

Eaton Socon Pre-School

38a Queens Gardens, Eaton Socon, ST. NEOTS, Cambridgeshire, PE19 8DN

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| Inspection date | 05/09/2013 |
| Previous inspection date | 24/11/2009 |

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| The quality and standards of the early years provision | This inspection: | 1 |
| | Previous inspection: | 1 |
| How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend | | 1 |
| The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children | | 1 |
| The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision | | 1 |

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This provision is outstanding

- The manager and staff team are acutely aware of each child's individual needs in this lively and vibrant pre-school where all children are fully valued, respected and included.
- Children are excited and highly motivated to take part in the extensive range of interesting and fun activities the staff provide for them and they thoroughly enjoy being able to play inside and outside during the session as they wish.
- When children start attending they are supported by the staff in an extremely sensitive and consistent manner to enable them to separate from their parents and to successfully settle in to the pre-school.
- The excellent partnership working that has been established with children's parents, other providers delivering the Early Years Foundation Stage and the children's centre is significant in ensuring that children receive a smooth transition between home, the pre-school and other providers and a consistent approach to their care and learning.
- Individual children's learning is actively supported by the very skilled staff. They engage them in meaningful conversations during their play and this extends their developing vocabulary and encourages the children to think about how they can explore even further by adding different resources.
- The pre-school garden is a haven of exciting areas for children to play and explore freely. They use their imagination alongside the fixed equipment to create well-organised games with their friends.

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 two playrooms and in the pre-school garden.
- The inspector held meetings with the manager of the pre-school and with two members of staff.
- The inspector looked at children's assessment records and the planning documentation.
- The inspector checked evidence of the suitability and qualifications of staff working with the children, the provider's self-evaluation form and action plans.
- The inspector took account of the views of parents spoken to on the day of inspection.

Inspector

Melanie Eastwell

Full Report

Information about the setting

Eaton Socon Pre-school was registered in 1979. It is on the Early Years Register. It is situated in its own premises in Eaton Socon, Cambridgeshire, and is managed by a committee. The pre-school serves the local area and is accessible to all children. There is a spacious, fully enclosed area available for outdoor play.

The pre-school employs 11 members of childcare staff. Of these, seven hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3 and 4. The pre-school opens Monday to Friday during school term times. Sessions are from 9am to 3pm. Children attend for a variety of sessions. There are currently 111 children attending who are in the early years age group. The pre-school provides funded early education 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.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- extend even further the excellent opportunities for children to learn about the risks associated with their play, for example, by providing clipboards and safety checklists to encourage them to become involved in the daily risk assessment for the indoor and outdoor play areas.

Inspection judgements

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

This busy and inspiring pre-school is staffed by a very knowledgeable and skilled staff team who know all the children very well. This enables them to be highly successful in planning an outstanding range of purposeful activities that takes account of each child's interests and identified next steps. The staff know their key children as unique individuals. They keep detailed and very well-presented records showing the progress they are making in their learning. These records include written observations, photographs and samples of the children's work. Parents are fully involved in their child's learning. They are encouraged to share information from home from the outset and ongoing about their child's interests and achievements. The key person actively uses this detail to contribute to their planning for that child. The information from home is gathered through the use of 'All about me' books that the parents complete. The staff are available to speak with parents during drop off and collection times and parents are encouraged to share any information from home. Parents evening meetings also contribute to this outstanding partnership

working; the key person has a detailed discussion with the child's parents and they decide on the next steps together. Parents are encouraged to use resources from the pre-school at home with their child that are linked to the next steps, such as 'chatter sacks'. These contain items to promote children's very good developing language skills. The staff spend lots of time talking to the children, showing a genuine interest in what they are doing and the children respond to this interest very positively. They talk freely about what they do at home, animatedly recalling events from holidays and days out. Children aged two years have a progress check recorded and this fully involves parents and identifies unique next steps in learning for individual children.

