

Biggleswade Academy Pre-School

144A London Road, Biggleswade, SG18 8EH

Inspection date

Previous inspection date

09/09/2014

Not Applicable

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This inspection:

1

Previous inspection:

Not Applicable

How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend

1

The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children

1

The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision

1

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This provision is outstanding

- Leadership and management are outstanding. The relentless drive for improvement means that children are given the best possible start to their education.
- Children at the pre-school make excellent progress in their learning and development because of the high-quality adult support. Staff skilfully use excellent teaching techniques, such as open-ended questioning, modelling language, recalling and making links with previous learning.
- Children's behaviour is exemplary. They form very good relationships with staff and with each other. This means that the atmosphere is calm and supportive for all children.
- Partnerships with parents are highly effective. There are excellent communication systems in place to ensure that information regarding children's learning and care needs is shared in a timely fashion.
- Staff receive regular safeguarding training. They demonstrate a very secure understanding of the procedures to follow in the event of a concern with regard to a child's welfare. As a result, children's safety is effectively promoted at all times.

Information about this inspection

Inspections of registered early years provision are:

- scheduled at least once in every inspection cycle – the current cycle ends on 31 July 2016
- scheduled more frequently where Ofsted identifies a need to do so, for example where provision was previously judged inadequate
- brought forward in the inspection cycle where Ofsted has received information that suggests the provision may not be meeting the legal requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage or where assessment of the provision identifies a need for early inspection
- prioritised where we have received information that the provision is not meeting the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage and which suggests children may not be safe
- scheduled at the completion of an investigation into failure to comply with the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Inspection activities

- The inspector observed activities in the indoor and outdoor areas.
- The inspector conducted a joint observation with the site lead.
- The inspector held a meeting with the site lead, the academy's phase leader for Early Years and the academy's principal.
- The inspector looked at children's assessment records, planning, progress tracking data and a range of other documentation.
- The inspector checked evidence of the suitability and qualifications of staff working with children and the site lead's evidence of self-evaluation.
- The inspector took account of the views of staff, parents and carers spoken to on the day.

Inspector

Anne Bell

Full report

Information about the setting

The setting was originally registered in 2008 and re-registered in 2014 on the Early Years Register. It is situated in a purpose-built premises on the site of Biggleswade Academy in Biggleswade, Bedfordshire. It is managed by the governing body of the Academy. The pre-school serves the local and neighbouring areas and is accessible to all children. It operates from two main rooms and there is an enclosed area available for outdoor play. The pre-school opens Monday to Friday during school term times. Sessions are from 9am to 12 noon and from 12.15pm to 3.15pm, with a lunch club available. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The pre-school provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children and there are currently 93 children on roll. The pre-school supports a number of children who speak English as an additional language and children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. The pre-school employs 18 members of childcare staff. Of these, 14 hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3 or above, including two with Qualified Teacher Status and two with Early Years Professional Status.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

To further improve the quality of the early years provision the provider should:

- build on the existing very good partnerships with other settings that children attend by sharing even more information with regard to children's development and needs.

Inspection judgements

How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend

Children at the pre-school make excellent progress because of the high-quality adult support. Every opportunity is taken by staff to extend teaching and learning as children take part in the wealth of activities on offer, both indoors and outdoors. Staff expertly step in to guide learning either by teaching particular skills or by asking thought provoking questions. Staff skilfully use excellent teaching techniques, such as open-ended questioning, modelling language, recalling and making links with previous learning. For example, when teaching songs about farm animals, staff provide the opportunity for children to discuss their own experiences of visiting farms. This enables the children to successfully contribute and to extend their learning. Staff plan a rich, diverse range of activities across all areas of learning. This includes an excellent balance of adult-led activities, as well as open-ended activities where children can follow their own interests and lead their own learning. Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities make excellent progress. Close partnerships with external agencies and professionals, together with skilfully targeted staff support, ensures that these children participate fully in the pre-school's activities and routines. Children who are learning English as an additional language are equally well supported, as excellent monitoring by their key person ensures that their progress is comparable with that of their peers.

