

Titchmarsh Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspector	K.A.Bryan
Setting address	The Club Rooms, High Street, Titchmarsh, Northamptonshire, NN14 3DF
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Type of setting	Childcare - Non-Domestic

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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under Sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006 on the quality and standards of the registered early years provision. 'Early years provision' refers to provision regulated by Ofsted for children from birth to 31 August following their fifth birthday (the early years age group). The registered person must ensure that this provision complies with the statutory framework for children's learning, development and welfare, known as the *Early Years Foundation Stage*.

The provider must provide a copy of this report to all parents with children at the setting where reasonably practicable. The provider must provide a copy of the report to any other person who asks for one, but may charge a fee for this service (The Childcare (Inspection) Regulations 2008 regulations 9 and 10).

The setting also makes provision for children older than the early years age group which is registered on the voluntary and/or compulsory part(s) of the Childcare Register. This report does not include an evaluation of that provision, but a comment about compliance with the requirements of the Childcare Register is included in Annex B.

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Description of the setting

Titchmarsh Pre-school opened in 1985, it is run by a committee. It operates from the function room at The Club Rooms on the High Street in the village of Titchmarsh in East Northamptonshire. The setting is registered on the Early Years Register and both parts of the Childcare Register to care for 26 children aged from two to eight years, of which 26 may be on the early years register. There are currently 42 children on roll, all of whom are in the early years age range. The pre-school opens five week day mornings from 9.15am until 11.45am and afternoon sessions are from 12.15pm until 2.45pm everyday but Monday. Children have access to an enclosed outdoor play area.

Children come from the local and surrounding areas. The pre-school currently supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

The pre-school employs eight members of staff, all of whom hold appropriate early years qualifications. The setting receives support from the local authority.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is Good.

Children are content and happy at the pre-school because staff know them as individuals and spend time sharing their interests. A good range of resources are also in place which support a variety of activities that engage and stimulate children. Staff work closely with parents to ensure they are always well-informed about children's needs, so consistency is promoted well. Staff generally make good use of planning and assessment to ensure children have a good base to develop their future skills. All required policies and procedures are in place and are generally well used to underpin the management of the nursery. Systems to monitor and evaluate the setting's performance are good. All recommendations from the last inspection have been met.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To further improve the early years provision the registered person should:

- strengthen the links between children's starting points and the six areas of learning to effectively monitor their progress
- ensure that staff understand they must declare all changes to circumstances which may affect their suitability to work with children
- ensure that procedures to be followed in the event of an allegation being made against a member of staff or volunteer are updated, specifically to include information about the Local Authority Designated Officer.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children are well protected because staff have a good understanding of their role in safeguarding and all have attended training in this area. They are clear about reporting procedures and a useful policy is in place which is shared with parents. However, other regulations relating to recruitment should be reviewed in order to enhance safety measures in place. Staffing levels are always maintained and people who are not cleared are never left alone with children. Children's safety is further enhanced as admittance to the building is via a door with an alarm and the outside gate is always locked. All visitors sign into the building so staff have a good awareness of who is on the premises. Recruitment procedures are generally robust, although, systems for recording staff associations are not routinely checked.

The setting has good measures in place to help children to feel safe. These include talking to them about stranger danger and staying safe with parents and adults. Children also learn about road safety through play which encourages them to have fun whilst learning. This helps them learn to be responsible for their own safety. Detailed risk assessments are in place which also include procedures for trips out, the premises are also checked daily to ensure the environment and resources are safe for children. The pre-school is welcoming with displays of children's work on the walls which helps them to feel valued and raises their self-esteem well.

The pre-school is well resourced and space is used imaginatively to provide children with opportunities to engage in a wide variety of activities. For example, singing and dancing and mark-making which is always available. Most resources are at children's height so they can access these easily and this promotes their choice making effectively. Children also develop their physical skills well, as they confidently explore their environment. Resources are also available in the hall and children enjoy using a climbing frame and trampoline, so they have the benefits of exercise throughout the year. Free-flow between the inside and outside also ensures children have lots of access to fresh air and activities, such as, using building bricks and sand and water.

