are able to pick out familiar numbers in a selection of magnetic tiles.

Overall, children are making satisfactory progress with their learning and development. Staff engage with parents to find out about what the children can do when they start at pre-school. Observations of their development do take place, though some records are inconsistent and do not inform planning of future activities very well. However, staff are knowledgeable about each child in their care during discussions, and they try to support their individual needs adequately. They learn key words, for example, for children for whom English is an additional language, to offer basic support. Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities receive extra help from staff, who respond to the advice from other professionals on how to extend development.

## 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

<b>How well does the setting meet the needs of the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?</b>	3
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	3

### The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	3
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding	3
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	3
The effectiveness of partnerships	3
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	3

### The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

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### Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

<b>Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	3
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	3
The extent to which children feel safe	3
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	3
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	3
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	3

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