

Cottontails Pre-School

Cambridge Road, Girton, Cambridge, Cambridgeshire, CB3 0PN



Inspection date

29 January 2015

Previous inspection date

9 January 2014

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	Good	2
	Previous inspection:	Requires Improvement	3
How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend		Good	2
The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children		Good	2
The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision		Good	2
The setting meets legal requirements for early years settings			

Summary of key findings for parents

This provision is good

- Children enjoy taking part in a wide range of well-planned activities that follow their interests both inside and in the pre-school garden.
- Children benefit from the staff's effective teaching skills. They spend time with them during activities, asking questions, supporting them to lead their play and to think about what they are doing.
- The pre-school staff have developed very effective partnerships with children's parents and the local school. This ensures that children's individual needs are met and that they are well prepared for the move on to school when the time comes.
- The manager and staff team work very well together to support the children's learning most of the time. They show a commitment to promoting high-quality provision and have a positive, reflective approach to their work with the children.
- Children behave very well. They know the expectations for behaviour and for safety because the staff maintain a consistent approach and are good role models.

It is not yet outstanding because:

- On occasion some children are not fully engaged in small group activities.
- The opportunities for children to extend their interest and curiosity about activities are not always continued by the staff.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- strengthen the organisation of the small group activities to ensure that all children taking part are motivated and eager to join in
- maximise all children's opportunities to play for sustained periods of time, for example, by moving resources around the setting.

Inspection activities

- The inspector observed activities in the two play areas inside and in the pre-school garden.
- The inspector spoke with the staff and children at appropriate times during the inspection and held meetings with the manager of the provision and with two members of staff.
- The inspector carried out a joint observation with the manager.
- The inspector took account of the views of parents who were spoken to on the day of inspection.
- The inspector looked at children's records, planning documentation, evidence of the suitability of staff working in the provision and a range of other documentation including policies, procedures and the self-evaluation document.

Inspector

Melanie Eastwell

Inspection findings

How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend. This is good

Staff provide a good range of activities that promote children's learning across the seven areas of learning. Children are able to choose freely from a wide range of resources which supports their independence. However, there are occasions when children are in small groups where the activities are not matched to their ability. This results in them not being fully involved. Sometimes, staff do not make the most of opportunities for children to sustain their interest in activities. For example, during very cold weather, some children need to come inside and staff do not always extend their interest by moving the resources inside for them to continue their play. Children are developing their communication and language well because staff spend time talking to them during their play. They ask well placed questions that encourage them to consider what they want to do. Strong partnerships with parents results in them being fully involved in their child's learning at the pre-school. Staff fully value their contributions about their child's progress and interests at home.

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

Children are safe in this welcoming pre-school. They are able to settle quickly when they start attending because staff work individually with their parents to arrange visits. Children clearly show that they feel confident and a sense of belonging. They enjoy the positive interaction from the staff who show a genuine interest in what they are doing. They are confident to select their own resources and move freely between self-chosen activities. Children benefit from being able to play outside as they wish for most of the session and the staff use the rural location to support children's learning, visiting local woodland. Children are learning about how to make healthy choices. They are fully involved in the preparation of the snack. Children quickly develop an understanding of the boundaries for safety and behaviour because staff are very consistent in their approach and involve children in the risk assessment of their activities.

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

The manager and staff team work well together, supported by the committee. Secure systems are in place to ensure that suitable members of staff are recruited and retained. Safeguarding procedures are clear and well known by the staff which ensures that children are kept safe. Staff are encouraged to develop their skills through working towards qualifications and attending training courses. This supports their confidence to take on delegated roles within the pre-school. The manager makes rigorous checks on the planning, observation and assessment of children's progress. She supports staff to continually reflect on their teaching skills. The manager and staff are committed to continuous improvement. They have made the required improvements from the last inspection. They identify well-targeted plans for the future and have high expectations of themselves.

Setting details

Unique reference number	221770
Local authority	Cambridgeshire
Inspection number	996346
Type of provision	
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 17
Total number of places	28
Number of children on roll	41
Name of provider	Cottontails Pre School Committee
Date of previous inspection	9 January 2014
Telephone number	07935 224 607

Cottontails Pre-school was registered in 1992. It is managed by a committee. The pre-school employs eight members of childcare staff. Of these, six hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 2, 3 and 6, including one with Early Years Professional status. The pre-school opens from Monday to Friday during term time. Sessions are from 9am until 3.30pm on Monday, Wednesday and Thursday, and from 9am until 12 noon, on Tuesday and Friday. The pre-school provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

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