Children have access to a highly exciting range of activities. They can choose freely and for most of the session whether they play inside or outside. They thoroughly enjoy being involved in the activities supervised by a member of staff and they are equally confident to play on their own or with their friends. For example, a small group of children explore the mud kitchen in the garden. They use the scoop to collect dirt and fetch water in a jug from the bathroom. They mix their concoction with some mint and rosemary leaves from the herb garden and talk to the staff about making 'mint tea'. The member of staff makes effective suggestions to extend the children's experience, such as piling up the logs to make a pretend fire and adding strips of orange paper for the flames. The children respond very positively to these suggestions and eagerly go about organising the logs. They talk with the member of staff about keeping themselves safe by not going too close to the pretend fire while they cook their 'mint tea'. This active involvement in their game, while still allowing the children to lead, and the member of staff's genuine interest in what they are doing, supports children's learning and explorations very well. There is scope to further extend children's excellent awareness of safety and the possible risks involved in their activities by involving them directly in the risk assessments for the group. Other children sit together and work out between them how to make a portable CD player work. They work extremely well together; one holding the disc player while the other presses the buttons. They smile triumphantly at each other when the music plays. This provision of highly accessible resources in the pre-school garden encourages children to be independent and to work very well together.

When children start attending they are closely monitored by the staff team who work to a high adult to child ratio. This enables them to spend time on a one-to-one basis with children as required. Children are very successfully supported to make decisions about what they want to do and to be independent in their personal, social and emotional development. The staff spend time with less confident children, gently showing them the activities and encouraging them to take part. This sensitivity and gentle involvement actively supports children to settle. Therefore, they develop an enthusiasm for their learning by taking part in the very attractive and stimulating activities that are available. Both the pre-school rooms are abundantly well resourced and beautifully decorated with the children's work, labels and photographs; providing a rich environment for them that promotes their awareness of written words, colours, shapes and numbers. A small group of children decide how the train track should go together. They discuss together and with a member of staff about possible ways to connect the pieces together. Children are very independent in their choice of activities and resources. The effort put into encouraging children to be confident and to make their own decisions contributes significantly to them being very well prepared for the eventual move onto school.

Children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are cared for exceptionally well. The staff team are very experienced in managing a wide range of different needs. They work very closely with other agencies who are involved with the children who help to ensure that any special equipment, such as chairs, are provided for them. Children who require help with their personal care needs during the day are managed with great dignity and privacy by the staff team. All children are treated with great respect by the staff. Those who speak English as an additional language are ably supported, again, through the close working partnership with their parents. The staff ask them to help with translations of relevant words and phrases and there is a wealth of signs and pictures displayed in both pre-school rooms showing pictures and words to help children communicate when they first start attending.

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

Each child's care is managed exceedingly well in this pre-school. The staff rapidly get to know new children because they spend time with them as individuals and are active in ensuring they have a highly successful start to their attendance. The high adult to child ratio actively supports this one-to-one time for the children. The staff carry out home visits to meet the children and their parents and they ask parents to complete the 'All about me' document, which provides detailed information from home at the outset. Children are then invited to a taster session at the pre-school so they can see what is on offer. The excellent settling in procedures when children start is done on an individual basis. The staff are confident to manage children and their parents who become upset when it is time to say goodbye. The staff are very sensitive and understanding of the children. For example, they give cuddles if the child wants this or they sit close by. They use a calm tone of voice and always acknowledge the children's feelings. This extremely sensitive handling of new children enables them to quickly settle and to trust the staff.

The very close partnerships with parents ensures that all children's needs are met. The highly effective key person system supports children to feel confident because they know which key group they are in. Children who have been attending for a while very clearly demonstrate that they feel safe and secure in the pre-school. For example, they are very confident to choose their own activities and they ask for items to enhance their play. Children climb onto the staff's laps to listen to a story and sit close to them during songs and rhymes. The children and members of staff have laughs and jokes together. For example, children using the computer find one of the pictures amusing. They turn around to the member of staff sitting with them to see if they can see the funny picture on the screen. The children get to know their key person very well and all the other staff at the pre-school. They spend time in the garden playing together and this enables them to have a very successful move from the seedling room to the main room. Transitions to other providers are equally successful in maintaining the excellent levels of care and learning for children.

