

Amphill Pre- school (Jack and Jill)

Inspection report for early years provision

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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

Ampthill Pre-school (Jack and Jill) has been open for over 30 years. It is run by a voluntary management committee and operates from a single-storey building close to the centre of Ampthill in Bedfordshire. Children have access to the fully enclosed outdoor play area.

The setting receives funding for early education. It is open each weekday during term-time only and sessions are from 9am to 12 noon and 12.15pm to 3.15pm. The setting is registered on the Early Years Register to provide 26 places and there are currently 71 children on roll who are within this age group. The setting serves a wide catchment area. A small number of children attend other settings, such as, childminders and other pre-schools. The setting currently supports a number of children with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

The setting is also registered to offer care to children aged over five years. This provision is registered by Ofsted on both the voluntary and compulsory parts of the Childcare Register. Children occupying these places share the same facilities as the children in the early years age range. There are currently no children on roll in this age range.

There are nine staff members, eight of whom hold relevant childcare qualifications.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

The setting has a positive attitude to self-evaluation, supported by effective procedures for the continuous review of their work. This enables them to develop clear action plans and implement improvements, thereby providing a service which is responsive to children's needs. Staff work well with parents and carers, gaining a thorough knowledge of each child's needs. They can, therefore, ensure that these are consistently met and children are offered appropriate support to participate in activities and play opportunities. Children are meaningfully involved in determining many of the activities and the use of resources, therefore, promoting their sense of belonging and self-worth.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- develop further the use of the self-evaluation process as the basis of ongoing review of practice
- develop further the planning and assessment procedures to show how activities are adapted and extended and how children's next steps are identified and fed into the overall planning in order to provide further experiences which are appropriate to each child's stage of development.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children's welfare is consistently promoted because staff have attended appropriate training and have a good understanding of their responsibilities relating to safeguarding children. This is supported by a clear written procedure, enabling staff to identify children at risk and take appropriate action. Stringent checks are carried out to make sure that all staff are suitable to work with children. Thorough risk assessments mean that hazards are minimised and children's safety is promoted. Children are building a good understanding of safety issues as staff offer them clear explanations. For example, they discuss the safe use of cooking implements as part of their preparation for cooking activities.

The manager and staff have a clear, realistic vision for the future. The ongoing review of practice means that staff have an accurate picture of their strengths and weaknesses and can prioritise changes that improve the outcomes for children. For example, recent changes include the increased involvement of children in selecting and setting out resources, thus promoting their self-esteem and independence. However, the self-evaluation process is not fully utilised to inform the overall review of daily practice and to evaluate the impact of any changes made. Staff work well as a team, helping to ensure that children's care is consistent and they are offered appropriate support. Additional resources are used well to promote children's learning and development. For example, staff utilise community facilities, such as, the library and local gardens in order to offer children further opportunities.

Staff demonstrate a clear understanding of anti-discriminatory practice. They ensure that the setting's policies and procedures are appropriate and consistently implemented, supporting them in providing a service which is inclusive for all children. They work closely with parents to ensure that they have a good understanding of each child's background and needs, taking these into account when planning activities. Staff maintain good relationships with parents and carers, enabling them to exchange information and ensure that children are consistently offered appropriate support. Parents are kept well informed of their child's progress and activities, for example, through newsletters, discussions with staff and the regular sharing of children's assessment records. The setting also works well with other professionals. For example, they have good links with local schools and can, therefore, work with them to prepare children for this transition.

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

Children make good progress in their learning and development because staff have a clear understanding of the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. They implement thorough procedures for assessing children, using some of this information to inform activity planning and ensure that children are offered appropriate activities. However, this is not fully promoted because the assessment

and planning procedures do not clearly show how children's next developmental steps are consistently fed into the overall planning. Staff know the children well and use this knowledge when interacting with the children in order to extend their play and learning. However, this is not extended to the optimum as daily planning does not always detail how activities are adapted and extended. Children are encouraged to develop their own play and staff make informed judgements about when to intervene in order to extend children's understanding. This enables children to play an active role in their learning and develop skills that will help them in the future.

The appropriate planning means that children are offered a wide range of activities and play opportunities. For example, children enjoy visiting the room that has been set up as a Victorian school classroom; they work on chalkboards, examine an oil lamp and play with toys from the Victorian era. Good staff interaction supports children in working together to solve problems and thereby gain skills for the future. For example, children explore the large construction set and are then joined by a staff member who encourages them to experiment with different building methods to determine how to make the most robust structure. Good staff interaction and the provision of appropriate resources mean that children's development is promoted. For example, children's interest in reading is developed as they become engrossed in using props to act out a favourite story while a staff member reads this to them.

Children are gaining a thorough understanding of appropriate behaviour as staff act as good role models, explaining to children the implications of their behaviour and encouraging them to work together to resolve any disputes. Children, therefore, show a mature responsibility and are kind and caring towards each other. Thoughtful daily procedures mean that children are offered opportunities to develop social skills as they express themselves and learn to appreciate the views and interests of others. An example of this is a music session, where children are offered the opportunity to play their favourite instruments for the other children; they thoroughly enjoy this time, listening carefully to each other and waiting patiently for their turn.

Appropriate planning means that children are offered meaningful opportunities to understand other cultures and ways of life. For example, children make their own displays about holidays and current sporting events. These include flags from other countries and greetings in a range of languages and frequently lead to further discussions and exploration. The good procedures for working with parents and carers mean that children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who use English as an additional language are offered appropriate support to enable them to participate meaningfully.

Children enjoy the company of their peers and the staff. They use language confidently and imaginatively, clearly explaining their ideas and discussing their role play scenarios. The thoughtful adaptation of daily procedures means that children are involved in some of these and they are used as learning opportunities. For example, children develop their mathematical, reading and writing skills as they sit alongside a staff member and take the register, reading the names, marking children as present and counting the total number of children at the end.

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

How effectively is the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	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	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