

# Castlethorpe Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

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**Unique reference number** 141823  
**Inspection date** 31/10/2011  
**Inspector** Hayley Marshall

**Setting address** The Village Hall, North Street, Castlethorpe, Milton Keynes,  
Buckinghamshire, MK19 7EW  
**Telephone number** 07749 999 361  
**Email**  
**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

Castlethorpe Pre-school opened in 1974. It operates from a large main room and secure outdoor area of the village hall in Castlethorpe, a village near Milton Keynes. Children attend from the local and neighbouring villages. A maximum of 26 children may attend at any one time. The pre-school is open Monday to Friday from 9.15am to 12.15pm during school term times only.

There are currently 21 children aged from two and-a-half to four years on roll. Children aged three and four years are funded for free early education. The pre-school is managed by a parent run committee. There are three members of staff who hold relevant level 3 qualifications. The pre-school is accredited with the Pre-school Learning Alliance and is registered on the Early Years Register and both the voluntary and compulsory parts of the Childcare Register.

## The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is satisfactory.

Children enjoy attending the pre-school and feel safe and secure. The staff has put thorough systems in place to help reduce risks and are committed to keeping children safe. Appropriate resources support children's learning and development inside, but these are not always available when children play outside. Sound partnerships mean that parents feel included in their children's care and learning. However, systems in place for initially gathering information about children's needs and interests are inconsistent. Wider partnerships with other professionals are not sufficient to support all children, especially during times of transition. Recommendations from previous inspections have been addressed and there are accurate evaluation systems in place demonstrating that the pre-school has a suitable capacity to maintain continuous improvement.

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

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

- increase children's opportunity for learning in all six areas of the Early Years Foundations Stage by linking the indoor and outdoor environment so children can move freely between them
- support children joining the preschool by taking part in a two way exchange of information with parents to find out more about children.
- build good relationships with all professionals to help support children during times of transition

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

Staff are committed to promoting children's safety. Appropriate checks have been made on adults who work and come into contact with children to make sure they are suitable to do so. Staff undertake a good induction process that means they fully understand safety policies and procedures. Detailed risk assessments are effective and staff take action to manage or eliminate risks. Regular reviews of safety procedures identify areas for development. When conducting and evaluating termly fire evacuation procedures, the staff makes sure that all children are included. Staff undertakes training to further develop their knowledge of how to keep children safe.

The manager accurately monitors the progress and well-being of children and the quality of teaching and learning. Staff communicate well with each other and regular appraisals support the professional development of each member of staff. In turn, staff know their own individual responsibilities within the pre-school. Self-evaluation and suitable action plans are in place to identify strengths and improve upon areas of weakness. Monitoring of these systems is adequate overall.

A range of planned activities and resources are available inside the pre-school to support children's learning and development. Children are supported by staff who use appropriate interactions to further their enjoyment of activities. However, resources are not always available for children to play with outside, resulting in planned learning in all six areas of the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum not being achieved consistently.

The pre-school adequately promotes equality and diversity and tackles unfair discrimination. Most children are making good progress but there are inconsistencies in gathering information from parents. Parents do not always complete 'welcome sheets' when their child first attends the pre-school, as a result there are gaps in identifying all children's individual starting points and interests.

The pre-school has developed partnerships with local schools through attending events such as Christmas plays. The pre-school is active in village life and takes part in fundraising activities within the local community. However, the pre-school does not always liaise with all external agencies or services that provide support for children, especially during times of transition.

A willing parent committee work together with pre-school staff to seek the views and opinions of parents and children. Together they develop and review policies and procedures and undertake fundraising activities to secure the financial future of the pre-school. Parents receive a newsletter and weekly emails to inform them about important events and dates. Information about children's progress is shared at parents' evenings and through regular opportunities at the end of the pre-school session. Parents are complimentary about the pre-school and about the staff, they view the pre-school as 'home from home' for their children.

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

Children enjoy their time at the pre-school and most make good progress in relation to their capabilities and starting points. Children explore a range of activities inside the pre-school that stimulate their interest and encourage them to think critically. Children are able to work independently but also seek out adults to share experiences with. Children are developing their skills of negotiation as they work alongside their peers. Whilst playing inside the pre-school children make choices about what they want to play with from a trolley of resources and a range of suitable activities.

Children display a strong sense of belonging in the pre-school. They are happy, settled, and generally display confidence, such as when they share news with the group and show items they have brought from home that are important to them. Children's self-esteem is raised by the sensitive interactions of staff who praise them and listen to them when they talk about things that interest them. When a new child starts the pre-school children welcome them and include them in their play helping them to feel a sense of belonging from the very beginning. Children behave well and follow adult instructions.

Children are beginning to show an understanding of healthy lifestyles. Some children will get a tissue, blow their nose and dispose of the tissue in the bin helping to prevent the spread of infection. Other children need gentle reminding from adults to maintain their own personal hygiene. Children access the toilet independently and wash their hands afterwards. Fresh drinking water is available for children throughout the session if they become thirsty. At snack time, children sit together and eat different foods provided by their parents. Children engage in physical activities and some are beginning to understand the importance of regular exercise.

Children have a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe. They are able to remind each other of the importance of not playing too roughly such as when playing in the pop up tent. Children share warm relationships with staff and know what expectations the staff has of them. In turn, they support children who are new to the pre-school, helping them to follow the routine such as when putting toys away at tidy up time, and lining up to wash hands before snack time. Children demonstrate their sense of security when they enter the pre-school in the morning and quickly engage with the staff, their peers and the activities provided.

## 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	2
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	2
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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## **Annex B: the Childcare Register**

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

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