

Little Windmills Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspector	Carole Lyne

Setting address	Reach Village Centre, Fair Green, Reach, Cambridge, Cambridgeshire, CB25 0JD
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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*.

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Description of the setting

Little Windmills Pre-School is run by a voluntary management committee made up of parents of children at the pre-school. It opened in 1989 and operates from Reach Village Centre in Reach, Cambridgeshire. Children come from the local area. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

A maximum of 25 children may attend the pre-school at any one time. The pre-school is open each weekday from 9.15am until 11.45am, during term times only and on Mondays until 2.15pm, when children bring a packed lunch. There are currently 18 children aged from two to under five years on roll. Of these, 14 children are in receipt of funding for early education. The pre-school employs five members of staff and of these, two, including the manager, hold appropriate level 3 early years qualifications and one is due to complete her level 3 diploma.

The setting receives support from the Early Years Partnership and is a member of the Pre-School Learning Alliance.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is satisfactory.

Overall children are making satisfactory progress in their learning. Children's welfare and health and safety are well supported because all of the staff have a good knowledge of safeguarding and take positive steps to ensure the children have a safe environment in which to play. Children are happy, content and developing good self-esteem, however, the organisation of some activities impacts on behaviour. Planning is still being developed to ensure the learning needs of all children are met and observations are used effectively to inform planning. Staff are developing good partnerships with parents and carers and there are strong links with the local school which supports children's transitions. The leader and the deputy are meeting regularly to reflect on the practice and making continuous changes to improve outcomes for all children.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- develop observations and assessments of children's learning
- develop planning to ensure that observations are used to plan activities effectively for the next steps in children's learning and that planning takes into account children's particular interests and stages of development.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Staff demonstrate a clear understanding of their responsibilities for safeguarding the welfare of young children and there are suitable policies and procedures in place. Vigilant risk assessments of all areas used by children are carried out each day as the building is shared with other users. Staff monitor the arrival and departure of children and the building is very secure. This provides a very safe environment in which children can enjoy their play. The setting adequately promotes equality and diversity and children's progress in relation to their starting points is satisfactory.

The room is set up in a very inviting way each morning with a wide range of bright and stimulating resources which are very accessible to children. Resources are rotated very effectively over a four week period to ensure they are used appropriately to support children's learning. The children come happily into the setting and quickly settle independently at an activity of their choice. All children are very engaged and the behaviour is good. At this time, staff are very effective in supporting children's learning by talking to them, encouraging children to explore the resources and asking open-ended questions to extend their learning. Children have free-flow access to the secure outdoor area, which is also set up with a wide range of resources. However, after snack, the children are not as engaged in activities and this has an impact on behaviour with staff having to support some children to share resources. The leader and the deputy are aware that the planning of the routines in the setting does not take into account children's concentration levels and are discussing ways to improve this part of the session.

The leader is very aware of the strengths and weaknesses of the setting to drive improvement. The Quality Framework action plans show the setting is beginning to develop their observations and assessments to meet the needs of all children. They now meet regularly to discuss children's progress which has a positive impact on children's learning and the activities provided. Observations are now more effective, but they are not using these fully to plan the next steps in children's learning. Planning is also an area that is developing. At present the planning is linked more to the deployment of resources each day. It does not clearly include the particular interests of children or the learning intentions of particular activities. The setting has very positive relationships with parents and carers. As a result of a recent questionnaire, there is now a full 'welcome pack' with more information on the Early Years Foundation Stage. Parents are also given more opportunities to add to their children's records. Parents report that they are very happy with the pre-school and staff are friendly and approachable. Partnerships with the local primary school are very strong which ensures an easy transition to school. There are frequent visits to the school and the teacher also visits the setting to talk to the children and observe them. Also the setting has strong working relationships with other professionals who help support children. The staff are receiving support from the local authority to reflect on practice in a more formal manner. Effective action plans are written which have supported staff in driving changes to improve outcomes for children.

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

Children are helped to feel secure in their surroundings and have staff looking after them who are caring, kind and considerate. Children are developing confidence as they move busily around the environment, deciding what to do both inside and outdoors. They are also confident to approach staff for support or comfort as seen when a child fell over. Staff ensure that the children are engaged in activities, particularly at the beginning of the session and praise their efforts and achievements, for example, sharing a book with a friend and finishing the game of dominoes. This raises children's self-esteem and willingness to try new activities. Children generally behave well in the setting but this is not consistent throughout the session. The good range of resources and activities available does mean children are making steady progress in their learning.

Children confidently use scissors as the staff give them opportunities to practise their skills using a range of tools. They understand how sharp tools can be, for example, a child using a saw told me that his dad uses a big one to cut wood, but he is only allowed to use a toy one until he gets bigger. Most children show good awareness of what constitutes a healthy lifestyle. They adopt good personal hygiene routines as they wash hands before snack, fully understanding that it is to remove dirt and germs before they eat. They also discuss healthy eating whilst having snack and looking at what they have each brought. Children have adequate opportunities to be physically active outside and indoors and are reminded that fresh air is good for them. One child came in to fetch her coat because she was cold outside but wanted to continue to enjoy the activities on offer in the outdoor environment.

Most children's communication skills are developing well. They enjoy listening to stories and are generally engaged. This is giving them the confidence to choose books to share with friends in the setting and retell familiar stories. Some children are developing a real love of books demonstrated by a child taking a book to the top of the climbing frame and sitting down to read it to herself. Children also take books home to share their learning with parents. Children are beginning to recognise their names as they self-register on arrival. Staff interact well with children as they sit with them at activities, for example, a child who was sitting quietly doing some creative work became very communicative when the staff fetched some stencils of different animals that she knew interested him. He then used this to develop his art work. Children are confident to approach adults to talk about their home lives and they listen well. The children are developing good imaginations whilst playing in the role play, for example, a child pushing a trolley around says it is full of items from the supermarket because he has to make dinner for everyone. Children are beginning to link sounds to letters particularly the initial letters in their names and confidently talk about these. They learn about colours, size and numbers and some children are using mathematical language appropriately in their play. Children learn about simple technology as they access a range of toys, such as a computer, tills and telephones. Throughout the activities, staff are beginning to make observations of children's achievements but have yet

to use these effectively in planning the next steps for children.

The children are developing a strong sense of community as they participate in local events, for example, they help plant a new orchard in the village and make a scarecrow for the local Scarecrow festival.

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	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	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	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	3
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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	3
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	3

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