

Bitterne Community Pre-School

Peartree Avenue, Southampton, Hampshire, SO19 7RB

Inspection date	28/11/2014
Previous inspection date	03/07/2009

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

- Children have an enthusiastic approach to learning and show high levels of engagement in the interesting range of activities staff make available.
- Staff provide a rich variety of learning experiences tailored to children's individual needs and support this with observation, assessment and planning that is of a very high standard.
- Staff reliably identify children whose learning and development is not at a typical level for their age and secure timely interventions to ensure those children make high levels of progress.
- Managers show a clear ambition to provide exceptionally good care and education for all the children, and work extremely hard to achieve this. Excellent systems of self-evaluation, staff training, and improvement planning underpin their success.
- Excellent relationships between staff and children help children to thrive and provide a strong basis for all children to achieve well.

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 a wide range of activities across all areas of the pre-school and talked with staff and children about what they were doing.
The inspector reviewed documents and procedures relating to safeguarding,
- staffing, supervision, risk assessment, equal opportunities, and health and safety, and checked a selection of other policies.
The inspector sampled a range of children's records, the pre-school's systems for
- planning, evaluation and exchanging information with parents and external professionals.
- The inspector took account of the views of parents spoken to on the day and reviewed written communication from parents.
- The inspector met with the leadership team and conducted a joint observation with the manager.

Inspector

Helen Robinshaw

Full report

Information about the setting

Bitterne Community Pre-School registered in 2001 on the Early Years Register. It operates from a purpose built classroom and adjacent outside play area, within the grounds of Bitterne primary school, in Bitterne, Southampton. It is one of two groups in Bitterne run by the same voluntary committee. The group serve the local community and surrounding areas. The pre-school is open each week day during term time from 8.30am to 11.50am and from 12.10pm to 3.10pm. The-preschool also operates a lunch club from 11.30am to 12.10pm. Children attend for a variety of sessions and some stay all day. There are currently 81 children on roll. The pre-school supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and children who are learning English as an additional language. The pre-school is in receipt of funding for the provision of free early education for children aged two, three and four. There are currently fourteen members of staff working with the children, eleven of whom hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- extend the already excellent partnerships with parents to include further opportunities for parents and committee members to experience the pre-school in action.

Inspection judgements

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

Staff are highly effective in facilitating children's desire to explore, learn and create at this welcoming and well-managed pre-school. Staff know the children extremely well, and design educational programmes to meet children's individual needs. Staff build on children's interests, develop their individual achievements and nurture their skills in every aspect of learning and development. For example, children enjoy a story about going on a bear hunt, so staff effectively plan many rich and imaginative experiences around this theme. Each key person regularly reviews the progress of children in their group. They know children's current achievements and next steps in learning across every area and aspect of their development. Consequently, each key person identifies how to adapt group activities to meet children's individual needs. Children practise new skills, extend them to new contexts and gain the confidence to move on to new areas of learning. Through this constant reflection, informed nurturing and diversity of experiences, staff help children make excellent progress across all areas of learning and development. Children, therefore make steady and timely progress towards the early learning goals, so they are ready for school and their next stages in learning.

Senior staff have very high expectations of themselves and surround themselves with a team who share their enthusiasm for nurturing each child to reach their full potential. For example, managers research how children learn additional languages. They break this process down into small steps and provide staff with practical strategies to help children learning English as an additional language at the pre-school. Staff make optimal use of repetition and a secure framework, as children act out and say key phrases in the bear hunt story. Children clearly understand the expectations and the story line from previous practices. This gives them more scope to focus on new language and speaking skills. They gain confidence as they share the enjoyment of learning, and keeping up, with their friends. Staff also craft such experiences to support the personal, social, and emotional development of very young children, and children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Children find ways to represent their hunting trip through the different landscapes. They pull off various shades of tissue from wet paper to create images of water. Staff extend children's thinking as they sow seed and grow long grass, mix compost and water to form squelchy mud, and make artificial snow. Staff's questions challenge older children to investigate further, by encouraging them to speculate and test ideas through trial and error. Children learn to experiment and use their imaginations when developing story lines. They link illustrations and text, and add expression to their story telling, as they begin to follow some of the key phrases from the book. Children of all ages and stages experience highly interesting learning opportunities, which staff use to support every area of their learning and development.

