

# The Valley Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Unique reference number</b>	110140
<b>Inspection date</b>	12/01/2009
<b>Inspector</b>	Stephanie Matthews
<b>Setting address</b>	C/o Meonstoke C of E School, Chapel Road, Meonstoke, Southampton, Hampshire, SO32 3NJ
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<b>Type of setting</b>	Childcare on non-domestic premises

## 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 report includes information on any complaints about the childcare provision which Ofsted has received since the last inspection or registration whichever is the later, which require Ofsted or the provider to take action in Annex C.

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.

## Description of the setting

The Valley Pre-school is popular and oversubscribed. It opened in 1975 and has operated in its present purpose built location since April 2000. It is situated in a self-contained annexe at Meonstoke Church of England School with playroom, kitchen and toilets, and shares outside play areas with the school. The pre-school is a community group, managed by a voluntary committee and serves the village and the local area. A maximum of 24 children may attend at any one time. It is open each weekday during the school term. Sessions are available from 09:15 to 15:00 on Monday to Thursday and from 09:15 to 13:00 on Friday with an optional lunch provided everyday. There are currently 51 children aged from two to four years on roll. Of these 35 receive nursery funding. The pre-school welcomes children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those with English as an additional language. The pre-school employs a total of six members of staff who work directly with the children and all hold appropriate early years qualifications. Two administrators have been appointed. The setting has close links with Meonstoke School and the local cluster. It receives support from the reception class teachers and from the Hampshire Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership. This provider is on the Early Years Register, compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register.

## Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

The setting provides a good level of care and education for children. Management is very effective in ensuring that good quality resources are used well to support learning through play activities chosen by the children. Staff have established excellent relationships with children and are constantly improving the range of indoor and outdoor activities. The setting is fully inclusive and caters well for children with learning difficulties and disabilities and for those who use English as an additional language. The quality of leadership and management is outstanding. Very clear strengths in self evaluation and the implementation of change indicate an excellent capacity for continuous improvement

## What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- maintain the good provision and outcomes for all the children
- improve access to outside play by providing a sheltered area or canopy
- improve opportunities for the children to have access to information and communication technology (ICT) resources.

## The leadership and management of the early years provision

Leadership and management by the supervisor, her staff and the management committee of parents are outstanding. The pre-school has experienced issues with

changing personnel, both with staff and parents involved in the work of the committee. They have resolved this by appointing administrative staff who can also help with the supervision of children if required. This new approach provides continuity and rigour and is proving highly effective in allowing the supervisor to focus on the children rather than administration. The leadership has begun the formal process of self-evaluation and this has been very effective in ensuring a focus on continuous improvement. The leadership and management has identified that working with and visiting other local settings is very beneficial and this approach has had a clear impact on the setting and the quality of the children's experience on a day-to-day basis.

The parents' committee meets frequently and is very active, for example, in raising money, sharing information and accompanying their children on trips and visits. It is always looking forward and planning improvements and has identified an opportunity to improve the already good accommodation by bidding for a new grant.

Partnership with parents is excellent and those questioned showed a high level of satisfaction with provision. The timing of opening, including lunchtime sessions, meets the needs of the local community very well and avoids congestion in the school parking areas and adjacent roads. A new system of key persons, who take responsibility for small groups of children, is ensuring that parents know about, and can contribute to, their child's progress and development in pre-school. Community links are strong and children benefit from familiarity with the adjacent school and its Reception classes.

Safeguarding is secure and risk assessment procedures are very thorough. An issue with facilities for nappy changing has been identified. The supervisor is seeking, as a matter of urgency, a means of fitting a changing table in the toilet area and has already identified possible solutions to the problem.

## **The quality and standards of the early years provision**

Children feel safe and settle well because they are well looked after by their key person. Their progress and general well-being are monitored carefully using a newly introduced system that has made a real impact on monitoring progress and keeping parents informed.

Children show a good understanding of health and hygiene issues, for example, when washing their hands before going to the snack bar. This innovative approach to providing snacks enables children to choose when and what they eat and drink. They talk knowledgeably about different foods and express their opinions about different kinds of food. Children were observed discussing the difference between grapes and raisins.

The emphasis on healthy eating is reinforced when children go on local visits, for example, to a farm where they can grow vegetables and later harvest and eat them. They go on longer visits, perhaps to a safari park, and local walks within the

village. These visits are well supervised and fully risk assessed. Children know about metamorphosis because they observe tadpoles and caterpillars and these activities help develop early understanding of the world around them and the skills of scientific investigation.

Children enjoy their time in pre-school and they benefit from free play sessions where they can choose what they do. The setting is really well focused on individualised learning experiences and this helps promote independence and the ability to sustain activities and concentration.

They can choose from a very good range of indoor and outdoor activities that reflect the six areas of learning well. They have lots of books and were observed really enjoying a cosy afternoon story session on the comfortable settee in the reading corner. There is a computer and tape player that can be used independently by children. A child was observed playing with a remote controlled dinosaur and, in the process, improving co-ordination skills and understanding of technology. Children see lots of photographs of their activities but they do not have a digital camera for their own use and overall access to ICT equipment is too limited to ensure good progress in ICT use or understanding of the range of possible means of communication. The setting has already identified this as an area for improvement.

Children can choose to play outside at any time and are provided with waterproof coats and boots and children cope well with putting them on and taking them off, indicating their progress in developing co-ordination. There are lots of activities outside and children can access the outdoor play equipment of the adjacent school. At present the setting does not have a covered area or canopy and this limits the range of activities available in poor weather.

Children make a positive contribution by registering themselves as present using photograph cards. They help prepare snacks and put away toys. When asked some can fetch their own coats at the end of the session. They take part in school and local activities and are made aware of life in different parts of the world through pictures and books. The new approach to assessment and the close links with the primary school ensure that they are well prepared for their next stage of education.

## 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*

### Overall effectiveness

<b>How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?</b>	2
How well does the provision promote inclusive practice?	2
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement.	1

### Leadership and management

<b>How effectively is provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?</b>	1
How effective is the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement?	1
How well does the setting work in partnership with parents and others?	1
How well are children safeguarded?	2

### Quality and standards

<b>How effectively are children in the Early Years Foundation Stage helped to learn and develop?</b>	2
<b>How effectively is the welfare of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage promoted?</b>	2
How well are children helped to stay safe?	2
How well are children helped to be healthy?	2
How well are children helped to enjoy and achieve?	2
How well are children helped to make a positive contribution?	2
How well are children helped develop skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being?	2

Any complaints about the inspection or report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

## **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

## **Annex C: complaint/s made to Ofsted**

This section of the report includes details of any complaint/s made to Ofsted when:

- we took action for the provider to meet the requirements of the Early Years Register; or
- we asked the provider to take action in order to meet the requirements of the Early Years Register; or
- the provider had already taken any necessary action to meet the requirements of the Early Years Register.

We will not report on any complaint where the provider met the requirements of the Early Years Register or did not require any action by Ofsted or the registered provider.

### **Detail of the complaint/s**

There have been no complaints made to Ofsted since the last inspection.

The provider is required to keep a record of complaints made by parents, which they can see on request. The complaints record may contain complaints other than those made to Ofsted.