

# Plum Tree Pre School and Childcare Services

Inspection report for early years provision

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**Unique reference number**

EY424467

**Inspection date**

20/10/2011

**Inspector**

Janet Keeling

**Setting address**

ADJ to Barrow C of E VC Primary School, Colethorpe Lane,  
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**Type of setting**

Childcare - Non-Domestic

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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**

Plum Tree Pre-School and Childcare Services opened at its current premises in 2011 and is run by a voluntary management committee. It operates from a purpose built, self-contained building adjacent to Barrow Church of England Primary School in Barrow, Bury-St-Edmunds. Children have access to an enclosed, outdoor play area and to the school playing fields. The setting serves children and families from the local and surrounding areas.

A maximum of 24 children from two years to under eight years may attend the setting at any one time. There are currently 39 children on roll, of whom, 30 are within the early years age group. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The out of school sessions run Monday to Friday from 8am to 8.50am and from 3.30pm to 6pm. The pre-school sessions run Monday to Friday from 9am to 3.30pm. A lunch club runs from 12noon to 1pm. The setting operates during school term time only.

The setting has procedures in place to support children with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and is able to support children for whom English is an additional language. The setting is registered by Ofsted on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register.

There are six members of staff who work directly with the children. Of these, one holds a National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) at level 5, four hold NVQs at level 3 and one holds a NVQ at level 2. The setting receives support from the local authority.

## **The overall effectiveness of the early years provision**

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Staff have a sound understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage framework and, as a result, children make good progress in their learning. Practice is inclusive, supporting all children to actively participate in activities which meet their interests and developmental needs. Most policies and procedures are in place and implemented effectively to safeguard and promote children's well-being. Excellent partnerships with parents and the host school have been established, ensuring children's individual needs are consistently met. The newly appointed managers, staff and the dedicated committee have high aspirations to further develop this already good provision. Together they embrace the process of self-evaluation and demonstrate a good commitment to drive and maintain the sustained and continuous improvement of the setting.

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

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

- improve accident procedures to ensure records contain all the required information regarding a child's accident and that parents' signatures are consistently obtained in acknowledgement of an accident
- develop further the outdoor learning environment in order to maximise children's learning opportunities.

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

Good priority is given to safeguarding and protecting children. All staff have a good understanding of safeguarding issues and are fully aware of the procedures to follow should they be concerned about a child in their care. Criminal Records Bureau checks are in place for all staff and committee members. Recruitment and vetting procedures are in place, together with induction procedures for new staff. All staff have a good understanding of health and safety issues and hold current first aid certificates. Although, while accident records are completed they often lack detail of the accident and staff do not consistently obtain parents' signatures in acknowledgement of a child's accident. Detailed risk assessments of the premises are completed and reviewed, while daily safety checks ensure all potential hazards to children are minimised. Staff routinely verify the identity of all visitors and have robust procedures in place for the safe arrival and collection of children. The learning environment is well organised, allowing children to move freely and independently around the designated learning areas. Good quality resources are accessible and well maintained. Staff are deployed effectively to ensure that children are supervised safely at all times.

The dedicated and experienced staff team work effectively together with drive and enthusiasm to ensure the smooth day-to-day running of the setting. Monthly team meetings provide valuable opportunities for staff to raise their views and share good practice, while yearly staff appraisals encourage the continued professional development of all staff. All staff hold an early years qualification and have access to further training. Staff fully respect each child's cultural background and value their linguistic diversity, and as a result, all children are included and integrated. Managers, staff and the committee embrace the process of self-evaluation and strive to improve this already good provision. Excellent links have been established with the host school, ensuring continuity of care and education for all children.

