

Chatterbox Community Pre-School

Halterworth Lane, ROMSEY, Hampshire, SO51 9AD

Inspection date	20/11/2013
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		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

- Educational programmes are exemplary, covering all areas of learning through a diverse range of opportunities that stimulate discovery, imagination and the acquisition of new skills.
- All staff have realistically high expectations for the children in their care and know how to develop their enthusiasm and interests.
- A comprehensive range of strategies are used to engage parents in their children's learning and development, supporting highly effective partnerships between parents and staff, and rapid progress in children.
- Leadership and management are exceptionally strong, providing stability in the long-term delivery of high quality education programmes for children.
- Children are exceedingly well prepared for their move into the pre-school and then on to local primary schools so they remain confident and excited about managing big changes in their routines.

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.

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 observed a wide range of activities and care routines across the large indoor and outdoor play areas and she talked with staff, children and parents.
- The inspector reviewed documents relating to safeguarding, staff recruitment and self-evaluation, and checked a selection of other policies.
- The inspector sampled a range of documentation including children's records and progress checks, the setting's planning and evaluation documents and information sharing with parents.
- The inspector took account of the views of parents spoken to on the day, checked the complaints log and reviewed written contributions from parents.
- The inspector met with and undertook a joint observation with the pres-school leader.

Inspector

Helen Robinshaw

Full report

Information about the setting

Chatterbox Community Pre-school Ltd registered in 2013 after changing from a committee-run preschool to a limited company. It operates from a purpose-built building on the site of Halterworth Community Primary School in Romsey, Hampshire. The pre-school serves the local area. Children access an enclosed outdoor play area. 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 opens each weekday during school terms. The opening hours are from 8am to 4pm. Children attend a variety of hours and sessions.

The pre-school is registered on the Early Years Register and both the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. There are 66 children in the early years age group on roll. The pre-school supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and children who learn English as an additional language. The pre-school employs nine members of staff including an administration assistant. Of these, seven hold appropriate early years qualifications. The pre-school leader is in her final year of a foundation degree in early years education.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- model the next level of language skills, whether it is through sign language or speech, so children learn to include rhythm and connecting words in longer sentences.

Inspection judgements

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

Children are making excellent levels of progress in their learning and development at this happy and caring pre-school. Staff work to very high standards providing children with an abundance of rich learning opportunities designed to stimulate every aspect of their development. Thoughtful preparation and use of resources link children's choice of activities with clearly focused teaching strategies. For example, staff identify the need to develop children's awareness of rhyming words and plan to end the session with a funny story that includes rhyming words. A big cooking pot contains toy props gathered to support the storytelling and this is left out for the children to discover. Children soon notice and are intrigued by the contents of the pot. Staff give children time to play with the props and then guide them into making 'silly soup'. In this game children find, match, add and stir two items that rhyme into the pot, taking turns and helping each other. This small group activity builds on the interests of some of the younger children. It also prepares them well as they begin to understand the concept of rhyming words and

practise in a cosy small group with their key person. By the time children gather for the whole group story they understand the idea of finding two items that rhyme, attend to the whole story and are very eager to join in. This combination of informed planning and building on children's interests ensures that children make excellent progress across all aspects of their learning.

Inspirational teaching builds on children's fascination and curiosity. Staff leave a basket of tinned and real vegetables by a traditional set of balancing scales and weights outside in the home corner. Children soon investigate the impact of different combinations of vegetables, tins and weights on either side of the scales. Astute staff allow children the freedom to explore and wonder, while gently modelling the new language they need to express what they are thinking about and trying out. Staff begin to ask open questions such as 'What would happen if...?' and model the process of choosing strategies, for example, 'I wonder which one would be better'. In so doing, staff encourage children to identify and solve problems and review how an approach worked or needed changing. These are characteristics of effective learning and give children excellent strategies for developing new skills. For example, a new pulley system in another part of the outdoor play area provides a natural extension for the comparison of weighty vegetables. Children extend their investigations by heaving small buckets of potatoes and carrots up and down the pulley system. As they do so they are fathoming out weight, gravity, strength and developing hand coordination as they pull. Children become active and inquisitive learners as they access an excellent range of resources and attentive staff challenge their thinking.

