

Chrishall Pre-school

Inspection report for early years provision

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| Unique reference number | 650025 |
| Inspection date | 17/02/2011 |
| Inspector | Veronica Sharpe |
| Setting address | Chrishall Pre-school, Chrishall Village Hall, Royston, Herts, SG8 8QE |
| Telephone number | 07817940813 |
| Email | |
| 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

Chrishall Pre-school opened in 1974 and operates from the village hall adjoining Chrishall Church of England Aided Primary School, Chrishall, near Royston, Hertfordshire. The group is operated as a registered charity by a management committee of parents. A maximum of 16 children may attend the group at any one time. The pre-school is open each weekday during term times from 9am to 12pm. During the summer term the group offers 'rising fives' sessions on Wednesdays and Thursdays from 1pm to 3.30pm. Children have access to an outdoor play area within the school grounds.

The pre-school is registered on the Early Years Register and both the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. There are currently 25 children aged between two-and-a-half and five years on roll. Of these, 19 children receive early years funding. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The setting currently supports a small number of children with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

The nursery employs five staff. Three of the staff, including the manager, hold appropriate early years qualifications. One member of staff is working towards a level 3 qualification. The group is a member of the Pre-school Learning Alliance.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children are involved in a broad range of stimulating activities both indoors and outdoors. Planning systems are generally well established to ensure that all children make good progress towards the early learning goals. Children benefit from healthy snacks and have good opportunities to explore new tastes and textures from around the world. On going self-evaluation enables the setting to provide good quality care and identify areas for future development.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- review display areas in the setting to provide increased opportunities for children to display their own child-initiated art work in order to enhance their self-esteem and sense of belonging
- develop further the effective use of observations to identify what children need to do in order to progress to the next stage of their learning
- help children increase their understanding of safety issues to enable them to talk about danger and how to keep themselves safe. This is with particular reference to outdoor play.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Staff have a good understanding of safeguarding issues. They attend regular training to consolidate their knowledge of child protection issues and review the policies. This ensures they are clear about their responsibilities. Rigorous recruitment procedures ensure adults are suitable to work with the children. Regular parent helpers and other volunteers also undertake the necessary checks so they can take an active part in the sessions. Staff implement daily risk assessments to ensure the premises are safe and secure. They are particularly conscientious about supervision in the outdoor area as it is part of the school grounds and therefore accessed by other adults within the school.

Staff and committee have recently experienced a period of significant change and uncertainty. Recent appointment of a new manager has led to many changes in the way the setting is run. Staff have tackled these changes with confidence and enthusiasm. They have developed good team working, with each member of staff taking a collaborative role in the successful planning and operation of sessions. Staff and committee show a commitment to the success of the setting and are currently engaged in updating their self-evaluation process. Recent introduction of appraisals have enabled staff to assess their own needs and identify further training to increase their confidence. For example, one member of staff is working towards a higher qualification. Strong support from their local authority advisors has given the drive for improvement further impetus.

The pre-school has comprehensive policies and procedures that keep parents well informed about the provision. All necessary documentation is well organised and up-to-date, such as, parental contracts, medical and contact information. This ensures children's individual needs are well met. Parents receive regular newsletters to keep them advised of changes and events and have daily opportunities to speak with the staff. A 'comments' book and a suggestion scheme also enables parents to have their say about the setting. Parents speak warmly about the staff and believe their children are secure and well cared for. Regular questionnaires enable the staff and committee to assess the quality of the provision. The setting works in partnership with the nearby school, enabling children to become familiar with teachers and classrooms. This ensures transition is a positive experience. Partnerships with other carers and providers are developing well; good relationships with nearby pre-schools and nurseries enable staff to share information about children who attend both settings. In addition, staff share training with other settings, which increases their ability to acquire new knowledge. Children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities have good support because staff work with parents and specialist teachers to meet each child's specific needs.

Children benefit from easy access to a broad range of age-appropriate resources that support their learning. Boxes and display units are well organised and clearly labelled so children know where to find things. Staff set out additional planned resources each day, and make them look attractive and inviting so children become eager learners, such as, colourful collage materials with scissors, pencils

and glue. Rooms are cheerfully decorated with colourful wall displays which create a bright and stimulating environment. However, there are few examples of child initiated work, such as arts and crafts, or attempts at emergent writing, which would further increase children's sense of belonging and self-esteem.

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

Staff have a good knowledge of the Early Years Foundation Stage and this enables them to support children well and extend their knowledge. They make good use of spontaneous opportunities, such as comparing the similarities and differences between bagels and doughnuts. Children decide they are both round like a circle, but doughnuts may not have a hole in the middle. Children's individual learning journeys make good use of photographs and comments from staff and parents show what children enjoy and can do. Daily planning of activities take into account children's current interests and home experiences, for example, a trip to a zoo, or dancing lessons. As a result learning is personalised for each child, enabling them to make good progress. Observations are collected but are not always used effectively enough to decide on the next steps in children's learning. However, staff know the children well, which ensures activities offer sufficient challenge.

Children enjoy the 'free-play' environment and are encouraged to be active learners both indoors and outdoors. They access resources confidently and show their independence, for example, as they use scissors to cut shapes for their craft work. Children select books with interest and handle them appropriately, turning pages and following the text with their fingers. They listen attentively to an adult during a storytelling session and enjoy choosing another story for later. Plentiful craft resources enable children to express their imaginations, using glue, natural materials and coloured shapes. They show they can draw beautifully, sometimes marking their work with their names or initial letters, according to their stage of development. The role-play area is well stocked, enabling children to prepare play food or dress up as a princess.

Resources such as timers, electronic toys, hole punchers and calculators introduce children to technology in order to promote their future learning. In addition, they have daily use of computers and competently operate simple games. Books, puzzles and 'small world' toys show positive images of children and families from other countries and cultures, helping children understand about diversity. There are no children on roll at present who have English as an additional language. However, the setting has policies in place. In addition, staff and committee are currently reviewing their ability to offer support to families from other countries and cultures and acquiring useful resources, such as books in other languages.

Children and staff enjoy warm and caring relationships. Staff welcome children into the setting so children settle easily into their activities and soon become engrossed in play. Generally, children's behaviour is good; they share resources well and respond with enthusiasm to staff requests, for example, helping to tidy away resources before they go home. However, they do not always show they know enough about safe practices, for instance, when boisterously riding their bikes and

trikes they run into each other, sometimes unintentionally upsetting other children.

Children eat healthy snacks, such as fruit, vegetables and various breads. Generally, snack time is flexible with children able to choose when to eat and drink. However, at times, they come together to share in special events, or explore food from other lands, such as Chinese spring rolls or American bagels. Children find out the bagels are cinnamon and fruit, and remember that cinnamon smells like Christmas. Staff promote children's understanding as they discuss healthy options and find out if children like or dislike the foods. Drinks are available throughout the session, and staff offer milk and additional water during snack time, ensuring children are well-hydrated. Each child with a food allergy has an individual care plan to ensure each member of staff is well informed about any action to take in an emergency. Good hygiene procedures ensure children learn the benefits of hand washing; visual prompts at the hand basin remind them to use soap and water.

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

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| 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

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| 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

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| 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

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| 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