

The Valley Pre-School

Meonstoke C of E School, Chapel Road, Meonstoke, Southampton, Hampshire, SO32 3NJ



Inspection date	21 January 2015
Previous inspection date	12 January 2009

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
	Previous inspection:	Good	2
How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend		Requires improvement	3
The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children		Requires improvement	3
The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision		Requires improvement	3
The setting does not meet legal requirements for early years settings			

Summary of key findings for parents

This provision requires improvement. It is not yet good because:

- Staff observe children regularly but they do not use the information consistently to check children's progress and plan what they need to learn next, so not all children make good progress.
- Leadership does not check that staff follow the stipulated policy and procedures for risk assessment, which compromises children's safety.
- The leadership team does not have good checking systems to make sure teaching is of a consistently good quality and to continually improve the provision for children by accurate evaluation methods.

It has the following strengths

- Children form sound relationships with the staff. This means that staff usually meet children's individual needs well and children feel secure.
- Good partnerships exist between parents and staff, ensuring that parents are kept well informed about their children's activities.
- Children learn to manage their behaviour. They share toys and activities by following the example set by staff.
- Staff are trained in child protection and have good understanding of how to recognise signs which may give rise to concerns for a child's welfare.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- improve staff understanding of how to use observation evidence to check children's progress and plan what they need to learn next
- ensure that staff carry out daily safety checks and risk assessments, as stipulated in the nursery's policy, by using effective checking systems, and so that management can demonstrate these checks have been undertaken to inspectors.

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

- implement regular reviews of staff practice and skills to ensure that these are used to best effect to accelerate children's progress
- check that staff use adult-led experiences consistently well to aid children's progress.

Inspection activities

- The inspector observed the quality of teaching, including for technology, and the impact this has on children's learning, both inside and out.
- The inspector looked at children's assessment records and the planning documentation.
- The inspector completed a joint observation with the manager.
- The inspector spoke to a small number of parents during the inspection and took account of their views.
- The inspector spoke to staff and children at appropriate times during the inspection and held meetings with the nominated person and the manager of the provision. Discussions included risk assessment and checking systems.

Inspector

Ann Rowe

Inspection findings

How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend. This requires improvement

Staff provide a range of suitable activities to promote children's learning and development across the areas of learning. Some good teaching occurs on a one-to-one basis so children receive individual attention to help them explore activities. Staff do not think about the balance of adult-led activities and following children's interests to ensure that all children are making good progress. Children have ready access to a wide range of toys and resources that help them to develop as independent learners. However, checking and tracking of children's progress is inconsistent across the staff team. It lacks sufficient detail to guide planning of what children need to achieve next. For example, the next stage for number recognition is not broken down into small stages that children can achieve. Older children have good skills in writing and are well prepared for starting school. Staff support children learning English as an additional language, and those with speech and language difficulties, suitably to help close any gaps in their progress.

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

The bright and airy environment is well resourced. Caring and understanding staff help children to settle and play happily. Staff teach children healthy routines by encouraging them to take regular exercise and to enjoy daily nutritious snacks independently. Staff do not always do what is expected of them to check that the play environment is safe for children's use, such as when completing daily risk assessments. However, no child has come to harm. Children and staff understand the evacuation procedure in the event of an emergency because they hold regular practices. Children are friendly and caring with each other and adults. Staff are good role models and manage children's behaviour well. Children who are unhappy or hurt themselves are cared for well. Staff work closely with parents when children first start which helps children to settle easily. This good relationship continues as children progress and parents report children are well looked after.

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

Committee members have a reasonable understanding of their responsibilities. They have a range of procedures and policies to guide staff practice. However, checks on the implementation of these are not sufficiently thorough. The manager does not monitor the safety systems, which is part of the role. The assessment process is not rigorous enough to ensure that all children progress quickly. The leadership team's ability to evaluate what is working and what needs improvement does not work well enough. For example, staff undertake regular training but the manager does not do reviews of their practice to check that training makes a difference to children's learning. However, other procedures, such as seeking parental views, recruitment and encouraging staff to take qualifications, work well.

Setting details

Unique reference number	110140
Local authority	Hampshire
Inspection number	839681
Type of provision	Sessional provision
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	2 - 5
Total number of places	24
Number of children on roll	29
Name of provider	The Valley Pre-School Committee
Date of previous inspection	12 January 2009
Telephone number	07751 191 766

The Valley Pre-school opened in 1975. It registered with Ofsted in 2001 on the Early Years Register, and compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. In 2013 it moved into purpose-built premises in the grounds of Meonstoke Church of England School. It is open each weekday during the school term. Sessions are available from 9am to 12 noon, and from 1pm to 3pm, with lunch provision. The pre-school is funded to provide some free early education to children aged three and four years. The committee employs five staff who work directly with the children, and all hold appropriate early years qualifications.

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