

Cherry Tree Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

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23/04/2012

Inspector

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Setting address

11th Letchworth Scout Hut, Pixmore Junior School
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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

Cherry Tree Pre-School registered in 2011 and is run by the Pre-School Learning Alliance and managed by the local children's centre. It operates from the Scout Hut in the grounds of Pixmore Junior School, Letchworth, Hertfordshire. The pre-school serves the local and surrounding areas and has strong links with the three local primary schools. The pre-school is accessible to all children and there is a fully enclosed area available for outdoor play.

The pre-school opens each weekday, during school term time, from 9.15am until 12.15pm with various sessions being offered and there is an optional lunch club until 1.15pm on a Monday, Wednesday and Friday. A maximum of 20 children aged from two years may attend the pre-school at any one time and there are currently 33 children on roll who are within the early years age group.

The pre-school is registered on the Early Years Register and on both the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. The pre-school provides funded early education for two, three and four-year-olds. It supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and children who speak English as an additional language.

The pre-school employs four members of childcare staff. Of these, three hold appropriate early years qualifications to level three or above and one is working towards a level three qualification. The pre-school receives support from the local authority.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

The established staff team create a warm and welcoming environment in which children settle easily. Effective safeguarding procedures and regular staff training ensure that children are protected. The knowledge staff have of each child's interests and specific needs enables them to ensure that every child feels included. Overall, planning for the Early Years Foundation Stage covers all areas of learning and staff provide a range of fun and interesting resources to ensure that children receive experiences which promote good progress. Partnerships with parents, carers and other settings are established and these help to promote continuity of care and learning for the children attending. Effective steps are taken to evaluate the pre-school's strengths and areas for improvement and the pre-school is responsive to the needs of those using their setting.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- develop further opportunities for children to celebrate, recognise and show

respect for the wider world, including their own home languages and cultures to ensure that their ethnicity is valued.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children's welfare is promoted as the setting has robust safeguarding procedures in place. For example, all staff attend regular training to ensure that they are fully aware of their role and responsibilities in working together to protect children. Rigorous checks are carried out to ensure that all staff are suitable to work with children on a day-to-day basis. Staff carry out thorough risk assessments and daily safety checks of the setting which ensures that hazards to children are minimised. Children gain a good understanding of safety issues through ongoing explanations from staff and they participate in a range of relevant activities to develop their understanding. Their understanding is clearly observed, for example, as a group of children tell others to pick things up so they don't fall over. The daily implementation of the setting's policies and procedures further supports children's well-being and all required safeguarding documentation is in place to support children's safety.

The leader and team of staff work well together. They share a genuine enthusiasm for their work and support one another throughout the session. The leader encourages all staff to attend further training and to continue to improve their practice through regular one-to-one meetings and appraisals. This helps to promote an environment where staff develop positive attitudes to learning. Resources in this pack away setting are used well to promote children's learning and development; children have regular opportunities to make choices about their play through the use of a choosing book. Staff demonstrate a positive attitude towards reflecting on practice to bring about sustained improvements. The pre-school staff work together on the setting's formal self-evaluation tool and parental feedback from questionnaires is also taken into account.

Effective use is made of the outside play area to ensure that children are offered an extended range of opportunities. They have continuous access to this area as the session promotes free flow play enabling children to choose activities inside, outside or a mixture of both. Staff demonstrate an understanding of anti-discriminatory practice and review their policies to ensure that the service they provide is inclusive to all children and their families. They work closely with parents and carers to ensure that they understand each child's family background and individual needs, and consider this information when they are planning activities and play opportunities. However, children do not always have opportunities to share or learn about their individual customs, languages and/or cultures as only some festivals and religious cultures are celebrated. Therefore, children's understanding of and recognition for the wider world is not always fully promoted. Parents receive thorough information about their child's progress and activities, through newsletters, daily talks with staff and regular parent and staff consultation sessions. The setting also works well with others to ensure the continuity of children's care and promote their development. For example, staff work closely

with the local primary schools so that they can support and prepare children for this transition.

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

Children make good progress in all areas of their learning because staff have a thorough understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage. They implement clear procedures for assessing children and draw on this information to inform activity planning, ensuring that children are offered activities that promote their individual development. The use of a key person system means that staff know the children and families well and can provide appropriate support whenever needed. Staff confidently encourage children to explore and develop their own play, intervening and joining in appropriately to extend their knowledge and understanding. This enables children to take an active role in their learning and develop positive attitudes to this.

Children's self-esteem is enhanced as their ideas are listened to and they are able to choose new resources with staff supporting them to ensure that there is a balanced range of child-initiated and adult-led activities. For example, children show great enthusiasm for the outside digging area. They use spades and buckets for transferring mud and excitedly want to show the wiggly worms they find to everyone. Children also enjoy the craft activities they take part in and promote each other's confidence with spoken statements such as 'that is a beautiful green you are using on your picture'. Children have opportunities to learn about the use of information and communication technology, therefore, gaining valuable skills for the future; they use resources, such as mobile phones, keyboards and computerised tills in their play. They develop good relationships with each other, show kindness and have also built effective relationships with staff.

Children develop a good understanding of appropriate behaviour because they are offered clear explanations by staff along with the promotion of the pre-school 'golden rules'. They learn about sharing, cooperation and negotiation as they take turns and help with tasks, such as tidying up. Children are developing some understanding of the wider world as they participate in activities and play experiences which encourage this. The procedures for working with parents and other professionals mean that children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are offered appropriate and continued support to enable them to participate and make effective progress. Staff incorporate children's individual interests into the planning, capturing their interests, extending their knowledge and providing them with opportunities to develop early reading and writing skills. For example, children participate in songs and rhymes to help them identify letters and numbers and enjoy writing and mark-making as part of the role play activities. Children are encouraged to develop healthy lifestyles and their understanding of the relevance of healthy eating is promoted as they participate in preparing their own snack, talking about the foods they eat and pouring their own drinks.

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

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