

Bitterley Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	224044
Inspection date	30/04/2012
Inspector	Bernadina Lavery

Setting address	Bitterley C E School, Bitterley, LUDLOW, Shropshire, SY8 3HF
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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

Bitterley Pre-School registered in 1993. The pre-school operates from a purpose built, demountable building in the grounds of Bitterley Primary School. It is situated in the village of Bitterley, near Ludlow, Shropshire. There is a secure, enclosed outdoor play area. The pre-school is managed by a voluntary management committee. The pre-school opens three days a week during school term only. Sessions are 9am until 12 noon and 12 noon until 3pm on Mondays, Wednesday and Fridays. The pre-school serves the local area. Children attend for a variety of sessions.

The pre-school is registered on the Early Years Register. A maximum of 22 children aged between two and five years may attend at any one time. Currently there are 17 children on roll, all of whom are in the early year's age group. The pre-school is in receipt of funding for early year's education places. The pre-school supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

There are four members of staff who work with the children. Of these, three hold national Vocational Qualifications (NVQ) at level 3 and one holds a NVQ 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 satisfactory.

Children are content at this friendly pre-school where they make steady progress in their learning and development, supported by caring, experienced staff. Recent staff changes have had a significant impact on the overall governance of this pre-school. Safeguarding systems and revisions to the daily routine require attention to support staff understanding of how to confidently implement child protection procedures and ensure children's drinks needs are addressed. Most documentation is in place to support the efficient running of the pre-school, although aspects relating to induction and risk assessment for outings require development. Sound attention is given to partnership working to support inclusive practice and transition arrangements. Planning, assessment and evaluation systems are being developed to provide quality information relating to children's overall progress and identify ongoing priorities for improvement.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- fresh drinking water must be available at all times 30/05/2012
- carry out a full risk assessment for each type of outing 30/05/2012
in order to ensure children's safety.

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

- provide induction training that includes matters such as evacuation procedures, child protection and health and safety issues for all new staff to help them understand how the provision operates and their role within it
- improve staff understanding of the safeguarding children policy to ensure they have an up-to-date understanding of safeguarding issues and be able to implement procedures appropriately, as required
- develop quality systems for evaluating the provision to include all service users' views including children
- evaluate planning and children's assessments to ensure children's starting points are recorded and information gained is used to help plan for the next steps of learning in all areas and with particular regard to knowledge and understanding of the world.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Safeguarding is given sound attention as staff are vigilant in keeping children safe. Very recent staff changes have prompted the review of systems, policies and procedures and lines of accountability are being established. While new safeguarding procedures are being introduced, some staff lack confidence in how to implement procedures appropriately if a situation arose, such as suspending a member of staff in the event of a child protection allegation. This jeopardises decisive safeguarding action being taken if required. Recruitment and vetting procedures are adequate. This includes provision for seeking references for recently appointed staff and recording information relating to Criminal Records Bureau checks to evidence suitability. However, induction training for new staff is not strategically planned or evidenced, hindering their professional confidence and practice in understanding how the pre-school operates and their role within it.

The system for recording children's hours of attendance is carefully implemented as staff remind parents and carers to sign children in and out, ensuring an accurate register is available in the event of an emergency. Visual safety checks are carried out on a daily basis and the overall risk assessment is updated as required. However, limited evidence is available to satisfy the Early Years Foundation Stage requirements regarding risk assessments for outings in order to demonstrate children's safety is promoted while on trips. Adequate systems are in place to record accidents, incidents and children's health and dietary needs. Staff are qualified in administering first aid. This supports children's safe play and that their welfare needs are being considered. Children play in a bright, welcoming room where their art work is attractively displayed. Suitable equipment and resources are available and accessible to support children's learning. Outdoor play is available at each session and children have access to a pleasant garden area, in addition they have the use of the school playground and fields.

A key worker system is in place to help provide consistency for children and their

families. Staff develop close, trusting relationships with children and clearly enjoy their company as they engage in conversations with children about their favourite breakfast cereals and the lambing season. Inclusion is given sound attention as children's individual needs are identified and supported appropriately. The appointed Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO) demonstrates a satisfactory knowledge of local support mechanisms, including speech and language therapists. The SENCO is working with the interim management team to ensure early intervention strategies are prioritised. Newsletters, daily discussions and a notice board are used to communicate with children's families. Staff are friendly and approachable and parents and carers speak well of the pre-school, saying they are happy with how their children have settled and the information sharing systems. Cooperative relationships between the committee, host school and pre-school staff are being developed in order to support children's transition. For example, staff are liaising with the school to develop children's achievement summaries to help brief reception staff prior to children starting school.

The recent organisational change has heralded a new era for this pre-school. All aspects of the pre-school are undergoing a complete review. Staff are dedicated and determined to embrace change in order to sustain improvement by supporting and cooperating with the interim management team. Consequently, some new ways of working have yet to have an impact, while other new initiatives are not yet fully implemented, such as quality improvement processes. Evaluation systems are not yet sufficiently established or representative of all service users to identify priorities and drive forward further developments.

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

Children make sound progress in their learning and development as staff have a secure knowledge of the Early Years Foundation Stage. Sensitive, patient teaching ensures there is an adequate balance between adult-led and child-initiated activities. Unsettled children are well-supported by staff, who offer reassurance and comfort as required. Planning and assessment systems are currently being reviewed and developed in order to adopt a less onerous, more informative system. For example, the current assessments do not clearly indicate children's starting points, achievements, gaps in children's learning or where individual children require additional support. Consequently, this information does not inform future planning, leaving areas of learning not sufficiently covered, such as aspects of knowledge and understanding of the world. Therefore, children's progress is not accurately recorded or consistently evaluated, limiting the quality of information that can be shared with parents, carers and reception class teachers.

Children arrive confidently, clearly familiar with the daily routine. After greeting staff, they hang up their coats and put their lunch boxes away before going off to play. The play environment reflects children's art work and pictures of the wider community. Children are beginning to gain an understanding about diversity through activities that promote relevance, such as practising Chinese writing to commemorate Chinese New Year. Children enjoy looking at books and listening to favourite stories. Staff encourage children to recall and recognise rhyming words,

causing much amusement when words rhyme with their names. Number skills are encouraged as children are developing an understanding of comparison, pattern and size. Children lie on the floor to draw around each other and then use collage materials to represent their spotty and stripy clothes. Children show some interest in technology as staff assist children in operating a compact disc player, although current planning and assessment systems do not reflect sufficient attention being given to fully utilising other technological resources, such as the computer. Children show developing imaginations as they talk about baking spider cakes in the role play area. Different media displays including Mondrian art, demonstrates children are starting to experiment with colour and design. Children generally secure the literacy, numeracy and technology skills they require to support their future learning.

Children are beginning to show an understanding of healthy lifestyles as they are offered nutritious snacks including milk, water and fruit. However, as the pre-school now caters for two year olds, fresh drinking water is not made available at all times, in case younger children cause spillages. This means children have to wait for snack time or ask for a drink, which does not meet the Early Years Foundation Stage requirement under food and drink. Staff offer children gentle reminders to encourage children to keep safe in the setting, such as being careful when handling scissors. Participation in fire drills helps children to understand the evacuation procedures. Children respond well to the flexible routine and choice of playing indoors or outside. The garden area provides opportunities for children to plant bulbs and run, balance and practise their physical skills while enjoying the fresh air.

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?	3
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	3

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	3
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding	3
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	3
The effectiveness of partnerships	3
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	3

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
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Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	3
The extent to which children feel safe	3
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	3
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	3
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	3

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