

Moonbeams Pre-School

1 St. Catharines Road, Cambridge, Cambridgeshire, CB4 3XJ

Inspection date

08/07/2013

Previous inspection date

10/12/2008

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This inspection:

3

Previous inspection:

3

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 3

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

- Children learn through play and enjoy their time at the pre-school. They are active learners and participate in a range of appropriate indoor and outdoor activities.
- Children's language and communication skills are developing as the pre-school has begun to implement initiatives which encourage them to speak and listen.
- The new management team are working hard to establish a high quality learning environment for the children attending. This is beginning to show in the level of engagement children show in activities on offer.

It is not yet good because

- Learning information is not gathered as children begin attending which does not enable the pre-school to plan for children's next steps in their learning, from the outset. Planning and assessment does not consistently offer children individualised learning opportunities or sufficient depth and breadth in their learning.
- Additional languages spoken by children are not consistently used or seen within the environment. This does not enable practitioners to support children to use them within their play.
- Parents do not always receive daily feedback from their child's key person which does not fully support consistency in their child's learning experience.

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 observed activities in the main playroom, the gym and the outdoor area including two joint observations with the manager of outside play and a creative activity in the main playroom.
- The inspector held a meeting with the manager of the provision and spoke to children's key persons as appropriate during the inspection.
- The inspector looked at children's assessment records, planning, evidence of suitability of practitioners working within the setting, the provider's self-evaluation evidence and a range of other documentation.
- The inspector took account of the views of three parents spoken to on the day.

Inspector

Deborah Hunt

Full Report

Information about the setting

Moonbeams Pre-school was registered in 1997 and is on the Early Years Register. It is situated in a single-storey wing of the Meadows Community Centre in Cambridge. Children attend from the local area and surrounding villages. The pre-school is accessible to all children and there is an enclosed outdoor play area.

The pre-school employs four members of childcare staff, three of whom hold appropriate qualifications at level 3. The pre-school opens Monday, Wednesday and Thursday of each week from 9.15am until 3.45pm, for 49 weeks of the year. Children attend for a variety of sessions. There are currently 29 children attending who are in the early years age group. The pre-school provides funded early education places for two-, three- and four-year-old children. It supports a number of children who speak English as an additional language and children with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

The pre-school is a member of the Pre-school Learning Alliance. They receive support from the local authority and are undertaking the local authority quality assurance scheme.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- consider the individual needs, interests and stage of development of each child and use this information to plan challenging, enjoyable experiences in all areas of learning and development. From their starting points, plan for children's next steps and provide depth and breadth in the experiences offered
- ensure that children learning English as an additional language have reasonable opportunities to see and use their home language in their play and learning.

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

- develop the key person system further to support engagement with all parents by ensuring key persons speak daily with each child's parents to keep them informed about their child's day.

Inspection judgements

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

Children play and learn in a child-focussed environment which enables them to engage in a number of relevant activities and experiences. They are developing some of the skills they will need to support them in the next steps in their learning, including school where appropriate. Parents contribute to their children's learning and development as they complete an 'All about me' booklet when their children begin attending. However, this does not include sufficient detail about children's learning to date, to enable the pre-school to plan for their early progress. Children settle easily through the attention paid to the settling-in process and enjoy their time at the pre-school. The pre-school ensures parents are aware that children's learning journals are always available for them to view and are developing children's ownership of these folders. Useful information is shared with parents to support children's learning at home. For example, regular newsletters are issued and wording for nursery rhymes and songs are sent home. An annual parent consultation meeting is also being introduced to provide parents with a summary of children's progress during the year.

Practitioners observe children to assess their current interests and stage of development. This information is then used to plan activities and play experiences. However, some practitioners have a less secure understanding of how to observe and assess children's progress. As a result, some activities do not accurately reflect children's individual learning needs and this does not help them to make best progress. The new manager is implementing procedures to monitor and track children's progress over time in all areas of their learning and development. The progress check at age two years is completed and parents are involved.

Most practitioners build positive, friendly relationships with the children and are involved in their play. Children's language and communication skills are developing and recent initiatives are beginning to show results. Talking boxes are used which are filled with items of interest to children. These encourage them to speak and they hear new words described to them by the practitioner working with them. Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities receive appropriate input and support. Partnership working with parents and other agencies enables the pre-school to offer them inclusive care and learning. This means they make sound progress from their initial starting points. Children speaking an additional language receive sensitive support to help them learn English as practitioners model new words clearly for them in the context of their play. However, they do not see their home language sufficiently represented within the setting and are not able to use it within their play and learning, which is important for their communication and language development. Children's mathematical development is considered as practitioners encourage children to count during their play and some question them to build on their existing skills and knowledge. For example, children spontaneously count as they run across the 'stepping stone' discs and receive praise from a practitioner nearby. However, other children using inset puzzles are offered little support to develop their understanding, which affects the progress they make in their learning.

Children's early literacy skills are developing through initiatives introduced by the new management team. For example, children enjoy using the story sacks and read a story about a hungry caterpillar. Through the skilled interaction of the practitioner they learn to count, predict, and anticipate. They show excitement and pride as they receive praise for remembering the word 'cocoon' and learn that a caterpillar turns into a chrysalis. Props used further encourage them to participate and pay attention. This fosters their love of books and reading and helps them develop skills for the future. The story prompts much conversation and they begin to form simple sentences as they put their thoughts into words. Older children communicate with growing confidence. They help prepare beds for one another and describe what they are doing. They recall that this is how their mummy makes a bed and develop their play as other children join them. They become the 'babies' and other children make 'food' for them to be fed with. They become deeply involved in the activity as they explore this real life situation. Children learn about rhythm and rhyme as they sing nursery rhymes and clap their hands on their knees in time to a familiar song. Children enjoy making patterns in play dough as they press it onto the train track and use textured rollers. They use chalks to draw a house and explore the marks they make on the blackboard outdoors. Such activities encourage children to develop skills which will contribute to their future learning.

