

The Beeches Pre-School (Annexe)

St. John Ambulance, Greenstead Road, Colchester, Essex, CO1 2SL

Inspection date	11/11/2014
Previous inspection date	01/03/2011

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		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 requires improvement

- Children generally acquire the skills they need for the future as they take part in a range of activities covering all areas of learning.
- Children are happy and have a sense of belonging. They form attachments to the adults caring for them, which helps them to be confident and willing to try new things.
- Children are safe and secure, because staff have a good understanding of child protection. Parents are reassured that their children are well cared for and are able to approach staff for advice and support.

It is not yet good because

- At times, sessions are too adult-led. This means that sometimes children are less able to follow their own interests and are not offered enough challenge to develop their creative thinking skills.
- Supervision and monitoring of staff performance requires improvement. Consequently, the quality of teaching is variable as staff do not always make the best use of the premises and resources to provide good quality experiences for children.
- Self-evaluation does not focus sufficiently on teaching and learning, or take full account of the views of parents, to successfully promote continuous improvement.

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 interacted with staff and children in the playroom.
- The inspector held discussions with the provider and the manager, and carried out a joint observation with the manager.
 - The inspector viewed a sample of documentation including evidence of staff suitability checks, qualifications certificates, some policies and children's development profiles.
- The inspector took account of the views of several parents spoken to during the inspection.

Inspector

Sarah Williams

Full report

Information about the setting

The Beeches Pre-school (Annexe) is one of two settings privately owned by one registered provider. The pre-school is registered by Ofsted on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. It opened in 2005 and operates from a room within the St John Ambulance Hall in Colchester, Essex. Children have access to an enclosed outdoor play area. The pre-school opens four days a week, for 42 weeks of the year. Sessions times are from 9.15am to 12 noon and from 1pm to 3.30pm on Monday to Thursday, with a lunch club operating between each session. Children attend for a variety of sessions. There are currently 29 children in the early years age range on roll. The pre-school provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children. The pre-school serves the local community and surrounding areas. It supports children who speak English as an additional language. The pre-school employs five members of staff, all of whom hold appropriate early years qualifications.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- develop an educational programme of planned, purposeful play with a balance of adult-led and child-initiated activity, focusing on providing maximum choice for children from a wide range of meaningful options, so that they can explore, investigate and follow their own interests, both indoors and outside and develop their critical thinking skills
- provide more regular and effective supervision for all staff, to foster a culture of support, teamwork and a maintain focus on continuous improvement of the quality of teaching.

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

- develop and improve self-evaluation so that it effectively identifies weaknesses and use this as a basis for continuous improvement, setting realistic and achievable goals for development, and taking account of the views of parents.

Inspection judgements

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

Children eagerly engage in activities and generally gain the basic skills they need for future learning. They participate in a range of activities which cover all areas of learning. Support for children's language development and vocabulary is provided during circle

times and in small group activities. Several children attend who speak English as an additional language. Staff ensure that they know some key vocabulary and important words to support these children to enable them to be fully included in all activities. Overall, the quality of teaching is variable and not consistently good. This is because at times sessions are too dominated by over-lengthy routines and adult-led activities. At these times, children are less well engaged because a whole group approach is used and some activities are mundane and lack challenge. The organisation of the larger group activities does not take account of children's differing stages of development and limits the ability of children to have meaningful choices and be in control of their own learning. They are sometimes kept waiting with little to occupy them while staff are busy preparing resources or snacks. Nevertheless, at other times such as during the afternoon sessions which are more freely flowing, children do become successfully engaged. They are encouraged to choose from the equipment and activities set out for them and spend time completing tasks and exploring. They use magnets to discover what happens when paperclips are scattered on the table. They create collages using sparkly shapes and glitter, adding pumpkin seeds which they saved from a Halloween activity. Free access to writing and drawing materials allows children to develop the skills of handwriting and pencil control. They practise making letter and number shapes in foam as they spread it around a table surface. Outdoor play is available at times but is not specifically planned for, so does not allow regular opportunities for those children who prefer to learn in an outdoor environment.

Staff complete a development profile for each child. This contains information about what children can already do, supplied by parents and from early observations of children at play. As a result, staff assess children's starting points and plan a programme designed to challenge them and help them make progress. The next steps in children's learning are identified and used to inform activities that the key-persons plan for. Parents can continue the learning at home and staff are willing to provide ideas and activities for those who request them. Staff use published guidance documents to track individual children's progress and identify any areas where they might need additional support to reach expected levels. A progress check is carried out for all children between the ages of two-and-three years. The findings of this report are shared with parents so that they can liaise with their health visitor.

