

Dalton Pre-School Nursery

Block 104, Dalton Barracks, Abingdon, Oxfordshire, OX13 6JB

Inspection date	07/09/2012
Previous inspection date	11/03/2010

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	2
	Previous inspection:	3
How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend		2
The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children		2
The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision		2

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This provision is good

- Staff get to know individual children well, forming warm and trusting relationships particularly with those for whom they take special responsibility. As a result, all children, including those new to the pre-school, settle in quickly, grow in confidence and feel sufficiently secure to explore their surroundings.
- Staff take a cheerful, enthusiastic and friendly approach to their work, which is appreciated by parents and encouraging to children. Staff are keen to develop their skills through undertaking additional training.
- All children progress well because staff use good teaching techniques, and assess children's capabilities and interests accurately. They provide experiences that capture children's attention so that they enjoy their play and often concentrate well at what they do.
- The manager and committee monitor the provision carefully, drawing up useful plans for the pre-school's development and working hard to make improvements happen.

It is not yet outstanding because

- Staff do not take all opportunities to extend children's social development by helping them understand how to look after resources particularly when part of a group, so they are prepared as well as possible for their eventual move to school.
- Staff are not currently able to make the most of the largest outdoor area to enhance the programme for children's physical development.

Information about this inspection

Inspections of registered early years provision are scheduled:

- at least once in every inspection cycle. The current cycle ends on 31 July 2016
- more frequently where Ofsted identifies a need to do so, for example where provision was previously judged as inadequate
- brought forward in the inspection cycle where Ofsted has received information that suggests the provision may not be meeting the legal requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage; or where assessment of the provision identifies a need for early inspection
- prioritised for inspection where we have received information that the provision is not meeting the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage and which suggests children may not be safe
- at the completion of an investigation into failure to comply with the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage.

The provision is also registered on the voluntary and compulsory parts of the Childcare Register. This report includes a judgment about compliance with the requirements of that register.

Inspection activities

- The inspector visited each of the pre-school's three playrooms and the outdoor areas, observing children's play and staff teaching.
- The inspector talked with a number of staff, including some staff from each room.
- The inspector had discussions with the pre-school's manager and talked with a trustee of the managing committee.
- The inspector looked at a sample of documentation including development plans and children's development records.
- The inspector undertook a joint observation of a teaching activity with the pre-school's manager.

Inspector

Rosemary Davies

Full Report

Information about the setting

Dalton Pre-School Nursery was established in 1993 and became registered by Ofsted in 2001. The pre-school is registered on the Early Years Register and both parts of the

Childcare Register. It is managed by a committee made up of staff, parents and army personnel. The pre-school operates from accommodation at Dalton Barracks, close to the town of Abingdon, in Oxfordshire. Children are accommodated across three rooms according to age and have access to enclosed outdoor play areas. Most children attending have parents serving in the armed forces. It is open on weekdays during school term times, from 7.45am until 5.15pm. A play scheme operates in the school holidays for children up to eight years, except for the Christmas holiday. The pre-school currently has 65 children on roll, aged from one year to under five years. Staff provide support for a number of children who learn English as an additional language. The pre-school is in receipt of funding for the provision of free early education for children aged two, three and four years. The pre-school employs 16 staff to work with the children. Of these, 12 hold relevant qualifications at level 3; two are qualified at level 2, while two are unqualified. A housekeeper and an administration officer are also employed.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

To further improve the quality of the early years provision the provider should:

- teach children to use and care for materials by: collaborating with children in creating explicit rules for the care of the environment; including opportunities for them to help with appropriate tasks, such as putting away toys and encouraging them to use and return resources appropriately.

Inspection judgements

How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend

Staff focus on knowing individual children well and forming strong relationships with them. They provide each child with experiences that will help them move on in their learning and development. They quickly establish a rapport with families new to the pre-school; this helps them understand what each child can already do when they start. Careful, on-going observations of children's play enable staff to plan stimulating activities that reflect the children's interests and needs. Coupled with generally skilful teaching, these systems help all children make good progress whatever their backgrounds.

