

Sunflower Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspector Cordalee Harrison

Setting address Germander Park County First School, 1 Germander Place,
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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*.

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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

Sunflower Pre-School registered in 1997 and re-registered in the current premises in 2005. It is registered on the Early Years Register and both the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. A committee of volunteers manage the preschool. It is located in a self-contained unit in Germander Park County School, in Conniburrow, Buckinghamshire. It has the use of two rooms, a kitchenette and toilets. In addition, children may use the school hall at appointed times. There is an enclosed outdoor play area. The preschool has close links with the school and the Sure Start Children's Centre. A maximum of 30 children may attend the pre school at any one time. Currently, there are 57 children in the early years age range on roll. Opening times are 9.00am until 3.00pm, Monday to Friday during term time. The preschool provides for children with special educational needs and or disabilities and children who are learning English as an additional language. The preschool is in receipt of funding for nursery education for two, three and four year olds. The preschool employs six members of staff, five of whom work directly with the children, all five hold relevant childcare qualifications.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Overall, the preschool is very inviting to children; the child-centred environment entices them to learn through purposeful, planned learning opportunities. The preschool makes good use of observations and information from parents to identify children's starting points. It uses the key person system effectively to engage with children and parents to meet children's individual needs, such as learning and development, welfare matters and cultural and personal preferences. Although the process of self-assessment does not capture all areas for improvement, overall, it is an effective tool to reflect the preschool's performance. The preschool demonstrates a very positive attitude to continuous improvement and they have addressed all recommendations made at the previous inspection.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- make sure that children follow hygienic hand washing procedures, for example by making sure that soap is available throughout the day
- make sure that children are provided with healthy meals, for example by informing parents about appropriate food content for packed lunches and by ensuring that children are not able to access lunchboxes that do not belong to them

- develop further systems to identify the setting's strengths and priorities for development, including the evaluation of adult-led activities.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Safeguarding

Safeguarding children is promoted to high standards in the preschool; for example, safe recruitment strategies ensure that all staff in the preschool are appropriately vetted. Most staff have completed safeguarding training in respect of child protection matters. The preschool is very experienced at working within a multi-discipline environment, which involves parents and other agencies when dealing with child protection matters. The manager and staff are fully aware of the different aspects of the safeguarding policy and procedure, including the importance of confidentiality. The preschool uses risk assessments and daily hazard checks effectively to maintain safe environments for children indoors and outside. The premises are safe and secure for children to use and safe procedures are in place for their arrival and departure.

Overall, the preschool safeguards children and promotes their learning and development very well. Staff practice is derived from a good knowledge of the Early Years Foundation Stage and the related Practice Guidance. The preschool provides staff and parents with informative policies and procedures which ensure that all parties are clear about the expectations of the provision and practice for children. The preschool is careful in the management of documents and records; this ensures that all of the required information is in place and that it is accurate and up to date. The leadership and management team is focused on driving improvement for children. They understand the value of staff who are highly qualified in education and care and ensure that this is reflected in the preschool. They maintain a stable team of staff and parents' input is important to the management team.

The preschool makes effective use of its resources to meet children's needs. There is an excellent range of good quality toys and equipment readily accessible for children to use independently. In addition, the most highly qualified staff member, who is the manager, works directly with the children and is generally available to supervise staff. Planning for inclusion is central to the preschool's operation. The preschool is based in the heart of a diverse community. A high number of children who attend speak English as an additional language. The preschool provides additional language support for parents and children if necessary. Some staff members have completed sign language courses; the skills obtained prove useful for some children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and children with emerging language. Resources to raise children's awareness of different aspects of inclusion and diversity are a core part of the play provision. The preschool is clear about the policies, procedures and practice for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. They work closely with parents and other education professionals to identify and respond appropriately to meet children's individual and additional needs. The preschool is proactive in narrowing the gap for children from an early age.