Children are generally prepared for the next stage in learning, which is usually school. They gain some independence by managing their own needs and taking part in more focused activities, such as writing their own name, in preparation for the school environment. They have visits from the reception teachers and spend time in discussions about what they can expect when they leave and start at school. The pre-school staff have developed links with several feeder schools and ensure that when children leave all relevant information is passed on. Some children attend the pre-school's sister setting as well and information is again shared as necessary for continuity of care and learning. Parents feel well-informed about what their children are doing. They have a daily diary which successfully encourages a two-way flow of information. Staff use what they know about children's interests and activities at home to engage in discussions with them, and plan activities for them at pre-school based on their interests.

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

Children are happy and settled at the pre-school. They form meaningful attachments to the adults caring for them. This enables them to be well prepared emotionally for any changes, and next stages in their learning, such as the move to school. Children form friendships with one another and generally behave very well, with a developing understanding that they must take turns and sometimes share resources. Staff know that it is important for children to learn how to resolve conflicts. They keep a careful eye on minor altercations, but allow children to find solutions to some of the problems that crop up. This strengthens children's resilience and self-awareness. Children's welfare is assured because they are cared for by adults with a sound understanding of child protection issues.

Children have a hearty, healthy snack of fruit and toast with a drink of milk or water at snack time. They participate by cutting and serving the fruit and washing up their own plates and cups. This develops their independence. However, due to the whole group approach, snack time is drawn out for too long. This results in some children sitting for long periods with little to do that is meaningful or challenging. Fresh air and exercise are not always prioritised as the outdoor area is not consistently planned for or offered for outside play. Nonetheless, children sometimes take part in physical activities, such as dance and music sessions indoors. Generally they remember to walk safely with reminders from time to time. Staff raise awareness of safety by carrying out regular evacuation drills. They remind children of the safe way to lift and carry a chair when they want to move it. Children are also told to check that their shoes are done up properly, to prevent them from tripping.

Parents report that they enjoy knowing that their child is in safe and capable hands. They say they would not hesitate to approach staff for advice on general childcare matters and are happy to work in partnership with staff to help children through stages such as toilet training. A strong feature of the pre-school's approach is the care and understanding they have for every child and their unique cultural and individual family circumstances. Activities are adapted to suit individual children's and families' preferences. Parent consultations are offered where there is a chance to discuss their child's progress in depth. These can be set at a time convenient for parents, some of whom are working or full-time students.

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

Children are kept safe and free from harm. All adults are checked and vetted for suitability, and are safe to be working with children. Recruitment and induction is rigorous and well established. Safeguarding responsibilities are understood by all staff and underpinned with policies and procedures detailing arrangements for any referrals. This means that any concerns are dealt with swiftly and support is provided for any child who requires it.

The management supports staff and trainees undergoing training programmes and

external reviewers visit trainees in the setting. Staff sometimes access courses organised by the local authority and cascade knowledge to the other staff. Systems for the supervision and monitoring of the quality of teaching, and monitoring the educational programme, require improvement as they are not sufficiently focused on raising standards. Every staff member has an annual appraisal where ongoing training needs are identified. However, too few regular, detailed supervision sessions and too little time to reflect on their practice are included as part of the day-to-day management of staff. The result is that on occasion, the quality of teaching is less successful and fails to benefit children fully. The provider takes responsibility for collating information about how well different groups of children are progressing, as some children attend both of her settings. She works with the manager to assess children's overall progress and ensures that any gaps are suitably identified and planned for.

Self-evaluation requires improvement as it is largely descriptive rather than focusing on goals for future development. As a result, not all staff have a good understanding of strengths and weaknesses, or maintain high aspirations for improving their practice and the outcomes for children. Partnerships with parents are generally sound and parents report positively about how well they feel supported and informed about their child's progress. However, while staff take account of any comments left in the daily diaries, and during informal discussions they have when parents deliver or collect children, not all parents' views are sought routinely. Therefore, some parents' views and ideas are not known and they cannot contribute to the support of children at the pre-school. Appropriate, supportive and effective partnerships with schools and other providers are in place, and services such as interpreters can be called upon where required. This helps to support families where English is spoken as an additional language.

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. We re-inspect nurseries and pre-schools judged as requires improvement within 12 months of the date of 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		There were no children present at the time of the inspection. The inspection judgement is that the provider continues to meet the requirements for registration.
Not met		There were no children present at the time of the inspection. 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	EY299557
Local authority	Essex
Inspection number	861698
Type of provision	
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 17
Total number of places	16
Number of children on roll	29
Name of provider	Elaine Joy Beecham
Date of previous inspection	01/03/2011
Telephone number	01206866615

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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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