Older children learn routines and where resources are kept in both the 'nursery' and 'pre-school' rooms, so they can help themselves. Children do not always take good care of resources, however, and often leave items, including books, lying around on the floor. This is because staff do not teach children to put away resources or model doing so, as part of the settling-in procedures and everyday routines. This does not help children prepare for school where they will be expected to care for resources properly.

Staff provide enticing activities covering all seven areas of learning thoroughly. Therefore

every child finds something of interest and many concentrate for long periods on one activity. Outside, one child was engrossed in painting at an easel explaining that she was painting a grass field and is going to paint 'my daddy there too'. Inside, several children in the pre-school room enjoyed pretending to cook, make tea and wash up. Staff extended their play well by asking such questions as 'Are you having a Chinese meal?'

Senior staff in particular provide positive and upbeat role models. All staff engage well with children and teaching techniques are strong overall across the pre-school. Staff keep alert for spontaneous chances to promote learning. They talk with children clearly and appropriately, joining in and supporting play activities constructively. One group of children learnt how to put on their socks and footwear, counting their toes as they do so and hearing words such as 'pull', 'stretch' and 'push'. Staff skilfully adjust their expectations and questions to the capabilities of the individual child, providing lots of encouragement and actions, so that all may actively participate, including those learning English as an additional language.

Staff understand how children learn and develop, demonstrating this knowledge well through the provision of thoughtfully laid out playrooms, based on active, explorative play. Records kept show children make good progress from their starting points on entry, with staff noting achievements and sharing these with parents, together with short reports. Some older children can write their names and sound out some of the letters forming them. They use clear sentences when speaking. Staff work closely with parents and find out where older children are likely to go to school. They liaise well with reception teachers to help the more able children to continue to progress. For example they find out the handwriting style used by the school and use this in the pre-school. They also find different ways of helping children learn to write.

The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children

All children form secure emotional attachments because of the emphasis staff place on getting to know individual families. They do this through the successful 'key person' system. Parents appreciate the welcoming and attentive approach of staff. It is particularly important to those with military backgrounds who may move to new barracks often. Staff make sure the key person system is established quickly, so children, parents and carers all know their special staff member. In the 'baby room', these close links help staff understand and follow the routines of the youngest children; so meeting their physical needs successfully. This attention helps toddlers feel happy, so they make the most of the new experiences offered as they explore their surroundings.

Any older children new to the pre-school also settle in well with help from staff. Those already familiar with the playrooms choose activities confidently, showing enthusiasm for what they do. New children receive helpful guidance from staff, so all get to grips with expectations. Two-year-olds happily explore 'messy' activities, learning how they need to wear appropriate clothing. Children in the pre-school room move readily between the indoor and outdoor play areas, eagerly selecting resources that appeal to them. When these are left out on the floor indoors, however, they may be tripped over by others.

Nevertheless children learn how to behave in safe ways well overall. In the nursery room, children enjoy testing their skills by riding down a suitable slope. Older children show their caring attitudes as they nurse dolls, handling them carefully and putting them down for a sleep gently. Such purposeful play means children generally behave well. Alert staff intervene quickly and appropriately to encourage sharing, if necessary, particularly when children are new.

Staff work closely with parents to support children's physical development in line with their wishes. For example, they respond positively when a child wants to copy an older sibling and use a potty at an earlier age than usual. Older children learn to manage their personal care well through good support from staff. They know how to wash and dry their hands thoroughly and when they need to do this. They delight in going outside in the fresh air, reflecting the positive attitudes of staff. They enjoy plenty of exercise in the spacious outdoor area, although the management team are aware that there are few resources to challenge those who are more athletic. Children wear sunhats willingly on extremely warm and sunny days. Staff allow older children to decide for themselves when they are hungry and want to eat their snack. They encourage children to manage their own lunchboxes but insist that savoury items are eaten first. These routines help prepare children well for their move to full-time education.

The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision

The trustees, committee members, manager and staff implement effective systems to protect children and safeguard their welfare. All understand their separate responsibilities. The pre-school's leadership makes good use of the wider support available, such as from health and safety army personnel and local authority professionals. Appointment systems for new staff are rigorous. Safeguarding forms part of induction processes and new staff thoroughly understand the safeguarding procedures they must follow if need be.