Partnerships with parents are outstanding. Children benefit hugely from the warm and relaxed relationships that have been developed between their parents and the setting's staff. Staff dedicate time getting to know children and their families, for example, through the effective settling-in procedures that are flexible and tailored to meet each child's individual needs and specific requirements. In addition, prior to their child's admission parents receive a well written and very informative welcome pack and are invited to attend 'taster sessions'. Information is shared very effectively through a variety of appropriate methods. For example, an attractive notice board in the foyer displays information regarding the running of the setting. Information about staff and committee members is also readily available. Regular meetings with parents are held which enable parents to discuss their child's progress and achievement. Parents also see many examples of their

children's work attractively displayed around the learning environment which demonstrate children's involvement in a range of activities. Feedback from parents during the inspection was excellent. Parents said they 'find staff approachable, welcoming and helpful', 'my child loves to come to pre-school' and 'the new building is fantastic'.

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

Children happily enter this bright, welcoming and child-friendly setting. They receive a very warm welcome from staff, settle quickly and are eager to immerse themselves in activities. They have good opportunities to make choices about their own learning and play as they freely access a wide range of stimulating activities and resources. Children benefit from the free flow system that operates between the indoor and outdoor learning environments, however, the outdoor environment is not yet fully developed in order to fully maximise children's learning opportunities. There is a good balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities that result in children being active learners. All children are valued and treated with equal concern, with any specific requirements being met sensitively through discussion with parents and other professionals. Staff know the children very well. They observe and assess them as they play and use information to inform future planning. All children have learning folders which contain both photographic and written information of children's learning and achievements. The format of the learning folders has recently been changed and is being developed. These folders are shared with parents at parent consultation meetings and are available for them to see at any time.

Children make good progress towards the early learning goals as they engage in an interesting and stimulating range of activities. They enjoy exploring sound by using musical instruments, singing and taking part in action rhymes. Indoors, there is great enthusiasm as children tunefully sing 'Twinkle, Twinkle, Chocolate Bar', while outside, as children sit on the decked area, they excitedly sing an array of songs from the sound of music. Their creativity is supported well through a range of accessible resources, such as construction toys, role play equipment and access to a range of media, such as sand, flour, water, rice and paint. In the creative area there is great excitement as children explore the grey dough. They confidently identify that the dough is soft and smells like strawberries. Then vigorously knead, roll, shape and cut the dough using a range of tools. Children enjoy looking at books independently and with their friends, and at story-time they listen with enjoyment to their favourite stories. Their information and communication technology skills are supported well as they access a computer and a range of programmable toys. Their understanding of numbers, weight and shapes is developing well through everyday activities. For example, they count how many children and adults are present at registration time, recognise shapes such as circles and squares and talk about 'more' and 'less' as they weigh ingredients during a cooking activity. Children have good opportunities to develop their physical skills as they enjoy engaging in games using the parachute, pedal bikes and throw, catch, and kick balls on the school playing fields. Children explore their

natural environment as they help to plant herbs in the sensory garden, enjoy nature walks and feed ducks at the village duck pond. Children benefit from meeting visitors, who help and support their understanding of the world around them. For example, they enjoy visits from a doctor, the police force and a vet.

Children are successfully encouraged to develop their own personal hygiene skills, such as independent toileting and automatically washing their hands before snacks. Children learn about healthy lifestyles and enjoy healthy snacks each day. They also freely access drinking water throughout the session ensuring that they remain hydrated. In addition, all children know that exercise is good for them as they relish physical play opportunities. Children are secure and develop a sense of belonging, as they are happy and settled, and display confidence and self-esteem. They are polite, behave well and respond positively to the boundaries set. Gentle reminders from staff help children develop a sense of right and wrong. They are encouraged to share, take turns and to say 'please' and 'thank you'. They are beginning to develop an understanding of the wider world through access to resources that are representative of diversity and by celebrating festivals throughout the year. Children thoroughly enjoyed the food tasting activity when they celebrated Diwali. They enjoyed, samosas, poppadoms and naan bread. They learn how to stay safe as they are gently reminded to walk in the playroom and to tidy away their toys so that other children do not trip or fall over them. Children demonstrate that they are acquiring skills that will help and support them in the future.

## 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>	2
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	2

### 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>	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

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

<b>Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	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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