

Smarties Pre School and Out of School Club

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspector	Alison Reeves
Setting address	The Community Building, Steeple Morden CofE Primary School, 7 Hay Street, Steeple Morden, ROYSTON, Hertfordshire, SG8 0PD
Telephone number	07952100208
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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*.

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

Smarties Pre-School and Out of School Club re-opened in 2011 following a move to new purpose built premises and an amalgamation of two settings. They operate from the community rooms in Steeple Morden Primary School, Cambridgeshire. Children have access to a secure outdoor area. The pre-school is open each weekday from 9am to 1pm on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday and 9am to 2pm on Wednesday. The out of school club is open each weekday from 3pm to 6pm during term time. They offer holiday clubs depending on demand from 8.30am to 5.30pm.

The setting is registered on the Early Years Register and both the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. A maximum of 24 children may attend the setting at any one time. There are currently 33 children aged from two years and three months to rising five on roll at the pre-school, and eight children within the early years age group at the out of school club attending various sessions. The settings support children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and welcomes children with English as an additional language.

There are 10 members of staff working with the children including the managers, two support staff and a student. Most members of staff have relevant early years qualifications. One manager is working towards Early Years Professional Status.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Smarties Pre-School and Out of School Club supports children in the Early Years Foundation Stage successfully. Children's specific needs are met and individuality is celebrated. Relationships with parents, the school and other settings are effective and this ensures high quality continuity of care. This means children are making good progress in their learning and development. Staff reflect on their practice, seek the views of their customers and are beginning to develop action plans to secure further improvements.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- develop further the systems for self-evaluation to identify your setting's strengths and priorities for development that will improve the quality of the provision for all children.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Safeguarding within the setting is excellent. Staff are knowledgeable and confident in the procedures to follow if any concerns about children's well-being are raised. This means children are very well protected. Recruitment procedures are robust and this ensures staff are thoroughly vetted before they begin unsupervised working with the children.

The new premises are well maintained and staff have detailed risk assessments for all areas and resources used by children. The outside area and the regular walks are also risk assessed to make sure potential hazards are identified and steps can be taken to minimize the likelihood of accidents. Consequently children are kept safe whilst enjoying the freedom to explore interesting and exciting activities.

Staff knowledge of the Early Years Foundation Stage, particularly in the pre-school, is excellent and as a result children are extremely well supported in making progress towards the early learning goals. In the out of school club staff have sufficient understanding and use this with their knowledge of playwork to provide a good range of recreational activities that support children in continuing their learning. The environment is well organised and accessible; children are free to select the resources they need to support their learning.

Staff evaluate the activities and organisation regularly. They are keen to hear the views of those who use the service and have made changes in response to parents' and children's comments. As a result some staff are setting ambitious targets. Following the amalgamation of the committee from both groups work has been done to draw up a single set of policies that apply across the board. They have yet to look at self-evaluation as a whole and bring together action plans that show what and how they intend to improve the provision across the board for all children.

Partnerships with parents are highly effective. Communication is excellent and several parents raised this as a significant strength. Parents and carers spoken to were extremely positive about their experience at the setting. They feel well informed about their children's learning and progress. Parents appreciate the regular feedback. Parents say 'I feel that the staff really know my child.' At the out of school club parent feedback was equally positive, 'The club provides what I need, a safe happy place for my child.' Relationships with other settings including the school are equally strong and as a result children receive excellent continuity of care and their welfare and learning are effectively supported by joined up working.

Staff offer sensitive support to children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. Activities are adapted to ensure all children who wish to participate can do so at their own level. This means children are suitably challenged and fully included. Policies on equality and inclusion support staff well in meeting the needs of all the children.

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

Children feel secure, they separate from parents and carers easily because of the close relationships with supportive and caring staff. They are very confident to try activities because staff are good at making children feel they are able to succeed. Children use small tools with care as they prepare the fruit for snack.

Children's good health is promoted effectively by staff who provide lots of outdoor play where children engage with the local environment. Great use is made of the small outdoor area, the local play area and the playground. This means children are physically active and recognise this as important to their own health. Children's nutritional needs and individual dietary requirements are met and involvement with healthy eating schemes help to develop children's awareness and understanding of what constitutes a healthy lifestyle. Good hygiene is communicated successfully to children in both groups and this minimizes the spread of infection and cross contamination.

Children thrive in the lively setting and enjoy a wealth of interesting and challenging activities. Children are good communicators and use language for talking and thinking well. They love to look at books, and share stories and experiences. As a result children have good levels of concentration and are developing a wide vocabulary. Emergent writing is popular with many children particularly keen to put their name on their work. They are confident in the use of numbers as labels and for counting. Children play a significant role within the local community, visiting the post office to use the photo copier and going for walks around the village. Children's natural curiosity is supported effectively and this means they enjoy making discoveries about the properties of the natural world. Children are enjoying the garden with the planting areas, greenhouse and mature trees. They feed the birds and observe their habits. Children are imaginative and creative, they use art materials to turn natural objects into decorations and use fabric to create dens. The out of school club has a recreational focus, nevertheless, children enjoy worthwhile activities that support them in making progress.

Staff in the pre-school frequently observe children as they play to assess achievements and identify next steps. This means individual children always have worthwhile and challenging play opportunities to stimulate their interest and secure further learning. The exceptionally well-documented cycle of observation, assessment and planning means children are making very good progress towards the early learning goals in all six areas of learning.

Children's behaviour is very good because the staff give clear explanations and set appropriate boundaries. They develop a respect for themselves and others. This is shown through their cooperation and support for one another across the age range. Effective use is made of resources and activities, including special visitors to help develop children's understanding of diversity and the wider world.

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	1
The effectiveness of safeguarding	1
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	1
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