

The Big Top Pre-School (Buckingham Park)

Buckingham Park Community Centre, Jubilee Square, AYLESBURY, Buckinghamshire, HP19 9DZ

Inspection date	21/05/2013
Previous inspection date	Not Applicable

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	
	Previous inspection:	
How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend		3
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		3

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This provision is satisfactory

- The manager and staff create a nurturing environment where children settle, enjoy themselves and become increasingly confident.
- Children learn to respect and tolerate each other's differences and staff manage their behaviour effectively.
- Children enjoy their time at the pre-school and take part in a range of age-appropriate activities that keep them occupied and engaged in their play.

It is not yet good because

- Children lack regular opportunities to develop early writing and counting skills and use numbers during play.
- The inconsistent use of self-evaluation has an impact on how well the staff are able to drive improvement in the pre-school and enhance children's achievements.
- The staff do not fully inform parents about their children's progress.

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
- scheduled more frequently where Ofsted identifies a need to do so, for example where provision was previously judged 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 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
- scheduled at the completion of an investigation into failure to comply with the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Inspection activities

- The inspector arrived at the setting and observed a range of activities.
- The inspector talked with the manager, staff, children and parents.
- The inspector sampled a range of documentation, including policies and procedures and children's development files.
- The inspector carried out a joint observation with the owner of the pre-school.

Inspector

Maxine Coulson

Full Report

Information about the setting

Big Top Pre-School registered in 2012. It is one of two settings owned by the same provider. It operates from the Buckingham Park Community Centre, in Buckingham Park, Aylesbury, in Buckinghamshire. The pre-school uses a large hall, toilets, a kitchen and enclosed outside area. The pre-school is open from 9.15am to 12.15pm on Mondays and Fridays, and from 9.15am to 2.15pm on Tuesdays and Thursdays. There are currently 56 children on roll in the early years age group, who attend for various days and sessions. There are seven staff who work directly with the children, who are all qualified at National Vocational Qualification level 3 and above. The manager holds Early Years Practitioner Status. The pre-school is registered on the Early Years Register.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

To meet the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage the provider must:

- implement systems to review the progress of children when they are aged between two and three years and provide parents with a short written summary of their child's development in the prime areas of learning.

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

- provide a range of activities to enable all children to develop their early writing and counting skills and understanding of numbers in everyday play
- develop rigorous and effective systems for self-evaluation that inform the pre-school's priorities and set challenging targets for improvement
- develop partnerships with parents to help to ensure that all parents have regular information about how their child is learning and developing.

Inspection judgements

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

Staff provide children with a suitable range of activities and experiences, which they very much enjoy and which generally support their development across the areas of learning. Staff at the pre-school have a sound understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage

framework and recognise the areas in which children are developing. The staff maintain children's development files, which include photographs and observational comments, and they use them to identify children's next steps for learning. Staff are aware of the progress that children are making. They use the national guidance document 'Development matters in the Early Years Foundation Stage' to highlight and record the progress children have made. Staff set out the environment into the areas of learning in preparation for children's arrival and as a result, children quickly settle and engage in activities. Children move around the room freely, choosing what to play with and following their interests. There is a comfortable reading corner arranged with a selection of books for children of different ages to share. Children take part in group games, art and craft activities and use a variety of table top games and toys. More toys and resources are stored in a large cupboard, which staff can easily access on request. Children are confident to ask for particular toys they want. For example, children ask to play with a range of large balls indoors and all children thoroughly enjoy bouncing, rolling, catching and throwing them around the large hall area. Children eagerly take part in the activities provided. They sit with members of staff to enjoy creative activities or putting together jigsaw puzzles. However, there is a lack of range of activities where children can develop writing skills through use of a variety of different equipment, such as, pens, pencils, chinks and paint brushes. There are fewer opportunities for children to develop number recognition, language and number names through every day play. Children enjoy daily free flow play to a large enclosed outside garden where they play with great enthusiasm, using a further range of toys and equipment.

Partnerships with parents are generally good and parents report back how settled and happy their children are, forming close bonds with the staff. They receive information through regular newsletters and there is a notice board with displays of a range of information. However, staff do not always keep parents fully informed of their children's progress to maintain communication about children's progress and involve them in their child's learning and development.

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

Children are assigned a key person who knows their individual care and welfare needs and supports each child well. Staff gather good information from parents before children attend, with regard to their personal preferences and requirements. This supports the settling-in process to help children feel content and secure within the pre-school. The staff are very caring about the children. They are quick to respond to their emotional needs and throughout the whole day, many children like to have a quick reassuring hug or cuddle, before happily going off to play again. The staff come down to the children's level, either sitting on the floor or at the tables with them to support them as they learn through play. They sit with them at snack and lunch times to enhance the social aspect of meal times and give gentle reminders in a calm and caring manner. The children demonstrate they feel secure as they readily move around freely and happily, and are confident to talk to visitors to the pre-school. The children readily ask for help with coats and shoes where necessary and confidently ask to use the toilet, therefore demonstrating that they are developing self-awareness and responding to their bodies' needs.

Children learn about the wider world through discussions and activities. They celebrate various cultural and religious festivals and access resources reflecting positive images of diversity. Children develop positive relationships with each other and help with tidying away toys and resources, demonstrating a strong sense of responsibility.

Children are developing a good understanding of the importance of staying healthy and safe. They enjoy a wide range of physical exercise both indoors and outside throughout the year. This supports them to stay fit and healthy. They enjoy healthy snacks, which include fruit, with drinks freely available at all times. Staff check all areas used before children arrive and the risk assessment procedures help to identify and minimise risks and protect children from hazards. A fire evacuation procedure is in place, which helps children learn about keeping safe and staff maintain a record of any drills carried out. All staff hold current certificates in paediatric first aid and appropriate procedures are followed for accidents and administering medication to children. This means children are appropriately cared for if they are ill or have a minor accident. The pre-school has developed effective links with other professionals to support continuity of care for children. The manager had established good working relationships with the host school and the reception class teacher.

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

Staff demonstrate a sound knowledge of the Early Years Foundation Stage and have updated their knowledge of the most recent revisions to the framework. As a result, staff have a suitable knowledge of their responsibilities to safeguard children. They understand the procedures to follow if they have any safeguarding concerns, including who to contact, to help protect children's welfare.

Self-evaluation and monitoring of the provision are not used to their full effect to clearly identify all strengths and weaknesses in the pre-school and drive improvement. Staff carry out monitoring and review of activities to plan children's next steps of learning. However, they do not carry out the required progress reviews for children aged between two and three years to identify strengths and any significant emerging concerns, and share the information with parents. This is a breach of the learning and development requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. The impact on children's learning and development is small because staff do monitor children's progress. Relationships with parents are soundly in place to ensure that children's care and welfare needs are known and well catered for. Staff take note of verbal comments from parents to provide consistency of care and learning.

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 action. 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	EY457207
Local authority	Buckinghamshire
Inspection number	895017
Type of provision	Sessional provision
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	2 - 4
Total number of places	32
Number of children on roll	56
Name of provider	Sylvia Anne Robinson
Date of previous inspection	not applicable
Telephone number	01296427861

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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, which are usually the childminder's 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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