

# Early Birds @ Valley Children's Centre

c/o Cheddar First School, The Hayes, Cheddar, Somerset, BS27 3HN

## Inspection date

10/10/2012

Previous inspection date

Not Applicable

## The quality and standards of the early years provision

**This inspection:**

2

Previous inspection:

Not Applicable

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

- Children thoroughly enjoy their time at the pre-school and are happy, secure and enthusiastic learners because the knowledgeable staff team establish warm and caring relationships. All children make good progress in relation to their starting points and capabilities.
- Children play and explore with confidence and fully engage in activities of their choosing. The learning environment is high quality, rich in a breadth of stimulating resources and open-ended activities, both indoors and outside.
- The whole staff team contribute to self-evaluative processes that identify the key strengths and areas for improvement of the provision. Clear action planning leads to the continuous development of the setting and to improving outcomes for children.
- The key person system very successfully develops strong relationships with all parents, involving them in their child's learning within the pre-school and at home. The pre-school establishes good partnerships within the community and with other professionals. Children with specific individual needs receive the additional support they need which fully promotes their inclusion.

### It is not yet outstanding because

- Staff do not always make the most of natural and meaningful opportunities to promote

children's learning and develop their listening and communication skills

- Staff do not always provide opportunities to develop children's independence, such as a snack-time.

### **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.

### **Inspection activities**

- One inspector carried out the inspection. A member of Tribal's quality assurance team was also present.
- The inspector observed activities in the main room and the outside area.
- The inspector held meetings with the manager and with the chairperson.
- The inspector looked at children's assessment and planning records.
- The Inspector checked the evidence of suitability and qualifications of practitioners working with children.
- The inspector took account of the views of parents' views spoken to on the day.

### **Inspector**

Timothy Butcher

## Full Report

### Information about the setting

Early Birds Pre-School registered in 1970 and re-located back onto its current site in 2010. It operates from a play area, quiet room, kitchen and toilet facilities within a purpose built building. The pre-school is part of the children's centre, which is located in the grounds of Cheddar First School in Cheddar, Somerset. Children have access to an enclosed outside play space that includes grassed areas and an all-weather surface. The provision also has access to the school field and the 'Forest School' area. The setting is registered on the Early Years Register. The pre-school is open from 9am until 3.30pm each weekday, during school term times. There are currently 77 children on roll. The pre-school provides funded early education for three and four-year-old children and supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. The pre-school employs 12 staff who work directly with the children, of these nine hold appropriate level 3 qualifications. This includes two members of staff who holds Early Years Professional status.

### What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- review the effectiveness of activities that promote children's communication, listening and speaking skills to make them more meaningful for children, such as 'listening walk' activities.
- develop further children's independence and self-care skills by allowing older children to pour their own drinks and serve their own food.

### Inspection judgements

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

Children eagerly play and explore in an exciting learning environment. Children have a rich range of open-ended activities that they freely choose from. As a result, they are active and inquisitive in their play and take their play in the direction they choose, pursuing their interests and ideas. Overall, good teaching techniques from an enthusiastic and knowledgeable staff team support and enhance children's learning. In general, the staff

pay attention to how children learn, as well what they do. The overall system of planning from observational assessment is secure and key persons have a good knowledge of each child's abilities and interests. Good settling in procedures and comprehensive information sharing between staff and parents about children's starting points mean children settle well and receive good support from the start. Practitioners make accurate observations of what children can do and use the information effectively when assessing what children need to learn next. Planning documentation shows a broad range of activities and rich experiences on offer to children that stimulate and provoke children's play, learning and development. Planning comprehensively covers each of the required areas of learning and development for children and strongly promotes their learning both indoors and outside. Consequently, children of different abilities or those who prefer to learn through active play have equal access to a good range of resources and experiences.

Children make good progress in their communication and language skills because staff sensitively support play with skilful interventions and attention. In general, they perceptively listen to children and use a range of questioning that strongly encourages children to express themselves throughout their day. For example, a child experiences textures in a trough of water beads with another child. A member of staff helps children to explore and sensitively supports learning. They explore the sensations and language. The child creatively goes on to use the 'squidgy marbles' as food items when cooking 'bubbly pie' in imaginative play alongside. Confidently finding different colour plates and grouping the marbles, the child keeps up a dialogue about what she does and concentrates for a good period of time. The adult listens perceptively and prompts naming the colours, talks about the process, introducing ideas skilfully such as 'how long to cook the bubbly pie'. The child 'makes dinner', happily telling the member of staff she 'will be back in minute' before going off to explore a painting activity. Activities such 'a listening walk' support children to develop their general listening skills. They are helpful in providing opportunities for children to practise vocabulary such as 'loud' and 'soft' when beating wooden blocks against a variety of materials in the garden. However, staff do not always make the activity meaningful and there is not a sharp enough focus on taking children's learning further. For example, when children say this is a 'funny noise', staff do not follow this up and encourage children to describe what they mean. As a result teaching is less effective and children's learning is not fully maximised at these times because, at times, children are distracted and not fully engaged.

Children make good progress in their mathematics, understanding the world and expressive art and design. For example older children match numbers and keys, in simple programmes on the computer. At snack time young children choose one or two pieces of fruit. They point to a card that represents the number of food items they want. Boys and girls explore capacity together filling the builder's mixer with mud sticks and other natural materials. Children have a wide variety of opportunities to explore capacity, use number and positional language in play with sand and water, as well as natural and creative materials such as tree bark, leaves, sticks, paint and gloop.

