

Little Owl Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number EY252361
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Inspector Amanda May

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Type of setting Childcare on non-domestic premises

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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

Little Owl Pre-school opened in 1966. It operates from a village hall in Send and has access to a kitchen, toilets and an outdoor play area. Children attend from Send and many surrounding areas.

The pre-school is registered on the Early Years Register and both the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register to provide sessional care for a maximum of 26 children aged in the early years age group. There are currently 38 children on roll in this respect, ten of whom receive funding. The pre-school supports children who have special educational needs.

Opening hours are 9:15am to 12.15pm, Monday to Friday during term time only. Some extended sessions are also available.

Six members of staff are available to work with the children and of these, five hold an appropriate early years qualification. The setting receives support from the local authority and the pre-school learning alliance.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is satisfactory.

Due to an experienced and caring staff team children who attend the setting enjoy their time being able to access a range of resources and have fun as they are developing a sense of belonging. Staff are attentive to children's needs and children are making friendships as they play, learning how to respect one another and recognising how their actions may make their friends feel. The setting works together to evaluate the effectiveness of the provision and seeks input from the local authority and parents who are encouraged to comment on what the provision does well and offer ideas to channel improvements. Overall, children's needs are well met.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- seek information from parents about their child's starting points in learning to ensure that activities are well pitched for their individual interests and learning needs
- review staffing arrangements to ensure that the individual needs of children are met at all times, especially in terms of supporting new children settle in to the provision
- develop the use observations to recognise the next steps in children's learning, ensuring that future activities have clear learning intentions which

- all staff are aware of in order to provide appropriate challenge to each child
- ensure relevant information is shared with other early years settings that children attend to promote continuity and coherence in their learning and development.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children are very well safeguarded as they attend the setting through effective risk assessment by staff, the committee members as well as the owners of the premises. Children are reminded about taking care and they are developing a good understanding of how to behave in a safe manner. Staff are very aware of their responsibilities in terms of safeguarding children and recognise the procedures to follow if they have concerns about a child. Relevant documentation is in place and shared with parents about how a concern would be dealt with and all staff feel confident in their responsibilities to protect the children who attend. Recruitment procedures are effective and the on-going suitability of staff is monitored through the supervisor by carrying out appraisals and through working closely with staff on a day to day basis.

All staff are encouraged to share their views and ideas about the setting and the team discuss and evaluate the provision together at team meetings and informally after sessions. Due to the staff effectively reviewing their practice they are able to recognise areas which would benefit from improvement to help meet children's needs more effectively. The advice is also sought from local authority advisors who help the setting to recognise other ways that the group can develop the provision. Parents are also encouraged to provide comments and feedback, although the views of the children are not yet officially sought or used to develop the setting's assessment of their practice. Previous improvements to the provision include the development of the outside area to allow children to access opportunities to develop their learning outside. This includes chalk boards, ride on toys, laminated books and counting displays.

On the whole, resources at the setting are used well to promote children's learning and development, and evidently children enjoy accessing resources which are based upon the weekly pirate theme. Staff offer a very warm and welcoming friendship to the children and are quick to offer comfort to new children when they are first settling in. However, although staff are eager to support children and parents at the beginning of term, on some occasions there are not enough staff available to support the children and parents who need it most. Parents on the whole explain they are very happy with the setting and that their children are well looked after and make progress, although add that limited information is sought from them about children's starting points in learning. Partnerships with other early years settings is also limited as currently discussions with childminders who collect children from the setting are based on discussing care needs, therefore information about children's progress and struggles in learning and development are not actively shared to promote consistency and continuity.

Staff plan activities to support children in their awareness of others and help them

to learn why it is important to respect one another's differences. Opportunities to learn about some different cultures and festivals are offered to children including activities which reflect Chinese New Year and Diwali. Posters are also displayed around the room to depict families of different cultures, although there are limited positive images of people with disabilities. Information about individual children's cultures and religions are sought from parents and staff plan additional activities to recognise these.

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

Children are making sound progress in their learning and development. Staff are aware of children's interests and use these where possible to plan ideas and activities, such as making the role play area into an airport lounge as children show interest in looking up at the planes flying over head. Staff observe children in their activities and these are linked to the early learning goals in each child's learning journeys. Each child is assigned a key-person, who takes responsibility for ensuring that evidence is collected to demonstrate children's achievements. However, the systems in place to use observations to recognise children's next steps in learning are not always effective, with some staff not being able to explain what the key objectives are for specific activities and how it will help individual children to make progress or overcome difficulty.

Information is shared with parents about children's achievements and copies of planning are displayed on the notice board for parents to view. However, as there are limited discussions with parents about children's starting points in learning staff are not always fully aware of how to ensure children are challenged and supported in their individual learning needs as soon as they start attending the setting.

Children enjoy accessing a range of resources and activities, many of which are planned based around a theme. Children especially enjoy helping to make a pirate ship in the role play area and this is a popular addition to the room. Children sit on the ship and row with the oars, keeping in time and developing a sense of rhythm and co-operation with the other children. Other activities such as hunting for buried treasure in the garden are also well received and children work well together to achieve an end goal. Staff remind children about taking in turns and sharing resources and children also remind each other about the rules, such as not throwing sand. Children enjoy accessing the activities on offer and begin to extend their own play and learning opportunities, such as when they carefully fill a bucket with sand and pour it onto a shelf on a ride-on car, concentrating in their efforts. However, this interest is sometimes discouraged by staff reminding children that sand should not be taken out of the sandpit. Therefore the static use of resources sometimes limits opportunities for children to develop their own ideas.

Children are learning how to be safe and the importance of keeping healthy. They enjoy washing their hands using the portable sink and staff effectively encourage them to think about why it is important to have good hygiene routines. Children enthusiastically access the outside area which has recently been developed to

allow play outside in all weathers and cover different areas of learning. Books are accessible to children outside and these have been laminated to encourage children to engage with them. Indoors children enjoy snuggling up in a soft enclosed area with teddies and looking at books together, with staff using this area skillfully to support children who would benefit from some quiet one to one time.

Staff are keen to ensure that children are kept motivated and interested in the activities and demonstrate their understanding of following children's interests. They actively recognise when children are bored or uninterested and quickly adapt activities to re-capture children's attention as they sing rhymes and action songs in the garden together.

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?	3
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	3

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	3
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding	2
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	3
The effectiveness of partnerships	3
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	3

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

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Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	3
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	3

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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