A useful range of operational policies and procedures are in place and parents receive a prospectus with many of these included. These are also available via the web site and e-mail. Parents have good opportunities to comment on the setting through a comprehensive range of media, such as a questionnaire, committee meetings and a suggestion box and staff have responded positively to suggestions. For example, about extending opening times. Staff are available to be spoken with daily and there is a home to school book which keeps parents well informed about their children's day. Parents spoken with were very pleased with the way the pre-school looks after their children and happy with the amount of information they receive, about their children's progress. Good progress has also been made in working with others, who deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage to children which means they receive a consistent service. For example, when children attend school, a transition document goes with them, so new staff know what they have achieved.

The supervisors understand that self-evaluation is a working document and all staff are actively involved in identifying areas for development. For example, by developing planning time and child protection work. The supervisors are clear about maintaining continuous improvement and achieve this by supporting staff training needs well. All of the staff team are qualified and two staff are undertaking an Early Years degree. Staff have also undertaken other courses which include first aid, observations, assessment and planning, outside play, role play and working with parents. This demonstrates the setting's commitment to providing a quality service to children.

The quality and standards of the early years provision and outcomes for children

Children are confident speakers and use 'Circle Time' well, to talk about their feelings and interests. They are encouraged to work together in groups for activities, such as music and movement and this helps them to understand the value of cooperation. Staff also have a good understanding of involving all children in activities, as they use Makaton signing in words and songs to help all children feel valued.

Children behave well and can sit patiently and wait for their turn, for example, as they use the laptop. They are skilful in the use of this and use a variety of programs to help them count and recognise shapes and words. Children can transfer these skills and displays of their work show they have drawn shapes and are making good progress in mark-making. Children can also choose their favourite books and often take these home in their 'Book Bag' to share with their parents. This helps provide continuity between the home and the pre-school well.

Warm relationships are in place between the staff and the children who happily involve staff in their play. They sit together on the floor and lay train tracks and discuss trains. Staff use this opportunity well to ask children questions to help them think about what they are doing. For example, which engine is bigger or smaller and children are pleased with the praise they receive for their answers.

Children's learning and development is progressed well, as staff have a good understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage. Children's starting points are established through the completion of 'All about me' sheets. However, these are not linked to the areas of learning which means children's progress is not recorded as effectively as possible. Regular observations and assessment help staff plan the next step in their learning and targets are shared with parents. This means they have good opportunities to be involved in their children's development. Staff have a good awareness of responding to children's individual interests and planning is flexible to accommodate this. For example, during the recent snow, children played outside and froze plastic bugs in ice which they really enjoyed.

Children bring packed lunches to the setting and staff have good measures in place to ensure these are healthy. They provide parents with information about healthy eating and also talk to children about healthy lifestyles. Children also grow vegetables which they eat and this helps them to understand the natural world well, whilst also promoting healthy options. The pre-school has also gained an award for 'Healthy Early Years' which is a local acknowledgement of how well they provide children with an awareness of healthy lifestyles. Children also understand the importance of good hygiene and paper towels and liquid soap are used which prevent cross-contamination well.

Annex A: record of inspection judgements

The key inspection judgements and what they mean

Grade 1 is Outstanding: this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality

Grade 2 is Good: this aspect of the provision is strong

Grade 3 is Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound

Grade 4 is Inadequate: this aspect of the provision is not good enough

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

How well does the setting meet the needs of the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?	2
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	2

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	2
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding	2
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	2
The effectiveness of partnerships	2
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	2

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
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Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	2
The extent to which children feel safe	2
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	2
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	2

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Annex B: the Childcare Register

The provider confirms that the requirements of the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are: Met

The provider confirms that the requirements of the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are: Met