Other monitoring systems work effectively too. Staff appraisals are undertaken annually, although the manager's was missed in the last round owing to a change in leadership of the committee. This omission is to be rectified shortly. The manager places emphasis on appointing staff with qualifications because staff turnover is frequent, owing to army redeployment. Staff undertake short courses enthusiastically, and are encouraged to start higher level qualifications. The manager knows her staff well and ably identifies their strengths and areas for development.

Notable improvements instigated since the last inspection two years ago, result in careful monitoring of children's progress through a consistent assessment system. This change means staff now plan clearly what children need to learn next. Changes to the layout of playrooms allow children to enjoy a broad range of activities. Currently, the largest outdoor area is not used to its full capacity. The management committee is actively making improvements to this and has obtained a large grant to improve resources in this area. They have also identified a member of staff who is about to undertake 'forest school' training, in order to address this issue. Additionally, an outdoor canopy is shortly due for

installation outside the nursery room to improve access to outdoor learning in all weathers. During the last two years, the pre-school's general cleanliness has improved too, overseen by a housekeeper, following a reassessment of health policy and procedures. These plans and actions show the management's reaction to exterior assessment and effective evaluation. They have clear target setting for what needs to be achieved next. Both the trustees and manager demonstrate clear determination and ability to improve children's experiences further.

Parents express great satisfaction with the pre-school provision, commenting particularly on the 'helpful and friendly' staff. They appreciate the pre-school's flexibility in accommodating parental needs and wishes, including different working patterns and the use of comforters. Staff work closely too with outside professionals to obtain support for any child who needs it, such as for speech and language development. This liaison includes establishing good working relationships with a number of schools, so that children are well prepared and confident to move to school when the time comes.

The Childcare Register

The requirements for the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are	Met
The requirements for the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are	Met

What inspection judgements mean

Registered early years provision

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	Outstanding provision is highly effective in meeting the needs of all children exceptionally well. This ensures that children are very well prepared for the next stage of their learning.
Grade 2	Good	Good provision is effective in delivering provision that meets the needs of all children well. This ensures children are ready for the next stage of their learning.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	Satisfactory provision is performing less well than expectations in one or more of the key areas. It requires improvement in order to be good.
Grade 4	Inadequate	Provision that is inadequate requires significant improvement and/or enforcement. The provision is failing to give children an acceptable standard of early years education and/or is not meeting the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. It will be inspected again within

	12 months of the date of this inspection.
Met	The provision has no children on roll. The inspection judgement is that the provider continues to meet the requirements for registration.
Not Met	The provision has no children on roll. The inspection judgement is that the provider does not meet the requirements for registration.

Inspection

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under Sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006 on the quality and standards of provision that is registered on the Early Years Register. The registered person must ensure that this provision complies with the statutory framework for children’s learning, development and care, known as the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Setting details

Unique reference number	134534
Local authority	Oxfordshire
Inspection number	813834
Type of provision	
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	1 - 8
Total number of places	60
Number of children on roll	65
Name of provider	Dalton Pre-School Nursery
Date of previous inspection	11/03/2010
Telephone number	01235 543640

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Type of provision

For the purposes of this inspection the following definitions apply:

Full-time provision is that which operates for more than three hours. These are usually known as nurseries, nursery schools and pre-schools and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. They are registered on the Early Years Register and pay the higher fee for registration.

Sessional provision operates for more than two hours but does not exceed three hours in any one day. These are usually known as pre-schools, kindergartens or nursery schools and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. They are registered on the Early Years Register and pay the lower fee for registration.

Childminders care for one or more children where individual children attend for a period of more than two hours in any one day. They operate from domestic premises that are usually their own home. They are registered on the Early Years Register and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Out of school provision may be sessional or full-time provision and is delivered before or after school and/or in the summer holidays. They are registered on the Early Years Register and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. Where children receive their Early Years Foundation Stage in school these providers do not have to deliver the learning and development requirements in full but should complement the experiences children receive in school.

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