Outdoor provision is a strength of the pre-school, with a large, well-resourced area where children can develop a wide range of skills, such as climbing, balancing, using wheeled toys, painting and drawing, digging and exploring musical instruments. This means that children have access to an exceptionally broad and balanced curriculum outdoors as well as indoors. Staff keep detailed, meticulous records of children's development. They carry out frequent observations of learning and then discuss this information at length during weekly meetings in order to plan precise next steps for each child. Details of planned activities, evaluations and observations are displayed in the rooms for staff and parents to see. This means that everyone involved in the children's learning is aware of how best to support their development, both in the pre-school and at home. Children are confident learners, who actively explore their environment and try new activities. This confidence in learning, together with the extensive variety of opportunities to extend their skills in communication, literacy and independence ensures that they are extremely well-prepared for school.

Staff use innovative ways to ensure that children have sustained time for concentration and engagement. For example, a visual timetable tells children the activities on offer and what will happen next in the daily routine. Also, children are given a five minute countdown before group time and when it is time to tidy up. As a result, children learn to plan their time and to adjust seamlessly to a change of activity. Children experience an impressive range of opportunities to gain new interests and become independent learners. They take part in a weekly challenge to practice or extend a new skill, such as learning a nursery rhyme or building a tower. Their creative development is promoted through many opportunities to paint, draw, make collages and models and to engage in very well-resourced role play. Children learn about technology as they operate the compact disc player in the listening area and play with realistic toy mobile telephones. Staff teach children their letters and letter sounds through well-paced, engaging phonics sessions. Staff teach children about numbers, counting and mathematical concepts as they use attractive props to sing familiar songs and rhymes. At all times, children's listening skills are extremely well promoted. Staff's skilled teaching of what it means to be a good listener is evident in the high levels of attentiveness from the children. This is an excellent preparation for school and future learning.

The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children

The pre-school staff have excellent settling-in procedures in place. This includes home visits, so that children can become accustomed to staff in their familiar home environment. When children start at the pre-school, staff put together a book of family photographs for each child, which is available at all times for children to look at and share with an adult or a friend. This promotes children's emotional well-being as they enjoy chatting about their families to supportive, interested adults. The key-person system works very effectively. Staff know their key children extremely well and demonstrate warm, caring relationships to all children. Staff sensitively support new children who are separating from their parents for the first time. As a result, children settle quickly and are soon observed playing happily alongside their peers. Secure relationships with staff mean that children display high levels of well-being and engagement. They move confidently

around the pre-school, making independent choices about what and whom to play with. Staff are excellent role models. Their calm demeanour, together with their clear expectations, means that children's behaviour is exemplary. Staff place the utmost priority on children's safety and safeguarding. All staff hold current paediatric first-aid certificates. This ensures that children's health and safety are extremely well promoted. Meticulous attention to safety practices ensures that children with allergies or medical needs are kept safe at all times. Communication with parents regarding children's care needs is excellent. Staff make themselves available at the start and end of sessions to ensure that an effective two-way flow of information is maintained.

There is a superb range of equipment and resources available for children. The classrooms and their resources are exciting, attractive and very well maintained. Staff regularly add new resources to stimulate and enhance children's learning. As a result, the environment is vibrant, engaging and inviting to children. Children's independence is highly promoted at all times, as they learn to wash their hands before serving themselves at snack times, then pour their own drinks, help themselves to fruit and clear away afterwards. This level of personal independence prepares children well for school. All children learn to take care of their environment by tidying up the resources in preparation for group time and by treating their toys and equipment with care. Children learn about healthy eating as they talk about what they are eating at snack time. Staff give parents clear guidance on what to include in a healthy packed lunch. This promotes children's understanding of the foods that make up a healthy diet. Excellent relationships with the academy mean that the children's move to school is extremely smooth. Staffing is regularly shared between the pre-school and the academy, so that children are already familiar with and known to school staff before they transfer. This consistency ensures that children's confidence is well promoted at a time of change. As a result, children settle very quickly into school and disruption is minimised.

The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision

The pre-school staff demonstrate an excellent understanding of how to meet the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. Staff describe clearly and confidently the procedures to follow in the event of a concern regarding a child's welfare. In addition, all staff are rigorously vetted and suitable to work with children. The academy's leaders place a high priority on the recruitment of skilled, suitable staff. This is followed up with excellent induction systems that include safeguarding training, food hygiene training and training about the school's systems for observing and recording children's development. Rigorous, ongoing monitoring of staff includes purposeful peer observations and individualised performance management. As a result, a consistently high standard of professionalism and motivation is evident from all staff. Excellent partnership with the academy means that staff have access to additional professional development opportunities and to in-house training. This means that staff skills and knowledge are constantly updated and maintained at a high level.

