

Ambrosden Village Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

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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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Description of the setting

Ambrosden Village Pre-School is a voluntary group managed by a committee of parents. It was established in 1974 and operates from an annex at the village hall in Ambrosden, near Bicester. The building provides a playroom with adjacent kitchen and toilet facilities. Children have access to two enclosed outdoor play areas. Children come from the village, local army base and Bicester area. The pre-school is registered on the Early Years Register to care for a maximum of 26 children, from the age of two years, at any one time. It is currently caring for 22 children. It supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. It is open on weekday mornings during school term times from 8.15am until 11.15am. Afternoon sessions are available on Mondays and Tuesdays from 11.50am until 2.40pm. The pre-school provides funded early education for three and four-year-old children. It has links in place with local schools and the local children's centre. The pre-school employs three staff, all of whom hold relevant qualifications.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is satisfactory.

Children develop secure relationships in this safe and welcoming environment. Effective partnerships with parents, outside agencies and other early years settings, help staff to meet children's individual welfare needs to a good standard. Children make some progress in their learning although there are weaknesses in observation, assessment and planning processes. Staff are welcoming and supportive although their interactions with children do not always extend learning effectively. The pre-school has made some improvements since the last inspection and there are continuous plans in place to develop practice further.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- develop observation, assessment and planning processes to clearly identify children's progress and their next steps in learning
- develop high-quality interactions with children in order to extend their thinking and help them make connections in their learning.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Staff demonstrate a high level of commitment to promoting children's safety. They show a strong awareness of safeguarding procedures, such as possible symptoms of children at risk, and they know how to respond to concerns effectively. All staff

have suitable background checks, early years qualifications and first aid certificates, enabling them to meet children's welfare needs effectively. Rigorous risk assessments, together with daily safety checks, provide a clean, safe and child-friendly environment. A suitable range of good quality resources is easily accessible to children, helping them to make some progress in their learning. Improvements to the outdoor area since the last inspection provide a safer and more welcoming play environment. Staff maintain records, policies and procedures to a good standard to support the safe and efficient management of the pre-school.

Staff develop highly positive relationships with parents. They are very supportive in helping families through difficult times and in accessing additional services where appropriate. Improvements since the last inspection to keep parents more informed of their children's time in the pre-school are having a positive impact. Daily discussions, communication books and sharing some observations of progress, provide parents with more detailed information. Parents comment very favourably about the pre-school, stating that staff are 'amazing' and that their children are happy. Partnerships with outside agencies and other early years settings are well established and make a strong contribution to children's well-being. For example, staff work closely with outside agencies to develop consistent strategies to support children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. In addition, good partnerships with local schools effectively help children through the transition from pre-school.

There is a positive approach to promoting equality and diversity. Staff show a suitable understanding of children's individual needs and have some awareness of their levels of development. However, weaknesses in the observation, assessment and planning processes mean that there are gaps in the staff team's knowledge of children's individual progress. The staff team have made some improvements to these processes since the last inspection by maintaining some records of development. However, observations of progress do not always cover all areas of learning and are not always consistent. This limits the ability of staff to respond effectively to children's individual learning requirements.

The staff team evaluate their practice regularly and build on areas of strength, accurately identifying further aspects for development. They have made several improvements since the last inspection although not all of these are fully effective. They show motivation to seek further improvement, such as installing new heating and an additional external door to provide easier access to the outdoor area.

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

Children display a strong sense of belonging in the pre-school. They build strong relationships with their friends, key persons and other staff. They show good levels of behaviour and benefit from the gentle and caring guidance of staff. They develop positive attitudes to people who are different from themselves. For example, activities such as henna hand painting, learning Spanish words and

making cakes for Diwali, effectively support their understanding of cultural diversity.

Children develop a good understanding of a safe and healthy lifestyle. Children receive gentle reminders from staff as they play, to help them remember safety rules. This includes not running down the ramp, as it may be slippery. Interesting activities help children to learn about road safety in a safe and exciting way, such as making their own roads with battery-operated traffic lights. Children enjoy healthy snacks, such as milk and raisins, and they talk confidently to staff about where milk comes from. They wash their hands under close supervision of staff, learning to use soap, running water and to dry their hands carefully. They are able to play in the outdoor area on a daily basis where there is plenty of space for them to run around freely. A good variety of play equipment, such as stepping stones, bikes, balls and hoops, encourage them to exercise and develop their physical skills.

Children generally secure the skills they need for their future learning. They have daily access to resources to support their literacy and numeracy development, and to stimulate their interest in the world around them. They learn that they can write for different purposes as staff encourage them to draw treasure maps in the garden. This particularly appeals to boys as they enjoy outdoor play and have a current interest in pirates. Children enjoy sharing books with staff, both indoors and outdoors, which helps them to develop an interest in stories and an understanding of the written word. They develop an understanding of number as staff encourage them to count the stepping stones in the garden or animals in a story. They enjoy imaginative games with their friends, such as playing in a 'pirate boat' or finding 'treasure' in the sand pit. They develop a love of nature by studying butterflies, setting up a wormery and growing their own vegetables and salad. Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities are able to enjoy all the activities on offer as staff adapt equipment to suit their individual needs. Staff are readily on hand to support children and help them to enjoy their learning. For example, they introduce some new vocabulary, ask some questions and comment on their play. However, there is a lack of focus on extending and challenging children's learning, such as asking open-ended questions and engaging in sustained shared thinking. In addition, weaknesses in the observation, assessment and planning processes, mean that there is a lack of focus in targeting activities for individual children. As a result, although children enjoy their play and make some gains in their learning, their progress is average in relation to their starting points and capabilities.

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?	3
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	3

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	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	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	3
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Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	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	2
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	2
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	3

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