

Benson Community Preschool

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	134300
Inspection date	15/02/2011
Inspector	Jill Milton
Setting address	The Youth Hall, Oxford Road, Benson, Wallingford, Oxfordshire, OX10 6LX
Telephone number	01491 824042
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

Benson Community Pre-School registered in 1984 and is a voluntary group managed by a committee. It is located in the village of Benson and the intake of children is from the surrounding rural communities. The pre-school uses rooms in the Benson Youth Hall and there is access to an enclosed outdoor play area. The preschool is registered on the Early Years Register and both the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. A maximum of 40 children in the early years age range may attend at any one time and there are currently 36 children on roll in this age range. The pre-school is in receipt of funding for the provision of free early education for children aged three and four years. It opens on weekdays in school term times with a variety of sessions over the week. Sessions run from 9.00am to 12.00 noon on each morning, with extended days until 3.00pm on Tuesday and Wednesday. The pre-school supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and children for whom English is an additional language. There are seven members of staff employed and all hold an appropriate early years qualification. The manager is a qualified nursery and infant teacher. There are strong links with Benson Primary School.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

The good working relationships between staff and the committee are contributing to the success of this pre-school. There is a positive outlook to continually improving the setting and action plans are in place to address areas requiring attention. Overall, the children are progressing well with their learning and development. The partnerships that staff build with parents and others caring for the children are excellent. Staff adopt an effective policy on inclusion, which helps them to meet the needs of each child in their care.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- strengthen links between observations of children's development and planning how to support their next steps in learning
- improve the presentation of some resources to enable children to select more items for themselves.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The committee follows safe recruitment guidelines when taking on new members of staff. Adults working with the children undergo checking procedures and volunteers are not permitted to be in unsupervised contact with children. Staff are able to readily recall from training, indicators that would cause them concern for a child's welfare and they understand how to act in such a situation. The staff maintain a safe environment for the children on a day-to-day basis with careful checklists of areas where children play. They add to a written record of risk assessment when a new issue arises. They help children learn about safety through regular emergency evacuations of the building to a safe collection point. Staff carefully monitor the exits when families are arriving or departing from the building and they ensure passwords for collection of children are updated.

The staff put a good deal of effort into creating a pleasant environment each day for the children. They ensure that children can participate in activities to support all areas of learning. The staff respond positively to children's interests and extend their learning by bringing out of the storeroom new items as the session progresses. However, there are currently limited opportunities for the children to self-select items from well-labelled storage areas within their reach. Staff demonstrate a good understanding of the needs of individual children. The well-qualified team is able to provide effective support to children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. They help children develop respect for others through displays and activities of different celebrations and events during the year. They are adding more resources to promote diversity in a positive way. Parents receive encouragement to share their knowledge and skills too, through the parent rota or by joining the active committee. The partnerships that staff build with families is excellent. Parents speak well of the pre-school and are keen to add comments in a compliments book. There is an outstanding emphasis on sharing children's learning, through book loaning and information recorded in each child's diary that highlights areas of learning they particularly enjoy. Staff value the feedback they receive from parents through regular questionnaires and comprehensive analysis of this information helps staff plan improvements. Excellent partnerships are developing with the local primary school and this helps to aid the transition to school for many of the children. The pre-school children share events with the schoolchildren when their topics coincide, such as a visit by local fire fighters. Staff are aware that some of their children are also cared for by childminders and sharing of information through the letter of the week, for example, enables other carers to support the children's learning too.

The pre-school has undergone some management changes recently and is settling down with the new team. The staff have a very good range of professional qualifications between them and they attend further training courses to supplement their knowledge. There is a positive attitude to improvement and staff are keen to address areas of weakness. They are able to evaluate accurately their own practice and are putting into place improvements linked to helping children achieve. The outdoor area is now a place that children can use safely on a free

flow basis and this is enabling them to access more activities in the fresh air.

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

Children appear happy and settled at pre-school and they soon become engaged in play when their parents and carers leave. They are developing good relationships with their peers and there are many examples of co-operative play. Now and then some play can be slightly boisterous, although staff are quick to intervene and explain why some actions are not desirable. Children are learning to link these messages to keeping safe, such as a discussion about why they must not throw toys. Staff are using different techniques to meet the needs of different age groups and abilities and are starting, for example to split children into two groups for story time so that all are able to gain from the session. Children are progressing well with key skills in communication, language and literacy. They enjoy mark making using different materials and they are learning about phonic sounds of letters. Staff build links with home learning too as children bring in objects from home beginning with the chosen letter of the week.

Children are learning to solve problems, such as working out if there are enough cups for snack time or threading beads following a pattern. They enjoy sitting together to eat healthy snacks and quench their thirst and they are aware of good hygiene routines for hand washing before eating or after playing in the garden. Children develop good levels of independence as they choose from healthy options and they show confidence at cutting their own fruit. The option to play outdoors in the fresh air tempts many children to take part in energetic play. The staff are expanding the opportunities for outdoor learning as children use a large chalk board or spend time digging in the flower beds. They learn about planting and growing over the year, providing helpful support to their knowledge and understanding of the world. Staff are good at extending children's curiosity, for example by suggesting worms found in the garden may like to be placed in the home for worms indoors. Simple toys for exploration such as magnifying lenses and magnets interest the children. Staff use effective questioning to help children explore ideas. Children also use a varied range of resources that introduce them to technology, building on their skills for the future.

Staff plan the weekly activities to provide effective coverage of the six areas of learning. They use their established key person system to collate observations of the children's achievements and these dated records demonstrate a good overall rate of progress. Staff are exploring ways to use observations to plan the next steps in learning in a consistent and manageable way. Currently these links are not fully in place. They successfully share developmental information with parents. Children know the names of the staff and they spend a pleasant time playing with others. Older children like to play imaginatively with their friends and use dressing up clothes and musical instruments to extend their ideas. They experience textures such as modelling materials, sand and water. Celebrations provide them with opportunities to extend their understanding of the wider world and to share special

days with their parents such as decorating heart shapes on Valentine's Day. Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities receive good support to their needs and are fully included in the range of daily activities.

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	1
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	1

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