The pre-school leaders demonstrate an impressive commitment to the ongoing improvement of the service that is provided to children and their families. Staff are

extremely conscientious about following the pre-school policies with regards to children's health and welfare. The site lead ensures that training is provided for staff so that children with medical needs or allergies can be safely accommodated. Effective procedures mean that all staff are aware of what to do to ensure the health and well-being of all children, including those with medical needs and allergies. The pre-school leaders provide a wealth of information for parents regarding the Early Years Foundation Stage and how their children's learning and care needs are met. This is done through displays in the classrooms, parent packs, informative newsletters, the academy website and a variety of electronic means. The academy principal, the phase leader and the site lead all take responsibility for monitoring children's progress. This rigorous monitoring ensures that children's strengths and areas for development are quickly identified and addressed. It also ensures that the pre-school continues to deliver wide-ranging, high-quality activities and experiences for the children.

All pre-school staff contribute to the self-evaluation procedures and to the drive for ongoing and continuous improvement. Parents' feedback is sought, welcomed and acted upon. The pre-school has thoroughly addressed the recommendations from its previous inspection and continues to set itself challenging targets for further development. Partnerships with external agencies and professionals are excellent. For example, the pre-school staff visit the local maintained nursery school and children's centre to carry out observations and to share good practice. The pre-school also supports the local community by providing regular accommodation for one of the children's centre parent groups. The pre-school leaders have established effective relationships with the other settings and childminders that children attend. However, there is scope to build on this very good practice by sharing even more information with regard to children's development and needs so that children continue to make excellent progress. Parents are highly appreciative of the service the pre-school provides. Those spoken to on the day of inspection were unanimous in their praise, particularly for the excellent communication and for the quality of care and attention that they and their children receive from the friendly, supportive staff.

What inspection judgements mean

Registered early years provision

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	Outstanding provision is highly effective in meeting the needs of all children exceptionally well. This ensures that children are very well prepared for the next stage of their learning.
Grade 2	Good	Good provision is effective in delivering provision that meets the needs of all children well. This ensures children are ready for the next stage of their learning.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	The provision is not giving children a good standard of early years education and/or there are minor breaches of the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. We re-inspect nurseries and pre-schools judged as requires improvement within 12 months of the date of inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	Provision that is inadequate requires significant improvement and/or enforcement action. The provision is failing to give children an acceptable standard of early years education and/or is not meeting the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. It will be monitored and inspected again within six months of the date of this inspection.
Met		There were no children present at the time of the inspection. The inspection judgement is that the provider continues to meet the requirements for registration.
Not met		There were no children present at the time of the inspection. The inspection judgement is that the provider does not meet the requirements for registration.

Inspection

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006 on the quality and standards of provision that is registered on the Early Years Register. The registered person must ensure that this provision complies with the statutory framework for children's learning, development and care, known as the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY473196
Local authority	Central Bedfordshire
Inspection number	956394
Type of provision	Full-time provision
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 5
Total number of places	72
Number of children on roll	93
Name of provider	Biggleswade Academy Trust
Date of previous inspection	not applicable
Telephone number	01767600309

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Type of provision

For the purposes of this inspection the following definitions apply:

Full-time provision is that which operates for more than three hours. These are usually known as nurseries, nursery schools and pre-schools and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. They are registered on the Early Years Register and pay the higher fee for registration.

Sessional provision operates for more than two hours but does not exceed three hours in any one day. These are usually known as pre-schools, kindergartens or nursery schools

and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. They are registered on the Early Years Register and pay the lower fee for registration.

Childminders care for one or more children where individual children attend for a period of more than two hours in any one day. They operate from domestic premises, which are usually the childminder's own home. They are registered on the Early Years Register and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Out of school provision may be sessional or full-time provision and is delivered before or after school and/or in the summer holidays. They are registered on the Early Years Register and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. Where children receive their Early Years Foundation Stage in school these providers do not have to deliver the learning and development requirements in full but should complement the experiences children receive in school.

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