Children enjoy free-flow play and make use of the sunny weather to take their play outdoors. They run and skip, hop and 'swoop' their paper aeroplanes up and down before seeing how far they can 'fly'. They enjoy sharing this experience with their friends and comparing how far their plane has flown. Children build a castle out of large pads, enjoy watching trees in the adjacent field being watered and play a game with a practitioner involving hats. They enjoy making their own play dough, which is now part of the continuous provision each day, and colour it blue. They weigh out and mix the ingredients and know that they cannot use the kitchen where it is cooked because the cooker gets hot.

Despite recent improvements, and the wide variety of resources available, weaker practitioners do not engage with children to offer them sufficient depth and breadth in all areas of learning. However, because the new management team oversee practice and are actively addressing these issues, children continue to make satisfactory progress towards the early learning goals.

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

Practitioners develop warm, friendly relationships with children and their families. Children visit with their parents before they begin attending and practitioners take time to find out their background, preferences and usual routines. This helps them provide children with a consistent, positive approach to their care and supports their transition from home into the pre-school. Children are treated as individuals and form secure relationships with some practitioners which allows them to settle easily. Children display confidence as they move around the room and seek support and reassurance from these practitioners. Key persons generally support children well, although they do not all speak with parents daily to offer feedback on their children's day. This does not fully promote consistency for children between the home and pre-school learning environments. Older children make successful

moves to school as the pre-school establish successful links with reception teachers. They share summary reports with them and invite them into the pre-school to meet children before they leave.

Children play in a generally welcoming environment. From a young age they are encouraged to share, take turns and be kind to one another. Practitioners explain why certain behaviours are unwanted and explore what may have gone wrong when children become upset. Children's confidence and self-esteem grow through the praise they receive from most practitioners for their achievements. They learn about risk as they place a towel under the water jug they use to stop the floor becoming slippery when water is spilled. Visits to the setting by the fire service and the local police help children learn about danger and how to keep themselves safe.

Children's health is appropriately promoted. The pre-school maintain the required records to ensure their safety and well-being. Children are encouraged to be active and make use of the outdoor learning environment, and enjoy other activities which promote their good health. For example, they enjoy using the gym hall for parachute games and look forward to the visit from the children's centre practitioner. They sing favourite rhymes and songs which require them to be active, as they stand up and sit down and wave chiffon scarves. Snacks and meal times have been re-organised to become social occasions where children sit in their key groups with their key person. Chopping boards, safety knives and small jugs are also a recent addition to the table to encourage children's independence. Children show recognition that they need to wash their hands before eating and after using the toilet and signage and explanations help them learn how this protects them from germs.

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

The new manager of the pre-school had only been in post for three weeks at the time of this inspection. The local authority has also offered full-time input from a quality improvement advisor. Together, they are working to drive up standards in practice overall at the pre-school. Although both are relatively new to the pre-school, the impact of improvements they have made to practice can already be seen. A stringent overhaul of the educational programme is taking place to ensure children are offered a high quality early years experience. This provides children with a continually improving range of activities and experiences which enable them to make the required progress towards the early learning goals. Systems of annual appraisal and regular supervision have been started to enable practitioners to be monitored and their training needs identified. Self-reflective practice has been introduced as a concept and the pre-school has begun completion of the local authority quality assurance scheme. This enables the setting to highlight strengths and areas to improve the quality of the service provided. The action from the previous inspection has been met and the recommendations partially met. The pre-school is now focussed on raising the quality of the provision with the support of the committee, the local authority and the input of the new manager.

The committee, manager and practitioners understand the responsibility they hold to meet the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. This

ensures children learn and play in a safe and secure environment. A wide range of appropriate policies and procedures are in place to support the management of the pre-school, and are reviewed annually. Safer recruitment procedures are used and vetting and induction processes are suitably managed. For example, any committee members who are not yet cleared do not have contact with children at the pre-school. All required training is complete to ensure children's welfare and safety. For example, all practitioners have undertaken child protection and first aid training. This means that they have up-to-date information about safeguarding children procedures as well as how to deal with accidents and injuries. Children's safety is given priority as regular risk assessments are carried out and any outings are separately assessed prior to the event taking place. The premises are secure and when children move from room to room they hold onto the 'Moonbeams scarf' to ensure no child gets lost or left behind. Visitor identity is checked before anyone is allowed access into the pre-school and electronic devices which take photographs are left in the office, to further safeguard children.

Partnerships with parents are developing and most are kept informed about their child's development. Information in the entrance area to the pre-school provides details about child development, local events and other aspects of the pre-school. Parents spoken to offered positive feedback about the pre-school regarding changes that have taken place recently. The only negative comment made concerned the lack of daily contact with some children's key persons which parents felt did not keep them well informed about their child's day. Practitioners understand the importance of effective partnership working with other agencies to secure timely interventions for children to receive the support they need. For example, children with identified needs receive appropriate individual support as required and staff attend meetings alongside other professionals to discuss their progress. As a result, attainable targets are set to help plan appropriate activities in order to support the children's continuing learning and development. Practitioners make appropriate links with other early years providers to ensure continuity in children's care and learning. For example, reception teachers are encouraged to visit the pre-school to observe and begin to develop relationships with the children.

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	221904
Local authority	Cambridgeshire
Inspection number	926059
Type of provision	
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 5
Total number of places	15
Number of children on roll	29
Name of provider	Moonbeams Pre-School Committee
Date of previous inspection	10/12/2008
Telephone number	01223 727481

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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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