Systems to track and assess children's development are highly effective and involve parents in every part of the process. Committed staff build up a good knowledge of children before they join the pre-school. This develops from conversations with parents and observations made at taster sessions and home visits. Parents and staff therefore have a clear basis on which to evaluate children's progress while they are at the pre-school. Children's learning journeys clearly document their ongoing progress with photographs and written observations detailing individual achievements. These provide the basis for targeting next steps in children's learning across all areas of development. Parents comment that they feel highly engaged in their children's learning and appreciate the strong working partnerships they have with their child's key person. Staff are accessible, friendly and use a wide range of methods to link with parents. This makes parents feel well supported and aware of the expertise that is available for them to draw upon. Staff and parents comment that children make extremely good progress because they work so well together.

Prompt progress checks for two-year-olds and meticulous ongoing attention to each child's achievements helps all children make very good progress from their starting points. Children develop strong foundations for learning through the exceptionally keen focus on the development of communication and language, personal, social and emotional and physical skills. Close links with local reception class teachers confirm that children's skills transfer to school, helping them settle in and build on their self-confidence. Each month the pre-school leader diligently updates practical ideas for supporting individual children in the pre-school. Consequently, staff also keep up to date with any additional strategies that help children with special educational needs and/or disabilities or who are learning English as an additional language. All staff know how to facilitate every child's learning so that

every child receives appropriate encouragement, experience and guidance. Thorough planning and preparation for children's next steps keeps expectations high and activities suitably challenging. As a result, all children are ready for their move to school.

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

Care practices at the pre-school are highly effective in helping children feel emotionally secure and ensuring children are physically and emotionally healthy. Excellent mechanisms are in place to help children settle in and develop secure emotional attachments to their key person. Parents provide valuable information on their children's achievements and about their preferences and needs. All staff are highly skilled and sensitive in helping children settle in, giving them the confidence to develop further independence and a willingness to explore their new surroundings. Staff target any gaps in children's development across the prime areas of learning, and specifically in areas of personal, social and emotional development. They do this through careful observations of children's likes and dislikes, the activities and resources that motivate them and a raft of methods for praising them and celebrating success. For example, when children were scared by the fire alarm, staff implemented steps towards independent management of the process. With initial support from their key person and further routine practices, children soon gained confidence, independence, and the award of a special fire safety certificate. Thoughtful, caring staff place the highest priority on keeping children safe and these are important life skills for even the youngest children.

The key person system is highly effective in tailoring care to meet the needs of individual children and their families. Staff know the best means of keeping families in touch with routine updates so that parents keep abreast of exciting developments for their children. They are also aware that significant events in the community and in family life can have an impact on young children's sense of security. This has led to the compilation of 'life event' sacks. These are rich in resources and ideas to help children understand and work through challenges such as bereavement and separation. Families appreciate the supportive staff and comment that they are reassured in the knowledge that their children are cared for so well.

Experienced practitioners work well as a team and are highly engaged in stimulating and meeting children's needs. Rich and exciting play opportunities are abundant, encouraging children to explore their own interests and concentrate for longer. Behaviour is generally very good as children have so much to interest them. Attentive staff gently guide children as they learn to understand and negotiate with their peers. This helps children to learn to tolerate and celebrate differences, develop their social skills and mix with a wider range of friends. Staff have high expectations for children's social skills and growing independence. They show their delight as children aspire to meet those expectations. They talk proudly of the children's increasing independence and skill at assessing and managing risks suitable for their age. Children become increasingly self-confident under their careful guidance and are better prepared for the next stages in their learning.

Children's understanding of the importance of a healthy diet and regular physical exercise

and fresh air are embedded in topic planning and choice of activities. Children grow vegetables and herbs in their outdoor planters and use these to make soup. In doing so, they learn to plan what is needed, sequence their activities, carefully manage risks as they chop vegetables and make something special. They practise and review their strategies when a parent brings them a pumpkin and they work out how to turn that into tasty soup. Highly practical activities such as these help children stay focused on a purpose, find new ways to solve challenges, and work cooperatively with each other. They also engage children in ways to choose a healthy diet and lifestyle, much of which happens in the outside play area where the children seem very comfortable. Well-chosen storage systems make it possible for children to access all the resources outside that they can do inside. Even on cold days, children wrap up warmly and enjoy the puppet theatre, instruments, vegetable shop and dressing up. They stretch their physical skills using a range of tricycles and scooters and learn road safety as their friends move warning signs around the play area track.

