

Blue Bear Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspector	Michelle Britch

Setting address	Strike Lane Primary School, Strike Lane, FRECKLETON, Preston, PR4 1HR
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Type of setting	Childcare - Non-Domestic

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Introduction

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Description of the setting

Blue Bear is a small village pre-school situated within Strike Lane primary school in Freckleton, near Preston. It registered in 2006 on the Early Years Register and Childcare Register. The setting operates from one main classroom with en-suite toileting facilities. The pre-school have access to two enclosed and purpose built outdoor play areas and use is made of the main school playground. The times of operation are between 8.15am until 3.30pm during term-time, with children attending a variety of sessions. A maximum of 24 children may attend the pre-school at one time. There are currently 52 children on roll aged between two to five years. Of these, 33 children receive funding for nursery education. The setting offers a service to local families and children. The setting supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and children who speak English as an additional language. The setting employs five staff and a pool of support staff is also used. All staff have early years qualifications. The manager holds an early years degree and is working towards Early Years Practitioner Status.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children have fun in the safe, inclusive and very child-centred environment. Children's learning and development are well promoted as staff demonstrate a sound knowledge and understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage. Children make good progress as a result of the focus placed on identifying and planning for children's individual interests, however, the record keeping of their next steps are not fully developed. The partnership with parent/carers and other agencies is strong and contributes significantly to ensuring that the needs of all children are met very well and that they get any additional support they need. Regular self evaluation by the manager and staff team ensures that any priorities for the future are promptly identified and acted on, resulting in a service that is responsive to the needs of all its users.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- develop formative assessment to support continuous observational assessment to form a view of where each child is in their learning, where they need to go and the most effective practice to support them in getting there.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children are safeguarded effectively. Designated staff are fully aware of their responsibilities to safeguard children's welfare and staff understand the procedures

to be followed if they have a concern about a child in their care. The organisation of the premises and deployment of staff means that children can move around freely and safely, accessing available resources both indoors and outdoors throughout the sessions. Effective procedures are in place to identify risks and hazards and appropriate action is taken to minimise these. All required documentation is in place, up-to-date and well organised to maintain confidentiality and to safeguard children. This includes staff checks, records of attendance, fire drills, accident and safety checks. Staff ensure that the equipment is clean and well maintained. This sustains high levels of hygiene and helps to prevent the spread of infection which protects children's health. All staff hold a current first aid certificate. This ensures staff can give appropriate care if there is an accident.

The management has a clear sense of purpose about what it is they want to achieve and have built a committed staff team. The highly motivated and experienced manager supports the development of the staff team and instigates changes where necessary. This results in a good learning environment where both children and staff thrive. Regular staff meetings and appraisals ensure that staff are aware of their roles and responsibilities and have a secure knowledge and understanding of the policies and procedures. All staff are encouraged to undertake ongoing training and they enthusiastically cascade new information to the team. A good commitment to self evaluation and on going improvement ensures that practices are constantly evolving and improving to reflect the needs of the children and their families. Quality assurance schemes, such as the Lancashire Quality Award and Red, Amber and Green audit tools shows a dedication to improving practice further.

Staff strive to provide a service that is inclusive for all children and their families. Staff plan their time well to ensure that children and parents receive a personal greeting every time they arrive and leave the nursery. They also ensure information is exchanged through verbal feedback and a notice board. The settling in process is seen as a critical period for getting to know the child and family. This is planned to ensure a bonding and mutual understanding between most key people involved in their care. The parental involvement co-ordinator arranges stay and play sessions and workshops throughout the term to maintain these relationships. They have developed links with other providers delivering the Early Years Foundation Stage to children in their care to ensure progression and continuity of learning and care. The Special Educational Needs Coordinator is fully trained. She successfully links with other professionals, such as speech therapists, and works on strategies to support parents with these agreed programmes.

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

Children's care, learning and play are supported well by staff who have a good understanding of child development and are skilful in providing an enabling environment. The resources are set out well to ensure that children have freedom of choice and movement within a stimulating environment. Through continual

observation, key workers collate spontaneous written observations on children's achievements and interests which are used to inform planning. Although this is done effectively to support children's personalised learning and set targets within the short term plans, they are not documented to their full potential in their journals to show a child's progress effectively.

Close and caring relationships increase children's sense of trust and help them to develop a strong sense of self. They cheerfully speak to visitors, asking their name and telling them what they are doing in the nursery. Staff are experienced in using a wide range of teaching methods, such as small group work and focused one to one support. Good questioning and sensitive interaction in play enables all children to participate and achieve. For example, posing a problem to the children and asking them how they think it can be solved. Children are interested, motivated and play with purpose and concentration. Imaginative play is well supported by staff as children have access to many interesting role play and small world resources to stimulate their imagination. For example, gold coins in the sand pit for them to find 'treasure' and a wide range of large crates and tarpaulins to make dens outside.

Children explore their creativity as they make marks on the outdoor surface with chalks and move around each other in creative ways to catch bubbles outside. They have made some interesting displays and their work is presented all around the environment. Children gain insight into the world around us through meaningful activities. The equality and diversity co-ordinator works well to deliver an inclusive programme of activities related to the theme 'Around the world in eighty days'. For example, learning the song 'head, shoulder's knees and toes' in Punjabi and celebrating different festivals like Chinese New Year. Children's understanding of sustainability is also promoted as they take part in recycling activities and use the remains of snacks to make compost for the planting and growing of seeds and vegetables. The support and encouragement that children receive to make choices and decisions, as well as the good progress that they are making in their learning and development, helps prepare them for the future. The children have access to a good range of information and communications technology equipment which is successfully used to enhance all areas of the curriculum. For example, the use of a web camera within a birds nest allows children to watch nature at its best on the setting's television.

Children are made aware of the safety issues in an age and stage appropriate manner. They engage in risk taking activities, such as cutting fruit under the watchful eye of a member of staff and learn how to handle them correctly and safely. Children's behaviour is very good, they are able to take instruction from staff and play well together.

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	2
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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