

The Chesterfords Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspector

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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

The Chesterfords Pre-School registered in 1999 and re-registered in 2011 as a limited company. The pre-school operates from the community centre in the rural village of Great Chesterford, Saffron Walden, Essex. The pre-school serves the local and surrounding areas and has strong links with the local primary school. The setting is accessible to all children and there is a fully enclosed area available for outdoor play. The pre-school opens each weekday, during the school term, from 9.15am until 12.15pm with an optional lunch club offered on a Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday until 1.15pm.

The pre-school is registered on the Early Years Register and provides funded early education for three- and four-year-olds. It supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and children who speak English as an additional language. Children are able to attend for a variety of sessions with a maximum of 30 children, aged from two years, attending the pre-school at any one time. There are currently 47 children on roll, who are within the early years age group.

The setting employs seven members of childcare staff. Of these, six hold an appropriate early years qualification at level 2 or above and one is studying for a qualification at level 2. The pre-school receives support from the local authority.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

The well-established staff team create a warm and welcoming environment in which children demonstrate that they feel settled. Staff follow effective safeguarding procedures and have an accurate knowledge of each child's interests, and needs, enabling them to ensure that every child is included in the setting. Planning for the Early Years Foundation Stage covers all areas of learning and staff provide a wide range of fun and interesting resources. This ensures that children receive experiences which promote good progress overall. Partnerships with parents and carers are excellent and help to promote children's continuity of care and learning. Self-evaluation is highly effective and takes into account the pre-school's strengths and areas for improvement, with all staff working together on the setting's formal self-evaluation tool. Parental feedback from questionnaires and discussions during consultation meetings are also taken into account. Therefore, the pre-school is responsive to the needs of those using their setting.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- obtain children's starting points in order to assess the progress which they are making

- improve the planning and assessments to ensure that children's starting points and children's next steps, in relation to their individual abilities and needs, are incorporated consistently.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children's welfare is promoted as the setting has robust safeguarding procedures in place. Staff are aware of the written safeguarding procedures and have attended safeguarding training to ensure that they are fully aware of their role and responsibilities in working together to protect children. Staff complete daily checks of the setting ensuring that hazards to children are minimised and risk assessments are completed for outings. Children gain a good understanding of safety issues through ongoing explanations from staff and they participate in a range of relevant activities to promote their understanding. This is further supported by visitors to the setting which include the local mounted police who spend time with children talking about keeping safe. Implementation of the setting's policies and procedures further supports children's safety and well-being and all required safeguarding documentation is in place to support staff knowledge and children's safety and well-being.

The manager and staff team work very well together; they share a genuine enthusiasm for their work and are clearly able to support one another. The manager encourages all staff to attend further training and continually improve their practice through regular meetings and appraisals. This helps to promote an environment where staff develop positive attitudes to learning. Children's suggestions are incorporated into the planning and resources are stored at a low level to allow children to make choices about their play. Good use is made of the outdoor play area to allow daily opportunities for fresh air and exercise, as well as the adjoining park and field facilities.

All staff have a good understanding of anti-discriminatory practice, enabling them to review their policies and ensure that the service they provide is inclusive to all children and their families. They work closely with all parents and specifically invite fathers, uncles and grandfathers into the setting to spend time with the children, and this has been hugely successful. Parents receive detailed information about their child's progress and activities, for example, through newsletters, daily talks with staff, and regular parent and staff consultation sessions. The manager also sends a weekly email to all parents to ensure that they are aware of what activities are planned for the following week, enabling parents to be involved in their children's learning. The setting also works well with others to ensure the continuity of children's care and to promote their development. For example, they work closely with the local schools so that they can help prepare children for this transition and they regularly share information with childminders.

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

Children make good progress in all areas of learning because staff have a thorough understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage. They implement clear procedures for assessing children and utilise this information to inform activity planning, ensuring that children are offered activities that promote their development. However, the setting does not incorporate every child's starting points, other than through general discussion with parents, in order to progress them further. Therefore, although progress is seen through development matters documentation it is not always clear to see where every child started from. The use of the key person system, and reserve key person, means that staff know all the children well and can therefore provide effective support whenever needed. They confidently encourage children to explore and develop their play, intervening appropriately to extend children's knowledge and understanding. This enables children to take an active role in their learning and develop positive attitudes to this.

Children feel valued and their play is enhanced as their ideas are listened to. They are able to choose new resources with staff support and this ensures there is a balanced range of child-initiated and adult-led activities. For example, children show great enthusiasm for the dinosaurs and train sets and their enjoyment is further enhanced as staff join in with their play. Children have many opportunities to learn about the uses of information and communication technology, therefore gaining valuable skills for the future. They use battery operated toys and have independent access to a laptop where they confidently use the keyboard and mouse with ease. Their emotional development is promoted through circle time, and they demonstrate that they feel settled, having clearly built secure relationships with staff, and each other. They develop a good understanding of appropriate behaviour because they are offered clear explanations by staff and they learn about sharing, cooperation and negotiation as they work out turn-taking and help with tasks such as tidying up. Children are developing a very good understanding of the wider world around them as they regularly participate in a range of activities and play experiences to support this, such as when they celebrate different festivals. For example, they celebrated the recent Jewish festival and a parent came into the setting and shared her experiences and knowledge to help them develop their understanding of the festival through discussion and various resources. Effective procedures for working with parents and other professionals means children with special educational needs and/or disabilities or those who speak English as an additional language, are offered appropriate and continued support to enable them to participate and make good progress. Children are encouraged to develop healthy lifestyles and their understanding of the relevance of healthy eating is well promoted as they enjoy 'The Chesterford's cafe'. This was created for children to access their snack, independently serve their own food and drink and socially chat with their friends and staff whilst eating healthily.

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	1

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	1
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	1
The effectiveness of partnerships	2
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

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	1
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	2

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