

# Ickwell Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

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219263

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06/06/2011

**Inspector**

Kelly Eyre

**Setting address**

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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*.

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## Description of the setting

Ickwell Pre-School originally opened 48 years ago and is run by a voluntary management committee. It operates from two rooms in the Village Hall in Ickwell, Bedfordshire. The setting is accessible to all children and they have access to the fully enclosed outdoor play area.

The setting provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-olds. It is open each weekday during term-time only and sessions are from 9.15am to 12.15pm. There are also afternoon sessions on Monday, Wednesday and Thursday and these run from 12.15pm to 3.15pm, with the option of a lunch club between the two sessions on these days. Children may attend for a variety of sessions. The setting is registered on the Early Years Register to provide 30 places and there are currently 52 children on roll who are within this age group. The setting serves a wide catchment area. A small number of children attend other settings such as other local pre-schools and nurseries. The setting currently supports a number of children with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

The setting employs eight members of child care staff. Of these, one holds an appropriate early years qualification at Level 2 and six at Level 3 or above. One staff member has qualified teacher status. The setting receives support from the local authority.

## The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

The excellent commitment to continuously reviewing their work enables the manager and staff to plan relevant improvements and thereby maintain a service which is responsive to children's needs. Good partnerships with parents and other professionals support the ongoing exchange of information and ensure that staff have a thorough understanding of each child's needs. This information is used to make sure that children's needs are consistently met and they are offered appropriate support so that they are meaningfully included. Effective assessment and planning procedures mean that staff are aware of children's current developmental needs and can plan activities to support their development. A key strength is the excellent use of all resources in order to offer children an extended range of activities and learning opportunities.

## What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- develop further the assessment and planning procedures to show how children's next steps are consistently fed into the overall planning in order to provide further experiences which are appropriate to each child's stage of

development.

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

Children's welfare is consistently promoted because staff have attended relevant training and have a thorough understanding of their responsibilities relating to safeguarding children. They are aware of local authority procedures and this area is further supported by a clear written procedure, enabling staff to identify any child at risk and take appropriate action. Stringent checks are carried out to make sure that all staff are suitable to work with children. Thorough risk assessments mean that hazards are minimised and children's safety is promoted. Ongoing explanations from staff and the good use of resources, such as role-play items, enable children to build a clear understanding of safety issues.

The manager and staff demonstrate a genuine warmth and enthusiasm for their work. They have a clear vision for the future development of the setting, securely underpinned by practical action plans that have been informed by feedback from all staff, parents, children and the management committee. The meticulous and honest evaluation of their daily practice supports staff in gaining a thorough overview of the setting and prioritising changes that improve the outcomes for children. For example, recent improvements include new outdoor equipment, offering children further opportunities to use a wider range of resources and thereby promoting their creativity and increasing their confidence to explore and experiment. The exceptionally well-considered use of all resources means that children are offered an extended range of opportunities and their development is promoted. For example, excellent use is made of all training opportunities, with staff feeding new ideas and newly-gained knowledge directly back into the setting. This creates a positive environment, where children are motivated and play happily. Staff make excellent use of all available resources to further support the promotion of children's learning and development. For example, the play areas are well planned and set out each day in order to offer a wide range of play opportunities in all areas of learning.

Staff demonstrate a good understanding of inclusive practice. They review the policies and procedures to ensure that these reflect the needs of the children and their families. Their participation in an inclusion development programme and the use of an equality checklist help to ensure that they are providing a service which is inclusive for all children. Staff work with parents and other professionals to ensure that they have a clear understanding of each child's needs. They then use this information to inform the planning of appropriate activities and support for individual children. Staff's good relationships with parents and carers mean that parents are kept well informed of their child's progress and activities, for example, through regular newsletters and the sharing of children's assessment records. The setting also works well with other people caring for the children. For example, they use a communication book to exchange information with other settings and thereby ensure that children's care is consistent and their development promoted.

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

Children make good progress in their learning because staff have a confident knowledge of the Early Years Foundation Stage. They observe children as they play, assessing their progress and using the majority of this information to inform the planning of activities, thus supporting children's individual development. However, this is not fully promoted because the assessment and planning procedures do not clearly show how children's next developmental steps are consistently fed into the daily planning. Children are encouraged to develop their own play and staff make informed decisions about when to intervene in order to extend children's thinking and understanding. This supports children in playing an active role in their learning and in developing a positive attitude to this.

The setting's thoughtful procedures support the development of children's social and communication skills and enable them to feel valued. For example, children take home 'Boris the Bear' and make a record of this, which they later share with the staff and children. Good staff interaction further supports children in developing their communication skills. For example, children use language confidently, explaining their ideas and discussing the details of their role play scenarios. The setting's good forward planning means that children are offered additional opportunities. These include visitors to the setting who bring pets, bake bread with the children, provide music and movement sessions and read stories.

Accessible resources mean that children are able to make independent choices and also extend their play. For example, children at a craft table draw pictures and go on to choose further resources such as scissors, glue and card, in order to adapt and enhance their work. The thoughtful provision of resources also means that children are able to explore the uses of information and communication technology and thus gain valuable skills for the future. For example, they use a computer, cameras, calculators and interactive toys. Practical opportunities are also offered that encourage children to be active learners and experiment. For example, they work with staff to set up their own 'Space Centre', utilising this area to experiment with torches, read associated stories and engage in role play.

Children are gaining a clear understanding of appropriate behaviour as staff act as good role models, remaining calm, attentive, polite and modelling good manners. They explain to children the implications of their behaviour and encourage them to work together to resolve any disputes. Children's understanding of diversity is promoted as they access relevant resources and participate in activities and discussions. For example, daily discussions and structured sessions offer children and parents the opportunity to share their beliefs and traditions in a meaningful way. The good procedures for working with parents and carers mean that children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who use English as an additional language are offered appropriate support to enable them to participate meaningfully. For example, staff make use of visual prompts and are introducing Makaton sign language to support communication.

Children are encouraged to understand the relevance of healthy lifestyles. For

example, their awareness of the importance of a healthy diet is promoted through daily discussions, simple cooking activities and growing their own vegetables during the summer months. Staff gently encourage children to share their ideas and work together, enabling them to gain further skills for the future and to extend their learning. For example, children have time to play independently with play dough before a staff member encourages them to work together to roll the dough into the biggest piece they can form; the children quickly become absorbed in this, discussing the changing shape of the dough and going on to develop an associated role-play scenario.

## 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

<b>How well does the setting meet the needs of the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?</b>	2
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	1

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

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	1
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	1
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	1
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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### Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

<b>Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	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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