

Collingwood Preschool

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspector	Edgar Hastings

Setting address	Collingwood Pre School, Collingwood road, South Woodham Ferrers, Chelmsford, Essex, CM3 5YJ
Telephone number	07855 885484
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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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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.

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Description of the setting

Collingwood Pre-School is run by a committee and was registered in 1999. It operates from a pre-school room, next to the foundation stage classroom within the main building of Collingwood Primary School in South Woodham Ferrers, Essex. All children share access to a secure, enclosed, outdoor play area.

The pre-school opens five days a week during school term times. Session times are from 8.45am until 11.45am and 12.30pm until 3.30pm. A lunch club is held between 11.45am and 12.30pm. It is registered to care for 21 children aged between two and five years at any one time. There are currently 63 children aged from two to five years on roll. Of these, 51 children receive funding for early education places. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The pre-school serves the local community and surrounding areas.

The pre-school is registered by Ofsted on the Early Years Register. It supports children with special education needs and/or disabilities. The pre-school employs ten staff. Of these, nine hold a National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) at level 3, and one holds a NVQ at level 6. The pre-school receives support from the local authority, and the Pre-school Learning Alliance.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Collingwood Pre-school provides a welcoming and stimulating environment where children largely make good progress in their learning. Skilled staff provide well planned activities to meet the individual needs of all children, including those with special education needs and/or disabilities, who are provided with excellent support. This is achieved through highly effective partnerships with external agencies and professionals. There are outstanding safeguarding procedures in place that give high priority to ensuring the safety and well-being of all children. The leaders demonstrate a clear vision and are ambitious for the future development of the pre-school, and have a good capacity to maintain continuous improvement.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- provide more opportunities for children to link sounds and letters during play, to further extend their learning
- develop further the outdoor area so that it can be used in all weathers and provides more opportunities for wide spread activities.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Providing a safe and secure environment for children is a high priority for the leaders and they have excellent safeguarding procedures in place to achieve this aim. Security is a shared concern for all staff and they monitor children's safety vigilantly and fully understand their responsibilities. All staff have undertaken safeguarding and first aid training. Daily risk assessments are carried out to ensure premises and equipment do not create any hazards. Children undertake regular fire evacuation procedures, and have an excellent understanding of how to keep themselves safe. Scrupulous hygiene procedures protect them from the spread of infection through a rigorous cleaning regime. The management committee has robust recruitment procedures and ensures that appropriate checks are carried out, and a programme of induction for newly appointed staff is in place. Comprehensive policies and procedures are regularly updated and ensure concerns are dealt with swiftly. The pre-school has excellent collaborative links with key external agencies to share outstanding safeguarding practice.

The recently appointed manager has quickly made her mark on the pre-school through the introduction of a number of improvements, and preparations for the implementation of the new Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) framework for September. She is passionate about creating exciting learning opportunities for children and ensuring all their individual needs are met. Her good leadership skills ensure staff work effectively as a team, and that children are all well supported. Self-evaluation is used effectively to identify the pre-school's strengths and areas for improvement. All issues from the previous inspection have been implemented, and the leaders show they have good capacity for further improvement. Resources are used well to support children's learning and development in all areas. They are of good quality, used imaginatively and are accessible to children. The accommodation is a colourful and stimulating environment where children are developing as confident learners. The outdoor area is well equipped but the lack of cover reduces children's opportunities for accessing outdoor activities in all weathers and seasons. Appraisal interviews ensure staff have opportunities to further their own professional development through undergoing extensive training courses. This enables specific staff to take on responsibility for managing areas, such as special educational needs, or behaviour management.

Securing equal opportunities for all children underpins the work of the pre-school. There are excellent procedures in place order to ensure children at all levels feel included and achieve well in relation to their starting points. Rigorous monitoring and tracking of progress through observations of all children ensure their next stages of learning are clearly identified and planned by their key person. Outstanding partnerships exist with external agencies to provide support for those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Guidance and support is readily available from the local authority's Early Years team, and the excellent links with the school enable information to be shared to support children when they transfer, following extensive transitional visits by the children. Children's understanding of the wider world is given excellent attention through the provision of some very interesting activities relating to the celebration of religious and cultural festivals.

These include Christian festivals, Sukkot, Diwali and Chinese New Year, when the children were fascinated by a display of Chinese string puppets. Parents are very supportive and speak highly of the good provision made for their children. They appreciate the increasing number of opportunities they have to discuss their children's progress through open evenings and personal meetings with their key person. Their views are sought and acted upon through the use of questionnaires and a suggestion box. The pre-school involves parents in their children's learning, and an effective system is in place to gain information about interests, likes and dislikes before their admission. This helps to establish some good starting points for their learning.

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

Children are happy, confident and secure at the pre-school because of the high level of care they receive, and the interesting and attractive learning environment. On arrival they separate from their parents straight away and go to an activity of their own choice. A good range of activities are organised, which allow children to play alone, with a friend, or in a group with an adult. In the jungle role play area children use veterinary equipment as they tend to sick animals. They carefully bandage an animal's paw and remove a knot from an elephant's trunk. Treatments are recorded by the children in mark-making books in the surgery, while staff skillfully develop children's thinking through questions and suggestions. Children are attracted to the toy farm animals and discuss the characteristics and names of the different species. The children know that the colour of the week is yellow and they spend time using their cutting and shaping skills to produce an Olympic torch using a variety of paper. Toy trains are popular among the children, who carefully fit the tracks together to make a complete circuit for the train to travel along. Modelling dough assists children in their development of fine motor skills as they press, squeeze, cut and shape. Children are encouraged to practise cutting out shapes in group craft sessions. The safe use of scissors is promoted very well by the staff and children know how to hold them safely. Regular opportunities to cut out shapes helps them improve their ability and their confidence. Children enjoy alphabet jigsaws, but opportunities to sound and link sounds through a variety of activities are more limited.

Children show good awareness of numbers and can count confidently to ten and above. Adults extend their learning through the use of questions to allow children to compare numbers. For example staff ask, 'is eleven bigger than eight?'. Children enjoy frequent use of the computer, where they practise their skills with the mouse. Staff regularly monitor children's progress and report their progress to parents to keep them informed about their learning. In the enclosed, outdoor area they enjoy being active with wheeled toys, the climbing frame, and playing group games such as 'The Farmer's in the Den'. Construction kits are also popular, as well as opportunities to engage in painting, which helps their control skills. Story time is enjoyed by all children because of the purposeful way in which it is organised. The adult leading the activity asks, 'why do stars come out at night?'

before reading the story to help the children answer the question. The children are absorbed and the content contributes well to their knowledge and understanding. Children sing nursery rhymes tunefully and remember all of the words. They sing action songs confidently and dance to music with great enjoyment.

The pre-school provides a good balance of child-led and adult-led activities. Children have a lot of enjoyment as they make good progress in their learning. The achievement of children with special educational needs and/or disabilities is also good because of the excellent support they receive through a well prepared programmes of activities. Children have an excellent awareness of their own safety and are taught to be aware of the safety of others through consistent and meaningful lessons from the staff. Healthy lifestyles are promoted well, with many opportunities for children to be active. Children enjoy tasting different fruits and are provided with healthy snacks during the session. Behaviour is good, as children are cooperative and helpful, and are showing growing levels of independence. Through the well planned activities children are making good progress in all areas of learning and are being prepared well for their future learning.

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	1
The effectiveness of safeguarding	1
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	2
The effectiveness of partnerships	1
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	1
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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