Staff plan thoroughly and react flexibly, as they review and evaluate the activities of the day. They summarise detailed observations of children's interests and achievements and share these across the team, so that all staff know how to support children effectively. Staff review children's progress each term and share their findings with parents. Together they celebrate children's strengths and identify their next steps in learning. Early identification of any gaps and delays in children's progress enables parents and staff to work closely together to focus teaching on those specific areas. Staff draw on the experience and specialist training of their local advisory teachers, educational psychologists, and speech and language therapists. They work closely with these specialists and parents to boost children's skills within daily routines, individual teaching sessions and small group activities. As a result, children with significant delays in their learning, or challenges in their social skills, have made excellent progress in readiness for their moves to school.

Parents spoken to on the day of the inspection spoke with enthusiasm and pleasure about the progress their children have made since they started at the pre-school. Relationships with staff are strong and highly effective in supporting children's individual needs between home and the pre-school. Staff welcome in parents who drop their children off each day and meet with them each term within the pre-school day. The children also invite their mums and grandmothers, fathers, and grandfathers into the pre-school for special occasions each year. However, good quality time for parents or committee members to engage with the rich diversity of their children's learning experiences within the pre-school are limited. As a result, not all parents who would like to share an insight into the pre-school in action are able to do so.

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

Children develop excellent relationships with their key person and with other staff, as they are all highly skilled and sensitive in providing care and security. Staff have an exceptional understanding of children's individual needs as they invest time in listening to parents from the first visit onwards. Staff encourage children to try new activities they will enjoy and reassure them as they provide continuity and praise. Staff have a clear and highly effective focus on planning to meet and extend children's personal, social and emotional needs from the start. Staff have consistent daily routines, which helps children feel settled and ready for the adventures of the day. Young children and new starters soon gain confidence as they balance the freedom to explore with times to become part of the group. Staff consistently guide children through their expectations for children's behaviour and the 'be rules' chosen by their older friends. Children learn how to 'be kind', 'be safe' and 'be helpful', as staff and children model and remind each other what that means in practice. Older children are quick to find the sand timer as they negotiate with friends when to share tricycles and computer time. Children develop a strong sense of responsibility as staff model effective social skills and support children's growing independence.

Children are aware of the benefits of healthy foods, as they describe what it is they like about their favourite fruits. Staff expand their conversations to encourage them to think about trying other fruit and vegetables in family meals. Staff encourage children to recognise when they are ready to visit the snack table, and let them come to a convenient pause in their play. Staff store children's morning and afternoon snack boxes and lunches on different shelves so children know where to find them. Children have limited opportunities to grow fruit on site, but staff include growing projects throughout the seasons as they plant spring bulbs and summer flowers. Topic work also includes a focus on healthy eating as children and staff examine the diet of the caterpillar in a popular story book. Children show a very good level of self-care and are able to manage a variety of aspects of personal hygiene appropriate to their age and stage of development. For example, staff talk to children about the importance of washing their hands thoroughly after handling spades and digging in the mud outside. As a result, children learn effective hygiene routines and the importance of preventing the spread of germs.

Children move freely between the indoor and outdoor areas of the pre-school for large parts of the day. They dig, draw, build and chat together over games and puzzles under a large fixed awning. Staff provide an abundance of resources in clearly labelled storage units at child height. This encourages children's independence as they select and experiment with materials of their choosing. Although the outdoor space is not extensive, staff make ample room for children to practise pedalling and scooting. Children also make up stories in the outdoor playhouse and have space to climb, slide, and practise balancing. Staff continually interact with children outdoors as they discretely extend their learning and guide them through the risks and challenges of new ventures. Children develop high levels of confidence and ability in a wide range of physical skills. Children also benefit from the excellent relationships staff foster with the early years team at the adjacent school. Staff and children are welcome to experience the new outdoor play facilities designed to meet the needs of the reception class children. A secure woodland walk between the two

areas also provides children with a rich and different environment as they explore the changing seasons and wildlife habitats. Children thrive as they spend long periods busily playing and learning in the fresh air. These visits also support children's moves to all schools as they experience playground rules and begin to understand how large numbers of children play together.

