

Exminster 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

Exminster Pre-school registered in 1981. It is run by a parent committee and operates from the village hall in Exminster, Exeter, Devon. The group have access to the main hall, which has kitchen and toilet facilities. An enclosed garden is available for outside play.

The pre-school is open Monday to Friday during term time. Sessions run from 9am to 12 noon and a lunch club is available from 12 noon to 1pm. On Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays the pre-school runs an afternoon session from 12.15pm to 3.15pm; on a Wednesday, the afternoon session finishes at 1.45pm. During the spring and summer terms afternoon sessions are offered at the nearby primary school each week day. This group is known as Cygnets and is a separate registration though many children attend both groups.

The pre-school is registered on the Early Years Register. A maximum of 40 children in the early years age range may attend at any one time. There are currently 58 children in this age range on roll. The pre-school supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. The pre-school is in receipt of funding for the provision of free early education for children aged three and four years. There are 11 members of staff employed to work with the children, most of these hold or are working towards relevant early years qualifications.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children thoroughly enjoy their time at this caring and inclusive pre-school. Overall, children make good progress in most areas of their learning and development. Staff at the pre-school work hard to provide an interesting and stimulating environment. They make the most of the indoor space, resources and some of the outdoor space. Most regulatory documentation is in place and there are good procedures for self-evaluation. Staff demonstrate a positive commitment to continuous improvement to promote better outcomes for children.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To meet the specific requirements of the EYFS, the registered person must:

- ensure children's attendance record details their actual hours of attendance (Documentation) 07/03/2012

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

- develop the outdoor area to provide children with a greater range of experiences in all six areas of learning
- provide a wider range of opportunities for children to experiment with their writing through making marks, personal writing symbols and conventional script.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Staff have a very good understanding of safeguarding issues. They know the procedures to follow if they have any concerns regarding the welfare of the children in their care. There are comprehensive systems in place for recording and maintaining most documentation. However, the children's attendance record does not detail their hours of attendance. This is a specific legal requirement. Since staff supervise the children closely, this has little impact on their safety. A range of written policies and procedures, that staff regularly review, are available to parents. Overall, these effectively promote children's safety and well-being at the setting. There are clear and precise records of risk assessment in place that show how staff manage any hazards to children effectively.

Children are fully encouraged to understand differences and to accept each other's level of ability. The setting celebrates different festivals and cultural events, which staff build into planning. There are close links within the local community to encourage children's awareness of the world around them. For example, many parents visit to talk about their occupations within the community as firefighters, ambulance crew and police officers as part of the 'natural superheroes' topic. Resources are purposefully and effectively arranged to provide a wide choice for children. Staff fully utilise all areas in the main hall and some of the outdoor area. However, the outdoor area is not fully developed to provide children with a range of experiences in all six areas of learning

The setting is very well organised. The management and staff show very positive attitudes towards working together, especially in evaluating areas of practice. Staff show enthusiasm and dedication towards driving improvements and outcomes for all children in their care. They are continually updating their knowledge through training.

The staff liaise closely with parents from the start, through visits and opportunities for questions. The staff use a key person system and develop good knowledge about children's routines, preferences and levels of development. Parents are very happy with the setting and fully appreciate the commitment of the staff. Informative notice boards, e-mails and newsletters keep parents informed of events at the setting and invite their involvement. For example, they receive invites to coffee mornings each week. The staff arrange visits to the local school and there are well-organised routines in place for children who transfer. They establish strong links with professionals in the wider community to support children's individual needs successfully.

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

Children settle quickly and happily in this welcoming safe environment. They feel secure in the setting because staff create a calm and nurturing atmosphere, which promotes their feelings of trust. Staff frequently record children's achievements; they note their observational assessments against each area of learning and use this to plan children's next steps in learning. They collate the information into a summary report for parents. Children are confident, articulate and self-assured. They behave very well because praise and encouragement are frequent. This promotes children's self-esteem and a positive and enthusiastic attitude to learning.

Children express their creativity in many different ways, for example, painting, role play and junk modelling. They create delightful pictures, which are on display along with their own unique rockets using different kinds of materials. These activities encourage imagination and dexterity. Staff provide regular opportunities to support children's requests. For example, allowing children to see what happens when they fill an ice cube tray to carry outside to see if it is cold enough for the water to freeze. Children are very confident at using the computer to access fun and educational games. Children are developing a love of books and enjoy sitting on the comfortable cushions in the book corner and 'reading' stories to each other. Exciting and interesting experiences are accessible daily across most the areas of learning, which enrich their overall development. However, opportunities for children to practise and develop their pre-writing skills are limited to one area. Children's understanding of the world is developing through trips to places of interest and outdoor activities.

Children enjoy free-flow access to outdoor play each session to help develop positive attitudes to exercise and fresh air. They dress up as pirates or superheroes and happily skip outside to dig up leaves to put in the wheelbarrow or travel around on bicycles. They laugh as they tiptoe forward and run back to base during a game of 'What's the time Mr. Wolf?' As children develop, they show high levels of independence in managing their own personal care. They are adept at helping themselves to a drink when they are thirsty. They know that they must wash their hands to ensure cleanliness after using the toilet, before snack time and before eating packed lunches. Children carry their plates, choose healthy food for snacks and sit together sociably. They have many opportunities to learn about food and how it grows as they explore the natural world. They talk about smell and taste a range of food including goats' cheese, chickpeas and pickled onions. Cooking activities introduce children to a range of useful mathematical concepts. Children use tools safely when they cut ham and grate cheese to make a pasta dish. They also learn about safety when toasting marshmallows and sausages outside on an open fire. Children and staff work diligently to maintain and cultivate the fruit, flowers and vegetables on their nearby allotment. Overall, children play and learn in environment that develops very good attitudes to learning, transferable skills for the future and encourages them to become active learners.

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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