

St Leonards Pre-school

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspector Susan Ennis

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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*.

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

St. Leonards Pre-school registered in 1993. It operates from one main room in a community building in the village of Brington, Cambridgeshire. The pre-school serves the local area and has strong links with the school. The pre-school is accessible to all children and there is a fully enclosed area available for outdoor play.

The pre-school opens Monday to Friday during school term time. Sessions are from 8.45am until 11.15pm, with lunch club from 11.15am to 12.15pm. Afternoon sessions are from 12.15pm to 2.45pm. Children are able to attend for a variety of sessions. A maximum of 30 children may attend the pre-school at any one time. There are currently 41 children attending who are within the Early Years Foundation Stage. The pre-school is registered on the Early Years Register and provides funded early education for two, three- and four-year-olds. It supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and children who speak English as an additional language.

The pre-school employs nine members of childcare staff. Of these, five hold appropriate early years qualifications. The pre-school receives support from the local authority.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Staff create a welcoming and safe environment in which all children thrive. Planning is flexible, taking into account children's likes and dislikes, enabling them to enjoy their time at the setting and make satisfactory progress in their learning and development. The staff build trusting relationships with parents and carers and keep them well informed about the day-to-day running of the pre-school. Senior staff lead a culture of reflective practice where all staff work together, to review the pre-school's strengths and areas for improvement and are committed to continuous improvement for all children and their families.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- develop further the systematic use of starting points, observations and assessments to plan the next steps in a child's developmental progress and regularly share this information with parents
- develop further the use of reflective practice and the involvement of users of the setting in the process.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The effective implementation of the pre-school's comprehensive policies and procedures support the daily running of the setting and ensure that children are offered a safe and secure environment. For example, there are robust procedures for checking that staff are suitable to work with the children and a rolling program of training to further increase their childcare knowledge. They also have an appropriate understanding of the procedures to follow relating to safeguarding children ensuring that their welfare is promoted and that they are fully protected at all times. Staff further protect children's safety by taking effective steps to minimise any hazards. They carry out daily safety checks of the areas used by the children and regularly complete comprehensive risk assessments. They are very vigilant about visitors to the setting and monitor the main entrance throughout the session. Practical procedures also protect the children when on outings. For example, children hold onto a handled rope and staff explain to them that they must not let go of it. Children learn to put their hand up if they need some help and to stop if they hear a car.

The pre-school effectively promotes equality and diversity enabling them to offer a service that is inclusive for all children and their families. Staff work closely with the parents to ensure that they understand each child's background, needs and beliefs. For example, they ask parents for familiar words in children's home language to help the children settle and feel secure and encourage them to share their celebrations of festivals with the children. For example, during Thanksgiving some parents help the children make pumpkin muffins and encouraged them to colour in pictures of turkeys. The pre-school actively obtains resources that the children can relate to. For example, they provide dual language books that the children and parents can share. The pre-school also provides additional staff to support the children to play along side their peers. Staff help children learn and understand about the society in which they live. For example, by celebrating festivals, such as, Diwali and Chinese New Year and providing resources, such as, dressing-up clothes and play figures reflecting other cultures and those with disabilities.

Children's individual development is positively promoted because the setting has sound procedures in place to support, monitor and evaluate their progress. The interesting range of available resources is actively used and the inclusive, child-friendly environment is conducive to children's learning. For example, low-level storage units encourage children to freely choose what to play with and child-sized furniture ensures that they can all sit comfortably while they play. They also make good use of the outdoor play area which is available on a daily basis to encourage their physical and independence skills.

Effective links with parents, carers and other providers positively promotes continuity of care and education for all the children. Parents are kept well informed about the setting's policies and procedures and good practice. All relevant information is shared with them on induction including the complaints procedure and information about the Early Years Foundation Stage. They build relationships

with their child's key worker and can see their child's development file at any time. However, this is an area for improvement to ensure that parents are fully involved in their children's learning and development. Wider partnership working is encouraged as the setting builds effective relationships with the other agencies and schools in the area. Children are invited to the local school to play in the grounds and the reception teacher visits the pre-school on a regular basis to build children's confidence in the transition to school. The pre-school shares relevant information where possible and works together to provide a consistent quality of care for all the children.

Staff show a genuine desire to promote the best care and opportunities for children and are committed to sustainability. They monitor the setting continually and make plans for improvement. For example, they applied for and have been awarded a grant to make an area of the pre-school into a sensory garden for the children to enjoy. They have started to evaluate their practice to help them highlight their strengths and areas for improvement. However, users of the pre-school are not currently fully involved in this process meaning that any feedback, views or ideas they may have are not being included.

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

Children are offered generally stimulating opportunities to help them progress and develop across all areas of learning. Information is gained from parents about children's home lives and their likes and dislikes. However, as limited information is gained about children's developmental starting points, this information is not used to inform initial assessments. Staff record children's attainments through use of observation and assessment. Each child has a development book which highlights the activities they have enjoyed and the areas of learning linked to them. However, as the system currently in place does not consistently identify children's next steps or demonstrate how these are incorporated into planning children's development is not optimally promoted.

Children's learning is positively encouraged through a range of adult-led and child-initiated activities. Flexible planning ensures that children's interests are taken into account and staff are confident in changing an activity if the children's interest in it starts to wane. The staff also make positive use of daily activities to extend children's learning. For example, during circle time children develop their spatial awareness as they sit on mats on the floor ensuring that they do not squash the person next to them. They are encouraged to put their hands in their laps and are praised for sitting 'Beautifully'. Staff develop their sensory and language skills by asking 'Can you find your eyes? What do we do with our eyes?' Children confidently reply 'We look'. They go on to talk about their 'listening ears' and 'touching hands' saying 'We use our hands for picking up and playing with our toys'. Children develop their thought for others as they are encouraged to welcome a new child to the pre-school and to help them with getting to know the routine. Each child is welcomed in turn building their confidence and sense of belonging and children enjoy saying 'Bonjour' to children who also speak French. Staff encourage children's name recognition by holding up name cards for them to

identify. Staff support some of the children by sounding out the first letter of their name. Children identify a job that they would like to do, for example, opening the cafe for snack or counting how many children are present, and place their card next to their choice. Staff adapt circle time so that children are not sitting for too long by, for example, moving discussion about the month and date to the afternoon session.

Children enjoy their time at the setting, forging friendships with the staff and each other. Their behaviour is good as they follow the positive role modelling of the staff and learn the consequences of their actions. For example, they are shown some pieces of puzzle that have been scribbled on. Staff explain that this makes them sad and sensitively remind the children where they can correctly use the pens.

Children's health and welfare are actively promoted as the staff take effective steps to minimise the spread of infection and develop children's understanding of healthy living. For example, they learn to wash their hands before and after eating and discuss why this is important. Children are encouraged to help themselves to the variety of fruits provided for snack and to pour out their own drinks, building their confidence and independence as they do so. Staff also support the parents understanding of healthy eating by giving advice on the suitable content for children's packed lunches and the amounts that the children can eat. Children are also learning about their own safety as they are encouraged to, for example, sit on the sofa rather than climb on it and to walk when inside instead of running.

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	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

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
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	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