Key persons sensitively help younger children to separate from parents and carers with ease and without upset and discuss with parents how children respond to activities. Children show good hand to eye control such as when holding a paint brush to explore the mixing of paints and as they fill the whole paper with colour. They show good body control

with large arm movements as they cover surfaces outside using large brushes and water. Children securely acquire the necessary skills, attitudes and dispositions to take them to their next stage of learning and in readiness for school.

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

All children have a good sense of belonging, form very secure attachments with adults and good relationships with other children. Staff are caring and attentive and know children well. They strongly support children's independence by providing very good opportunities for children to make choices with in their play. Staff skilfully encourage them to express their views, valuing the choices they make. Children think about the resources they want and go to fetch them. Children's confidence blossoms, as staff provide plenty of support and meaningful praise. Children are very confident to ask for help if they feel they need it. Young children when having their nappies changed remain relaxed, comfortable and cooperative. The staff focus well on the experience for the child, warmly talking to them while carrying out the good hygiene routines. Sometimes staff miss some opportunities for children to fully develop their self-care and independence skills. Older children do not routinely pour their own drinks and serve their own food, when they are capable of doing so. Sometimes concentration on the task mean staff miss children's successes so do not reinforce these with praise and sometimes provide less opportunity for children to attempt routines for themselves first. However, in general children show they receive good support to learn personal self-care skills.

Children have a wealth of high quality resources to choose from that adds breadth and depth to their learning both indoors and outside. The staff plan resources and activities that they present creatively, that are numerous, easy for children to access and capture children's interest. The staff make a different variety available for the afternoon session.

Children of all ages make good progress in their physical development because they thoroughly enjoy taking their play outside into the garden and adjoining areas. They show good control and coordination in large and small movements, in line with their expected development. Young children safely practice their climbing, crawling and jumping skills on a wide range of equipment and with close support. A young child chooses to practice their pedalling and steering skills on a big tricycle but struggles. A member of staff carefully explains how and why they will find greater enjoyment on one that they can successfully pedal. They go to find one together so that the child gains confidence and fully enjoys experiences that provide very appropriate challenge. Children actively move between resources in vibrant free-flow play as well as in adult-led activities such as 'the listening walk'.

Strong transition arrangements prepare children well for their move to school. The pre-school staff has close ties with schools, children's centre and the professionals in the local community. There is good communication, reciprocal visits with school; and fun days involving a wide range of others who support children's smooth transitions. Children have good skills and the necessary positive attitudes to learning. Children get on well with their peers and demonstrate independence. They know what is expected of them because children have clear boundaries in a pre-school that provides a problem-solving approach

when they face difficulties.

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

The pre-school is committee run and the provider fulfils their responsibility in meeting the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. There is secure monitoring of the provision through good communication by the chair with the manager and other staff, backed by a number of other processes of direct observation of the setting.

The manager has a secure understanding of the safeguarding, welfare and assessment requirements. The manager and staff have a secure understanding of the learning and development requirements. The manager monitors the educational programmes, reviews planning documentation and holds regular supervision meetings. This results in a clear line of responsibility for the delivery of the educational programmes and strongly supports the continuous professional development of staff. The skilled and well qualified staff team hold a secure awareness of the areas of learning and how children learn.

Clear safeguarding procedures, regular training and secure staff induction procedures enable all to have a secure awareness of how to protect children if they have a concern. Staff's secure knowledge of policies, procedures, and other documentation successfully promotes children's welfare. Staff carry out risk assessments that successfully minimise potential risks to children so that they are cared for in a safe and secure environment free from risks. Children become aware of safety issues such as when lining up to go as a group on the listening walk. They test their physical skills safely, learning to be aware of others.

The partnerships with parents are a particular strength. All parents spoken with at inspection report very positively indeed about the pre-school. They say they are always welcome to visit; there is good communication with key persons and plenty of opportunities to be involved in the pre-school and children's learning. Information about children's starting points is shared and parents receive detailed information about how their child settles in the first weeks through photographic and written observation sheets. Observational information and progress summaries, along with parent's access to the learning journal enable them on-going involvement and keep them up to date with their child's progress.

Thorough evaluation, using a number of processes, including an early childhood environment rating scale, team meetings, staff appraisal and supervision; result in the whole staff team having a good understanding of the priorities for improvement. They are knowledgeable through the various training they attend and through the discussions they have as a team about best practices. Consequently, the whole staff team are continuously driving improvement to the benefit of children.

The staff team demonstrate a clear commitment to working in partnership with parents, other childcare practitioners and external agencies such as health professionals involved in providing care and support for children and their families. There are strong links with groups in the community and the local children's centre. As a result children receive strong

support and are making good progress, given their capabilities and from their starting points when first joining the pre-school.

## 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

EY419174

<b>Local authority</b>	Somerset
<b>Inspection number</b>	749243
<b>Type of provision</b>	Full-time provision
<b>Registration category</b>	Childcare - Non-Domestic
<b>Age range of children</b>	0 - 5
<b>Total number of places</b>	40
<b>Number of children on roll</b>	77
<b>Name of provider</b>	Early Birds Pre-School
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	Not applicable
<b>Telephone number</b>	01934 740123

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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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