Staff use home/school books to exchange information when children attend a separate nursery or are in the care of a childminder. Parents sign agreements for staff to share information, such as children's next steps in learning. This helps to provide continuity of care and learning across different contexts. Staff also prepare children well emotionally and socially for their moves to school. Staff welcome new teachers to the pre-school and support children's visits to school with photographs, relevant role-play areas and storybooks. Children flourish in the thoughtful care of their committed staff.

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

The pre-school staff and many children split their week between two sites that are just a short walk from each other. Parents, staff, and children enjoy the different benefits found in each location and the continuity of staffing across both sites. There are, therefore, two managers who have developed a highly successful partnership over many years. They demonstrate a highly successful and well-documented drive to improve achievements for all children, over a sustained period. A voluntary pre-school committee, made up of parents of children who attend the pre-school, oversees their work.

The chair of the committee, the managers, and their senior staff have a comprehensive knowledge of the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. By thoroughly reviewing policies and procedures at frequent intervals, they demonstrate their commitment to keeping children safe. Staff have a detailed understanding of how to manage any concerns they may have about a child's welfare due to their excellent knowledge of safeguarding issues. All staff and committee members undergo checks and vetting processes to ensure their suitability to work with children. Procedures for recruiting, inducting, and mentoring new members of staff also help to ensure staff suitability. Staff demonstrate an excellent understanding of how to carry out their roles and responsibilities because these are clearly defined and frequently reviewed with them. These measures help to keep children safe from harm during their time at the pre-school.

All mandatory documentation for the safe management of the pre-school is in place with staff routinely implementing good practice. Risk assessments for all aspects of the pre-school are in place, and staff update them as improvements are made to the premises. Daily checks also help staff to keep the indoor and outdoor learning environments free from hazards and safe places for children to play. All staff regularly update their training in paediatric first aid. Staff keep clear records when children require medicines, and ensure parents sign to confirm they have read any accounts of accidents or injuries during the day.

A highly professional team continually reflects on the success of their practice, and drive forward improvements to support all areas of children's learning and development. Impressive monitoring of the educational programmes ensures that staff plan and provide a rich and varied range of experiences to help children make very good progress in all areas of learning. The managers work very effectively with local advisory teachers who prove an invaluable source of knowledge and guidance. Their support has been instrumental in raising standards to high levels across the pre-school. For example, there are comprehensive systems in place for staff supervision and appraisal, coupled with an extremely positive attitude to professional development. The daily experiences of children at the pre-school are greatly enhanced through the diversity and frequency of staff training across all areas of care and education. This is evident in staff's use of environmental rating scales and the space children have to move freely around the pre-school.

The local authority has acted as a pathfinder for the new Education and Health Care plans. The Area Special Educational Needs Coordinator has been exceptionally supportive as staff have initiated these for children in their care. Parents say staff are particularly effective in supporting them, as they learn to unravel and address children's individual needs, at home as well as in the pre-school. The dedication and professional expertise of staff makes an enormous contribution to closing significant gaps in children's learning and development while they attend the pre-school. Partnerships with parents are clearly very good. Staff share an excellent range of information with parents to update them on activities in the pre-school and how they can extend children's learning at home. Parents enthusiastically report high levels of satisfaction with the pre-school.

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	148865
Local authority	Southampton
Inspection number	986318
Type of provision	Full-time provision
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 5
Total number of places	28
Number of children on roll	81
Name of provider	Bitterne Community Pre-School Committee
Date of previous inspection	03/07/2009
Telephone number	023 8042 2233

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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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