Children are encouraged to be as independent as possible throughout all their care routines. A hand washing song is used before the snack bar opens and washbasins and hand towels are at an appropriate height. With their outdoor play area, frequent woodland walks and trips to the school pond, children soon learn what they need and how to put it on. Staff support them by promoting a life skill a week, such as pouring their own drink, putting on their 'wellies', turning taps off and learning that water is precious. This helps children become more independent and raises their self-confidence, which is excellent preparation for going to school.

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

Leadership and management of the pre-school understand and implement the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage very effectively. The provider and senior managers have an extremely good understanding of the learning and development requirements and deliver high quality educational programmes. The pursuit of excellence in all aspects of the children's care and learning is evident throughout their paper work and practice. The morale of the staff is very good and they work well as a team, each continuing to drive forward specific plans to improve services. Effective systems are in place for managing the performance of staff and continuing their professional development. The pre-school leader is near to completing her foundation degree and one of the directors is also an Early Years Foundation Stage teacher. This expertise enhances observations and appraisals of the teaching team. It also helps to ensure that practice keeps abreast of changes in policies, practice, further training, specialist knowledge and good resources. Consequently, improving outcomes for children is always central to decision making.

Children's care, welfare and learning are significantly enhanced by the diligent application of requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage on a daily basis. All the mandatory documentation for the safe management of the pre-school is in place and included in staff training updates. Recruitment and vetting procedures are robust to support the

safeguarding of all children. Regular appraisals, supervision and training of staff helps to make sure that only suitable adults work with the children. All staff have recent training in safeguarding children and are confident of the appropriate procedures to follow in the event of concerns about children or an allegation about a member of staff. Most staff hold current certificates in paediatric first aid and some have attend food hygiene training.

The successful move from committee run pre-school to limited company and charitable status illustrates the pre-school's strong drive for improvement. Current plans include extending provision to include breakfast and after school clubs. Parents and local stakeholders are contributing to the consultation process, which will inform further planning. Staff regularly evaluate activities to identify areas of success as well as areas for improvement or change. An immense amount of thought has led to a wide range of methods of engaging parents in their children's learning at the pre-school. Initiatives in this area prove highly successful with new parents especially appreciative of how working partnerships support their children's development. Not all parents understand the workings of the pre-school, that it is a not-for-profit organisation and still depends upon support from the parent body 'Friends of Chatterbox'. Staff are currently researching 'barriers to parental involvement' as a means of further strengthening this area and securing greater opportunities for children's learning.

Strong and highly effective links between the pre-school and primary school clearly benefit the children who enjoy many opportunities to use shared outdoor facilities, attend plays and concerts. The pre-school keeps parents informed of helpful initiatives at the school, such as the 'Positive Parenting' courses. The school has encouraged the pre-school to strengthen children's moves to school through a range of guidance and direct support. The latest project resulted in the development of a song book and CD to be used at home and at pre-school to support the early learning of phonic sounds. Aply supported by the creative talents of the local Women's Institute who knitted all the characters, this project is designed to make it easier for children learning to read when they start at local primary schools. The children are very enthusiastic and keen to use these resources as songs and rhymes are so much part of their everyday enjoyment at the pre-school.

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	Requires improvement	The provision is not giving children a good standard of early years education and/or there are minor breaches of the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. It will be monitored and inspected within twelve months of the date of this inspection.
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 monitored and inspected again within six 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	EY455169
Local authority	Hampshire
Inspection number	921374
Type of provision	Full-time provision
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	2 - 8
Total number of places	26
Number of children on roll	66
Name of provider	Chatterbox Community Pre-School Limited
Date of previous inspection	not applicable
Telephone number	01794278340

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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.

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

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