The preschool uses the process of self-evaluation as a tool to assess performance. However, the process is not fully comprehensive, for example, staff do not recognise that there are some gaps in the evaluation of some focused activities. As a result, improvements are not always identified at the earliest opportunity. Additionally, the preschool does not realise that some practices in relation to hygiene are not to a consistently high standard. The preschool achieves effective partnerships working with other relevant agencies and professionals. Children benefit from their interactions within the Children Centre and the school. This is exemplified by the regular activities, such as story time in the Centre which provide opportunities for them to begin to build relationships with other responsible adults in a safe environment. Very close liaison with the school and its staff makes children's transition easier as they progress with their education.

There are many effective strategies in place to engage parents in their children's learning and development, such as the parent's notice board, newsletter and the 'share a book with your child' scheme. Additionally, the preschool involves parents in the review of development records and encourages them to contribute to the planning for children's progress. The preschool provides parents with information to help them to understand how children learn through play. Parents praise the staff highly for the education and care they provide for children.

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

The preschool is attractive to children; in general, staff plan activities well to ensure that children experience all areas of learning consistently. Activity plans are made using information from regular observations and the next step that is identified for individual children. The preschool manager works closely with other staff to review and revise the plans to ensure that the correct strategies and resources are in place to support and promote children's learning individually as they progress towards the expectations of the early learning goals.

Staff identify learning intentions and resources for focused activities to achieve good levels of adult-led and child-initiated activities. However, they do not always use reflective practice to consider the value of some focused adult-led activities. For example, although there are clear plans and learning intentions for the weekly cooking activity, staff do not evaluate it to ensure that they maximise the learning opportunities for all of the children. Children get lots of physical exercise each day; they make use of the outdoor area and use various equipment. This promotes their physical health and contributes positively to their understanding of healthy lifestyles. They run, walk, climb, balance and use a range of resources to challenge their physical development. Although children eat healthy snacks and are able to drink water throughout the day, they are not always supported fully in learning about healthy lifestyles. For example, they are not learning fully about the importance of balanced and nutritious diets to their overall development and health. There are some good practices pertaining to health and hygiene, such as the provision of healthy snacks and drinks. However, the management of children's

packed lunches is not entirely appropriate, since some lunch boxes are not labelled with children's names. This presents the risk of children eating food that is not prepared for them and reduces the effectiveness of the arrangements for the management of allergies. There is acknowledgement in the preschool that there is still work for them to do, because the quality of food that is in some lunch boxes that parents provide for children is not nutritious. In addition, although children have the opportunity to wash their hands regularly throughout the day, staff do not make sure that soap is always available for them to use, which could lead to cross infection.

Children have opportunities to solve problems and work their ideas through with many first hand experiences, for example, they measure and compare in their water play activities, they construct vehicles in their creative play, they ride the vehicles they make and share the learning experience with their friends. Children's use of realistic tools such as spanners and hammers helps them to develop fine movements and to learn new skills through practice that is seamless within their play. They put their skills to good use as they participate in a range of creative activities, from manipulating the computer mouse to construction, writing and reading and playing the drums. Children demonstrate that they are able to use fine movements competently to promote their independence and learning across all areas, for example, they learn from each other as they use the computer independently and with their friends, they show that they are able to write for different purposes, some children write their names to label their work. Children are achieving and enjoying through many good quality first-hand experiences. They recollect their understanding of different stages in the lifecycle of living things, such as chicks and butterflies. Good planning, resourcing and delivery of these practical and exciting activities enhance children's learning. For example, some children know that the chicks that hatched in the preschool now live on the farm and that the butterflies now live in natural world. Additionally, they learn that it is important to care for insects and bugs, and that although they are all different, they are all equally important. Children are learning many useful skills to enhance their lives now and in the future and are aware they are able to make positive contributions through their actions.

The warm interaction between staff and children is a good indicator that children feel safe. The preschool is busy and at times the noise level is high, but nevertheless, children behave well and show consideration for others. They are learning to be proud of their achievements and some children proudly show staff how they can write their names. Staff encourage children to care for their resources by tidying them away, children learn to relate their actions to the prevention of accidents and begin to recognise that their contribution and behaviour is necessary to maintain a safe preschool where all children are welcome and included.

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	2
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	3
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

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