

Bassingbourn Pre-school

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspector	Suman Willis

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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).

Children only attend this setting before and/or after the school day and/or during the school holidays. The judgements in this report reflect the quality of early years provision offered to children during those periods.

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

Bassingbourn pre-school opened in 1970 and operates from two rooms in a new, purpose-built unit, within the children's centre. One room is shared with an after-school club. The pre-school is situated in the village of Bassingbourn, near Royston. Children have access to a secure outdoor play area. The pre-school is open each weekday from 8am until 2.45pm, for 38 weeks of the year. The pre-school also provides a breakfast club for children attending the local school on site.

The pre-school is registered by Ofsted on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. A maximum of 35 children in the early years age range may attend at any one time. There are currently 78 children on roll, aged between two and five years. The pre-school provides funded early education for two- three- and four-year-olds. The centre makes provision for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and for those who speak English as an additional language.

The pre-school employs nine staff. Six members of staff hold appropriate early years qualifications. The setting welcomes students and volunteers. The centre receives support from the local authority.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Overall, children are making good progress towards the early learning goals. Their learning and development are mostly promoted very well. Procedures to work closely with parents are, most of the time, effective in extending and challenging children. Staff sensitively meet the developmental needs of all children and link in with others involved in the children's care, effectively. Good leadership ensures that all staff and parents, are fully involved in the evaluation of the pre-school which enables them to make continuous improvement for the benefit of children.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- develop further staff's knowledge and understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage
- develop partnership with parents and invite them to become familiar with the Early Years Foundation Stage so that they can contribute to the planning and observation process.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children are safeguarded very well because staff have robust systems in place to enable them to protect children. For example, volunteers and students are closely supervised and they have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities. All staff and committee members are suitably vetted and are safe to be around children. Visitors are asked to sign in and are closely monitored by staff. Clear risk assessments and daily safety checks of the entire premises mean that children's safety is consistently well-managed. The organisation of all areas and resources is effective in ensuring that children can continue to learn through free exploration.

All activities are planned well. This means that all children are able to participate at their own level. Good planning of the outdoor and indoor areas ensures that children make good progress towards the early learning goals. Good deployment of staff enables children to participate in a broad range of interesting activities which are adult-led and child-led. Children benefit from the very experienced staff who are dedicated to promoting their welfare and learning. The manager provides good leadership and is supported well by committee members. All staff are given designated roles, this works very well as they feel valued and respected. Self-evaluation takes into account the views of all staff, parents and children, in identifying areas for development. This ensures that staff are pro-active in making improvements for the benefit of all children. For example, fire drills are now effectively recorded to ensure that monitoring procedures for emergency evacuation are suitable for keeping children safe.

Systems to build a strong link between home and pre-school are good. For example, children take home school books and a daily diary keeps parents informed of their children's day. Parents provide valuable information about their children's welfare and learning, both informally and formally. They are warmly welcomed into the group and their comments valued. While regular meetings between the parents and their child's key worker ensure that parents are fully aware of the progress their children are making, parents are not fully informed of the Early Years Foundation Stage. This means that procedures to involve parents in promoting children's learning and development are at times, inconsistent. Effective relationships with other provisions and professionals involved with the children are well-established and contribute well to supporting children's welfare and learning. Staff's commitment to promoting equal opportunities for all children, means that those with additional needs are supported sensitively, enabling them to participate fully in the setting.

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

Most staff have a good understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage and use this well to support children in their learning. Procedures to monitor and observe children's progress are mostly effective but not always linked to the six areas of learning. This means that at times, children may not be fully challenged. Children

participate in a wide range of well-planned activities which sustain their interest. Staff consistently ask open-ended questions to extend children's learning. They are provided with ample opportunities to develop their writing skills. For example, some children enjoy mark-making as they write lists, while others confidently write their full names. Letters and numbers are attractively displayed throughout the pre-school and children are encouraged to use these to copy from when writing. Children are developing their interest in books as they enjoy reading to themselves and being read to. All children concentrate and contribute well in group story time and enjoy predicting what happens next. Younger children are developing good communication skills and their independence, as staff use laminated pictures to help children make choices.

Children are beginning to understand mathematical concepts through their routine and during organised activities. For example, at snack time they enjoy counting out the number of cups and plates required. Children understand volume as they measure out beakers of sand to fill larger ones to make sand castles. Younger children are delighted as they successfully count to three without support and confidently recognise shapes. All children are fully engaged and concentrate well in creative activities, such as, making caterpillars out of egg boxes and junk modelling.

Children move freely between indoor and outdoor activities according to their preference and careful deployment of staff means they always play safely. A partially-covered outdoor area ensures that children are protected in all weathers. Children understand safety boundaries because staff consistently use group time to get them to think about safety. For example, they are reminded to put their individual mats safely in a pile so that they do not trip over them. Children's health needs are very well-promoted as they eat healthy snacks, these consist of apples, carrots, bananas and pitta bread. Good posters remind children to wash hands after toileting and before snacks. Children have regular fresh air as they play outside. They enjoy developing their physical skills as they learn to manoeuvre wheeled toys, use balancing beams and learn to roll hoops. Children use a variety of tools, such as, playdough cutters, pencils and paint brushes, to extend their small manipulative skills. They enjoy developing their technical skills as they use a variety of construction tools to create models which move.

Children behave very well and are polite and friendly towards their peers and adults. They happily share resources, such as, boxes and scissors, as they make their models. Children concentrate well and participate in activities with enthusiasm because staff consistently offer praise and encourage. They develop a very good understanding of other cultures and beliefs as they celebrate festivals from around the world and participate in activities, such as, making igloos. Positive images are attractively displayed throughout the setting. This means that children continue to develop very good skills for the future.

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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Annex B: the Childcare Register

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