The children behave very well at this pre-school because they are provided with a great range of interesting activities that spark their curiosity. They work very well together

during their activities and understand the importance of sharing and taking turns. The staff gently remind the children about the expectations for behaviour when necessary through clear explanations. They encourage each child to think about their friends and this highly successfully develops their awareness of showing care and concern for each other. Children thoroughly enjoy being able to use the pre-school garden as they wish for most of the session. The outside area is extremely well appointed with fixed play equipment, ride on toys and a willow tunnel. The children enjoy exploring the herbs from the low-level planters and adding them to their mixtures in the mud kitchen. They are supported to test their physical skills by climbing on the geodesic dome. The staff encourage them with very positive language to hold on tight and give lots of praise for their efforts. The garden has lots of shady areas and the children enjoy spending time digging in the sandpit, looking at books or completing puzzles with the staff in the shade when the weather is hot.

Children are protected from the sun because the staff apply sun cream and the children know about the importance of wearing hats outside. This helps them to learn about keeping safe very well. There are water coolers in both pre-school rooms where the children can access a drink as they wish. Children sit together in small groups for their snack and at lunchtime. The staff use these times as very social occasions where they talk enthusiastically with the children about their food. This promotes lively discussion about the choices of food they have in their lunch boxes. The staff's attention given to each child during their outdoor play and during meal and snack times is significant in contributing to children's continued good health and their excellent developing awareness of how to keep themselves healthy.

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

The management team and staff are a long established and very experienced team who work exceptionally well together in order to meet all the children's needs. There are very clear systems to ensure the recruitment and retention of suitable members of staff and the policies and procedures for the pre-school are reflected clearly in the staff team's activity with the children. They all have a very strong knowledge of the welfare and safeguarding requirements, giving the children's safety an extremely high regard. For example, part of the core training for the staff team involves regular training in safeguarding and very robust procedures are in place for recording and reporting any child protection concerns. The safeguarding policy makes reference to the Local Safeguarding Children Board procedures. Children are closely supervised during their activities and highly effective procedures are in place during the busy arrival and departure times to help keep children safe. These include one member of staff supervising the main door of each of the pre-school rooms and one member of staff supervising the gate in the garden. The manager is fully aware of the importance of keeping Ofsted informed of any events that may have an impact on the children. She and the staff team, supported by the committee, have responded to the extremely complex needs of particular children attending the pre-school and have taken entirely appropriate action to support their full inclusion into the group while ensuring that plans are in place for emergencies. Detailed records are kept of significant events and the action taken by the staff to ensure children's

safety.

The manager provides a significant amount of support for the staff. They receive regular supervision to monitor their performance and group training during staff meetings. Staff are encouraged to attend training courses and to work towards further qualifications. The staff team demonstrate a highly effective understanding of the learning and development requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. They are very successful in implementing this for each of their key children because they know them well and by working closely with parents they provide well-planned next steps in learning. Parents report highly positive and complimentary comments about their and their children's experience at the pre-school. They say how welcoming and friendly the staff are and how they support their children through the lovely activities.

The manager has very effective systems in place to monitor the children's progress and which identify groups of children who may require extra support, in order to close any gaps in learning and progression. The outstanding partnership working with the local children's centre supports a consistent approach for whole families, which in turn benefits the children attending the pre-school. The staff team are highly committed to continually evaluating practice and activity with the children to ensure they continue to meet the children's and family's needs. The staff team work together to devise action plans with very well targeted aims for the continued development of the pre-school. These are regularly evaluated to monitor the impact on the children through the identified actions.

The staff team work extremely well together. They support each other and work seamlessly with the children. The very close working partnerships support the children attending and ensure a consistent approach and a smooth transition between home and different providers as necessary. This strength in the team and the high commitment and dedication of all the staff makes a significant contribution to children's feelings of belonging, their well-being and their rapid progress in their individual development.

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

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| Unique reference number | 221749 |
| Local authority | Cambridgeshire |
| Inspection number | 908351 |
| Type of provision | |
| Registration category | Childcare - Non-Domestic |
| Age range of children | 0 - 5 |
| Total number of places | 46 |
| Number of children on roll | 111 |
| Name of provider | Eaton Socon Pre-School Committee |
| Date of previous inspection | 24/11/2009 |
| Telephone number | 01480 406047 |

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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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Store St
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