

Alec Hunter Pre School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number

EY425074

Inspection date

28/09/2011

Inspector

Patricia Champion

Setting address

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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

Alec Hunter Pre-school is run by a committee. It was established in 1974 and moved into the current premises in 2011. It operates from a converted church hall in Braintree, Essex. All children share access to a secure, enclosed, outdoor play area. Access to the front of the premises is via two steps and a ramp. A maximum of 30 children may attend the pre-school at any one time. The pre-school opens five days a week during school term times. Operating times each day are from 9am until 12noon and from 12.30pm to 3.45pm.

There are currently 86 children aged from two to four years old on roll. Children aged three- and four-years-old receive funding for early education. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The pre-school serves the local community and surrounding areas. It supports a small number of children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities or who have English as an additional language. The pre-school is registered by Ofsted on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register.

The pre-school employs 10 members of staff, all of whom hold appropriate early years qualifications. 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 benefit from being cared for in an inclusive setting where their unique needs are known and respected. They thrive in a vibrant and stimulating play environment and are happy, motivated to learn and make good progress. Exceptionally strong and professional partnerships with parents and other early years professionals are fostered to ensure that children are fully supported within the Early Years Foundation Stage. Most of the required documents are in place to promote children's welfare and safety. The staff are fully committed to providing the best for the children in their care and keen to develop best practice.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To meet the specific requirements of the EYFS, the registered person must:

- request written parental permission for seeking any necessary emergency medical advice or treatment (Safeguarding and promoting children's welfare). 12/10/2011

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

- review and revise self-evaluation more regularly to ensure that continuous improvements are sustained.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The pre-school has robust policies and procedures, which are effectively used to ensure the health and safety of all the children. All staff and committee members have undergone the necessary background checks through the Criminal Records Bureau. At regular intervals staff sign a declaration to confirm their ongoing suitability to work with children. Children are effectively protected because the staff have a secure understanding of safeguarding procedures and know what to do if they have concerns about a child. Staff are vigilant in supervising children to ensure their safety and are especially conscious of their differing ages and abilities. Risk assessment and daily checks are carried out to minimise any potential hazards. Information is gathered from parents about children's individual medical needs and there are staff holding current first aid certificates who can deal with minor injuries. However, staff may not be able to deal with all eventualities as they have not yet requested written parental permission to seek any necessary emergency medical advice or treatment in the future. This is a breach in the welfare requirements.

There is a stable staff team who have worked tirelessly along with the committee to make the move into the new premises a great success. The staff and parents are all involved in the renovation and landscaping projects and they have now secured sponsorship from a local supermarket to help resource a sensory room. The pre-school has a wide range of resources that support children's understanding of diversity and encourages them to be respectful and value others. Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities or those who speak English as an additional language are sensitively supported. Visual aids and signs and symbols are successfully used to help children understand the routines. The pre-school secures funding for one-to-one support for any specific additional needs and the knowledgeable special educational needs coordinators attend meetings with any other professionals working with the children.

Staff make good use of their regular meetings to reflect on practice, planning and outcomes for each child. They are committed to their ongoing professional development and attend a variety of training courses and workshops to update their knowledge and skills. The staff demonstrates a good understanding of the strengths of the setting and have action plans for further development. Further consideration for reviewing and revising the self-evaluation more regularly has the potential for enhancing outcomes for children even more and also ensures that continuous improvements are sustained.

The pre-school has extremely positive relationships with parents and other carers. Parents' views are sought and acted upon, such as through questionnaires or their involvement in the committee. They speak enthusiastically about the pre-school and really appreciate the efforts of the very caring and experienced staff team. They say that they feel very involved in their children's learning and attend open evenings, join farm trips, help prepare snack during sessions or contribute items towards the harvest festival. Children take home ideas for activities to share with

their parents. Plenty of information about the pre-school is distributed through well-written newsletters and informative notice boards. The pre-school has highly effective relationships with other early years professionals and external agencies to ensure that there is a shared approach enabling the best possible progress for all children. The staff join local community meetings to demonstrate their 'Pride in the Patch'.

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

Children are confident and curious learners. Flexible planning allows for activities and variations that suit individual children and small groups. The organisation of the learning environment is imaginative and enables children to drive their own learning. For much of the session, children select materials, make decisions and extend absorbing activities in ways that make sense to them. They relish the opportunity to choose between indoor and outdoor play and develop the basic props and resources to support their current interests. As a result, children are motivated, inquisitive and there is a real excitement about learning.

Children are happy and enjoy their time in the pre-school. They make good relationships with the staff and each other. The children are given close, individual attention and adult communication is weighted towards listening and open-ended questioning that extends children's thinking. Staff carry out regular observations and assessments to monitor children's progress, which are used to inform future planning. Each child has a learning journal containing positive comments about their achievements supported by examples of their work. The staff effectively track children's progress to ensure that there are no gaps in their learning and parents can contribute their observations of learning at home.

Children effectively develop the skills they need for future learning. They recognise their name and some children can point out familiar words in books or read the many captions and labels in the play environment. Mark making materials are readily accessible both indoors and outside and children develop their technology skills when they independently access the computer. Problem solving and counting is incorporated into many activities, such as construction or puzzles. Children sit attentively during group activities and really enjoy stories and they sing popular action rhymes with gusto. They use their imagination and express themselves creatively in different ways. For example, children explore play dough and different paint techniques and use props to act out different role play scenarios.

Children learn and adopt good health and hygiene practices. Activities are organised so that children learn about the importance of exercise, fresh air, healthy eating and looking after their bodies. Children are well nourished and have healthy appetites as they independently choose toast, fruit and drinks for snack or adeptly manage their lunchboxes at lunchtime. They follow good hygiene routines and disposable paper towels and liquid soap are provided to reduce the risk of cross-infection. Nappy changing is sensitively undertaken to preserve children's dignity. Children learn about how to keep themselves safe and find out about road safety on outings and practise emergency evacuation procedures from the

premises. They know to behave responsibly as discussions are held about the possible consequences of their actions and they are eager to help staff with simple tasks, such as tidying up. Children play calmly and harmoniously and they learn compassion and consideration through the sensitive guidance they receive from the staff team.

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

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|--|---|
| 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

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|--|---|
| 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 | 2 |
| 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

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|--|---|
| The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage | 2 |
|--|---|

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

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| 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

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| 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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