

Piccolo Early Years Group

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*.

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

Piccolo Early Years Group has been established since 1999 and is registered on the Early Years Register and the compulsory part of the Childcare Register. The group operates from the school hall and a separate building in the grounds of Bugle County Primary School. There is disabled access to both buildings. The group is committee-run and serves Bugle and the surrounding villages. It opens five days a week during term time. Sessions are available from 8.45am to 3.15pm. The setting also runs a breakfast club which runs from 7.45am to 9am. The group is registered to care for up to 64 children aged from two to under eight years at any one time. There are currently 48 children in the early years age group on roll. The group receives funding for the provision of free early education for three- and four-year-olds. Children attend a variety of sessions. The group supports children who speak English as an additional language, those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, and also a community of travellers. Nine staff are employed to work with the children, eight of whom have early years qualifications and one has qualified teacher status.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

The Piccolo Early Years Group is a good setting that recognises the needs of the children and provides an inclusive and supportive environment. The setting ensures children are very well cared for by well trained and knowledgeable staff, whose skills are mostly used to good effect in supporting children's learning through the engaging and interesting activities provided. The systems for evaluating the impact of individual activities on developing children's skills are at a relatively early stage of development. Partnerships with parents are good and the setting shares and celebrates the children's successes through these links. Good relationships between the children and with the adults around them are a strong feature of the setting. There is a clear determination and good capacity to improve further.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- develop sharper systems for evaluating the effectiveness of specific learning activities in order to identify precise areas for improvement and to enhance outcomes for children
- focus the planning of learning opportunities more closely on the individual needs of children of different abilities to further personalise their learning

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Safeguarding arrangements are excellent. Policies and practices to ensure children's safety are robust and all staff are trained to a high standard in implementing them. Excellent attention is given to ensuring the safety of the site and carrying out rigorous health and safety checks on a regular basis. Children are closely supervised in the outside area and they take part in regular fire drills in conjunction with the main school. All staff have paediatric first aid qualifications and meticulous records are kept. The setting has formed excellent partnerships with a range of outside agencies and the manager works tenaciously to secure support for children with specific needs when it is needed. Day-to-day routines ensure the setting is effectively managed and resources are used well. The improvement points from the previous inspection have been successfully addressed. As a result, the setting has undergone a major re-development of its outdoor facilities which now provide the children with a safe and interesting space to enjoy. This enables the children to develop good physical skills as well as promoting other areas of learning and is extensively used. The leadership team are keen to enhance the skills of the staff and staff development is seen as a high priority. For example, staff have recently benefited from training on developing communication skills and on the use of information and communication technology (ICT), which has already had a positive impact on children's learning. Although leaders evaluate the impact of their work well in order to identify areas for improvement, systems for reviewing the effectiveness of specific learning activities are still developing. Links with parents are good and families are well known to the staff team. Termly parents' meetings allow the progress of the children to be shared and celebrated. A newsletter gives parents a wide range of information about what is happening at the setting. Support for children with additional needs, whether these be social and emotional or academic, is a strong feature of the setting, as is support for children who speak English as an additional language. The setting supports children from diverse backgrounds and promotes equality well so that there is no discrimination. As a result all children are fully integrated and involved in the activities on offer and make equally good progress. Links with the local primary school are very strong. The setting has recently improved the records of children's progress to share with the reception teachers in order to enable a smooth transition.

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

The children enjoy being at the setting and feel very safe and looked after. They have a wide range of good and engaging learning experiences to try and they achieve well as a result. Children are given a free choice of adult-led or more independent tasks to follow. They demonstrate a good interest in the world around them, for example when children were fascinated by the developing ice which was forming on the toy duck pond and enjoyed touching the freezing water and telling each other what it was like. Staff are deployed well and they monitor and record

the progress of the children closely, using both written and photographic evidence to capture important milestones. The learning journals are detailed and staff track children's progress carefully. The activities are linked increasingly to themes, such as 'the environment'. The children worked on bird-related activities through art and model making, effectively developing good collaborative skills and showing strong creative traits. Children develop good skills for the future as they confidently operate simple computer programs linked to the environment. The children have the opportunity to move between activities, although some choose to spend extended periods on single tasks. One child spent over an hour loading a fir cone with sultanas to act as a bird feeder. He was able to choose the spot out in the garden to place his feeder. Such activities are celebrated by the adults and children in the group. Children are able to move freely between the indoor area and outside. During the inspection, despite the very cold weather, children put on their coats and went outside to use the very good outdoor facilities. Children chose to use the 'small world' and role play areas to do woodwork and demonstrated good hand to eye coordination when using the toy tools in their imaginative play. Others, under the guidance of an adult, thoroughly enjoyed playing at being birds, flapping wings and making calls as they moved safely around. The children demonstrate thoughtfulness and good social skills by taking turns with some of the larger play equipment. The activities they engage in are well planned and enable all children to be fully involved, and as a result they make good progress in their learning. The staff are aware of the need to provide challenge to more able children and this is seen in their planning. However, they do not always tailor activities closely enough to ensure individual children's interests are taken into account and their needs fully met. Exciting activities are provided that enable children to become involved in the local community. For example, during the West of England Brass Band Contest, musicians visited and the children enjoyed trying instruments and making hats for the parades. Children's behaviour is very good and this is rewarded with stickers. They take pride in their successes and value the rewards. They develop strong communication skills through a range of activities, for example when they discussed making healthy egg sandwiches. Children develop an excellent awareness of how to keep healthy through regular vigorous exercise and learning about healthy foods and hygiene.

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	1
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	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	1
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	1
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