

Chestnuts Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspector	Susan May
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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

Chestnuts Pre-school originally opened in 1984. It occupies its own self-contained premises in a residential area of Woosehill in Berkshire. Children have access to two playrooms and a fully enclosed outside play area. The pre-school is a community group, managed by committee, whose members comprise of parents of children attending the group. The preschool is registered for 26 children on the Early Years Register. They are also registered on the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. Children attend from the Woosehill area and tend to move on to Hawthorn School.

Sessions are held Monday to Friday during term-time only, from 8.45 am to 11.45 am and 12.20 pm to 3.20 pm. A lunch club operates between these hours on Mondays and Thursdays. Children may attend for a variety of sessions. There are currently 67 children on roll in the early years age group, of whom 30 are in receipt of nursery education funding. The pre-school welcomes children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language or are bilingual.

There are 10 members of staff who work with the children, all of whom work a variety of sessions throughout the week. There are six staff members who hold appropriate early years qualifications and one is currently attending relevant training. The setting's manager is currently studying for an Early Years degree.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is outstanding.

The pre-school is extremely well organised, with support for children's individual welfare and development needs supported by highly skilled staff. Children benefit greatly from the pre-school's highly stimulating play environment, with the outdoor area reflecting the excellent learning opportunities provided indoors as superb resources are available throughout. Children's progress is exceptionally well supported by a range of highly challenging and well planned activities, with many opportunities for child-led play. The pre-school has established close links with other carers, early years practitioners and health professionals to enable all children to reach their full potential. Strong relationships with parents provide coherence and cohesion as parents are encouraged to extend learning at home. The pre-school is highly confident in its use of self-evaluation and promoting improvement. Staff are strongly committed to maintaining high quality childcare and learning.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To further improve the high quality early years provision the registered person

should consider:

- supporting the important relationships with parents by offering further information about extending learning at home.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The pre-school is a long established childcare setting, with a well trained and experienced staff. The strong staff team are committed to providing quality care and have worked together well to raise standards. Stringent recruitment systems are in place to ensure all staff are suitable, appropriately vetted and qualified. Children are effectively safeguarded within the pre-school by the vigilant and well-organised security measures in place. A rolling programme of training ensures staff have a consistent awareness of safeguarding practice and procedures. Effective staff appraisal systems identify both the pre-school and individual staff training needs and staff regularly complete in house training and attend local authority courses. To support effective leadership and management the pre-school recently completed a quality assurance scheme with Wokingham Borough Council the results of which reflect the high quality care and learning opportunities they offer.

An outstanding feature of the pre-school is the exciting and highly motivating learning environment. Children make good use of well presented play resources that provide opportunities for all children to learn through their play. Children are consistently encouraged to explore the play environment and create their own play and learning. The pre-school makes excellent use of its outdoor area for a wide range of learning experiences and the overall accessibility and variety of toys and resources provided, has a significantly high impact on children's development and learning.

Staff know each child and their family circumstance well, encourage each child to recognise their own unique qualities, with good systems in place to ensure each child feels a sense of belonging and is able to take part fully in the provision. Inclusion is threaded through all aspects of the pre-school and children are effectively provided with activities to help them learn about other cultures and people's differences. There are highly effective partnerships between staff, parents and their children and external agencies to ensure all children reach their full potential. Staff work closely with local school staff to ensure that the transition from pre-school to school is sensitively handled and children are well prepared for the next step in their education. The pre-school's partnership with parents is highly organised from initial home visits to sharing the well presented information on their children's development and learning progress. Parents are requested to reinforce children's learning in the pre-school through some related activities at home, this has been recognised as an area for development, with further information made available to parents to support extended learning at home.

The pre-school staff show increasing confidence in their application of reflective practice and self-evaluation. The staff have successfully completed a self-evaluation document, which has a full and detailed account of areas identified for

development. Senior staff show a strong ability to guide and oversee all aspects of practice and the maintenance of quality within the setting ensuring that the organisation and management of the pre-school is highly effective and promotes children's progress and achievement within an excellent programme of play and learning.

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

Children achieve well in the child-orientated environment where staff skilfully extend their learning through open ended questions and provision of activities that support children's interests. The pre-school staff provide an excellent balance between supporting child-led free play activities and more focused group learning sessions. A strength of the provision is its observation and assessment systems that outline individual children's learning and progress through the development stages. Well detailed folders are kept for each child with input from parents well used and included in the children's records of achievements providing the basis of future planning for children's next steps.

Staff are highly effective in encouraging children's independence and supporting their confidence providing considerate care, which helps individual children feel included and able to enjoy their play. Consistent support is provided to encourage children's social learning and their ability to share and take turns. The staff give careful consideration to children's safety at all times and children demonstrate a growing awareness of keeping themselves safe, for example, when using knives at snack time they follow safety rules, telling a member of staff they must not touch the blade or they may cut themselves. Staff promote children's understanding of their own self-care and the importance of good health, through extremely good hygiene routines, frequent opportunities for fresh air and nutritious snacks, often from fruit and vegetables the children have grown themselves. Drinking water is freely available. Parents and visitors make regular presentations to the children to widen their awareness and interests such as visits from a doctor, police and firemen. Outings within the area to the garden centre to buy plants for the sensory garden and a visit to a residential home for the elderly help children find out about the local community. Children have opportunity to find out about the wider world as they celebrate festivals and events that are important to them and their families.

Staff do excellent work to provide positive learning outcomes for all ages attending. Children's communication and their use of speech and language is actively promoted through discussion and phonics sessions and they have many opportunities for mark making and developing their writing. Quiet areas throughout the pre-school provides opportunities for children to look at books on their own, while group sessions allow children to take a more active part in stories. Staff are attentive in promoting children's problem solving and learning about numbers and size is well featured in everyday events. Children's creative development is well promoted as they have access to a variety of materials with which to paint, make models, glue and stick, enabling them to to explore their

imagination and creativity. Children are given frequent opportunities to be expressive as they take part in role-play activities, singing and action rhymes. Children have access to computer opportunities to use everyday technology in their play as they access simple effect, games and equipment.

Children use the pre-school's well prepared play environment with confidence and become involved in frequent child-led play. Staff are highly supportive of the children's ideas and successfully encourage their imaginative instincts. For example, children decide they want to make a den indoors, staff provide several large pieces of material and children use their own initiative and problem-solving skills to make a den under a table, taking a torch with them so they can see in the dark. Children's physical development benefits from many opportunities to be active; children enjoy climbing, balancing and building structures using construction both indoors and out. Children develop close relationships with staff and each other, inviting adults into their games and playing alongside each other well. Children are lively, but at times when they are required, for example, at circle time and mealtimes behave extremely well, listening to the adults and each other without interrupting, taking turns to speak, show respect and care for each other and clearly enjoy the social occasion.

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?	1
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	1

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
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	1
The effectiveness of safeguarding	1
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	1
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	1
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Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	1
The extent to which children feel safe	1
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	1
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	1

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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