

Alpha Pre School

Freshbrook Community Centre, Worsley Road, Freshbrook, Swindon, Wiltshire, SN5 8NU

Inspection date

16/12/2014

Previous inspection date

23/09/2010

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This inspection:

3

Previous inspection:

2

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

- The committee does not have a thorough understanding of their roles and responsibilities to ensure that they meet all statutory requirements.
- Staff do not have secure knowledge and skills to support the learning and development of children fully. This means they do not consistently provide activities that offer sufficient challenge and interest. Consequently, the children's progress is steady rather than good.
- Staff do not consistently consider the organisation of resources, particularly for role play, to enhance children's learning experiences further.

It is not yet good because

- Children settle well at the start of the day with staff who show they care and provide a friendly environment.
- Children are safeguarded well because staff have a secure understanding of child protection issues and are proactive in taking steps to support children and their families.
- Children enjoy daily outdoor play throughout the year and staff are taking positive steps to improve the outdoor provision.

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 children's play both indoors and outdoors.
- The inspector talked with some parents, children and staff.
- The inspector held discussions with the manager.
- The inspector and manager completed a joint observation.
- The inspector sampled a range of documents.

Inspector

Karen Prager

Full report

Information about the setting

Alpha Pre School registered in 2010. It operates from a room in Freshbrook Community Centre, in West Swindon. Children have access to an outdoor play area. The pre-school is open each weekday from 9am to 3pm term time only. The pre-school is registered on the Early Years Register. There are currently 28 children on roll. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The pre-school receives funding for free early education for children aged three and four years. There are six members of staff who work with the children. The manager holds an early years foundation degree and the other childcare staff hold relevant qualifications at level 3. There is an administrator working in the group. The pre-school is a registered charity and is managed by a voluntary committee.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- develop the committee's knowledge and understanding of their roles and responsibilities to ensure statutory requirements are adhered to, including completing suitability checks for all adults connected to the setting
- implement a programme of interesting and challenging activities which encourage children to explore, create and think critically
- develop monitoring systems to improve the quality of teaching and planning, so that all children make good progress in all areas of their development.

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

- review the organisation of resources, with particular regard to the role-play area, to further support children's learning and development.

Inspection judgements

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

Children enjoy their time at the pre-school. Children quickly settle when they arrive and are ready to learn. Staff understand that children learn through their play and the majority of the children's day is spent in free-play activities. Children move freely around the room and choose what they want to play with.

Staff plan activities with children's learning in mind, including some focused adult-initiated group times. However, the quality of teaching is variable. While most children keep busy and adult input encourages children to think, this is not consistent throughout the day. For example, the support for older or more able children is not always challenging. This means that sometimes these children do not focus as well on their activities and become bored during free play. In addition, the whole-group time at the end of the session offers little variety on a daily basis and offers modest interest and challenge to children of all ages and abilities. As a result, children make steady rather than good progress in their learning.

Staff invite parents to sessions at the pre-school to sample the play experiences their children enjoy and to discuss their children's development. This helps ensure parents are included in their child's development. Staff use appropriate systems to assess the development of all children, including the required progress check for two-year-old children. Staff keep a record of children's progress and share this with parents so they can support their children at home.

Staff provide daily opportunities for children to play outside and children are keen to do so. During the inspection, children developed their physical skills while spreading glue. Staff sat with the children and helped them to develop their ideas for decorating a Christmas card. Staff provide a variety of activities like this to help children develop creative skills. Children made decisions about their learning when they chose to play with the animals in the water tray outside. They kept active as they wheeled the large toys around developing control of their bodies as they negotiated the space so they did not bump into their friends. Children played in the home corner developing their imagination and social skills as they played with dolls. However, the role-play resources provided are limited and do not fully support all the different areas of children's learning.

Staff use puppets and sing songs in a lively manner to hold most children's attention. This helps children to develop good listening skills. Children show that they are developing an interest in books. For example, children chose to look at books from those staff had set out. In addition, children sat together on the mat for a group story and responded appropriately to questions staff asked about what was happening. Children learn that written words have meaning, and identify their name when they enter the room at the start of the session. This supports their literacy development and helps them develop some skills they will need for the next stage in their learning.

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

Staff provide a friendly welcome, which helps children feel secure. Children enter the pre-school confidently and settle quickly to play. Each child has a key person who oversees their learning and development, and liaises with parents. Staff help children understand about what they expect. For example, they ask them to use kind hands when they play with other children. As a result, children play together well developing friendships, which helps to prepare them for their future learning.

Staff set out the room with range of suitable activities for the children. The staff display

bright posters and children's art, which are regularly changed to maintain children's interest in their environment. The toys are in easy reach of the children and they confidently ask for any additional resources that staff have not put out. However, staff do not consistently consider the organisation and range of resources, particularly for role-play areas. As a result, this does not always fully capture children's interests to promote their learning.

Children start to understand about safety and learn to keep themselves safe. For example, staff remind children not to run indoors. Staff support children well with their developing independence. Children enjoy washing their hands before they eat their snack. The staff promote further children's understanding about leading healthy lifestyles when they provide healthy snacks and talk to children about the different foods they eat. Children find their coats and develop skills in putting their coat on before playing outside in cold weather. Children are very keen to play outside and they benefit from the fresh air while they play.

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

Generally, the manager and staff have an appropriate knowledge and understanding of their statutory responsibilities. They maintain an accurate record of the attendance of both children and visitors to the pre-school and implement a broad range of policies to support the children's welfare, learning and development. The pre-school staff share these with parents to keep them informed of procedures that help staff keep their children safe. However, the management committee members are less clear about their statutory responsibilities. For example, the provider has not made Ofsted aware of changes to the committee so that required suitability checks can take place to help to ensure the pre-school protects children's welfare effectively. It is a requirement of the Early Years Foundation Stage to do so. However, on this occasion Ofsted does not intend to take further action. This breach of requirements has limited impact on children's safety, as the committee members do not have unsupervised access to children.

The manager has a sound understanding of the strengths of the provision and areas to improve. Since the previous inspection, the system of monitoring the provision has improved. However, the manager does not use effective systems to monitor the quality of teaching and planning to maximise outcomes for children. The staff welcome support from the local authority and they work together to identify areas for improvement. The manager has built effective links with other professionals and local early years providers. This helps to support children in their learning and development.

Staff encourage parents to provide feedback through informal discussions. This provides useful opportunities for parents to feel involved in their children's learning and in helping drive improvements within the pre-school that will benefit their children. The regular staff meetings allow staff to review policies, monitor children's development and share suggestions to develop practice. Additionally, staff are encouraged to continue professional development through further training. For example, staff have attended

training on how to record children's development, which has had a positive impact on the records staff keep on the children. Partnerships with parents are positive. Parents comment that their children are keen to attend and play with their friends, and the parents value the friendly staff. They feel that staff keep them well informed of their children's experiences through discussions and the regular newsletters.

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	EY408710
Local authority	Swindon
Inspection number	831687
Type of provision	Full-time provision
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	2 - 5
Total number of places	24
Number of children on roll	28
Name of provider	Alpha Pre School Freshbrook Committee
Date of previous inspection	23/09/2010
Telephone number	07875422315

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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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