

Harebreaks Preschool

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number

EY227780

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Inspector

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Type of setting

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 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).

Description of the setting

Harebreaks Pre-school opened in 1973. It is owned and run by the registered provider. The setting operates from two rooms at the North Watford Methodist Church. All children have access to a secure outside play area, the setting is fully accessible. The pre-school is open from 09:30am to 12:00noon, Monday to Friday and between 12:30pm to 2:45pm on Monday, Tuesday and Thursday, term time only.

The pre-school is registered on the Early Years Register. A maximum of 26 children may attend at any one time. There are currently 62 children aged from two to five years on roll. The pre-school provides support for children with learning difficulties and/ or disabilities and children who speak English as an additional language

There are eight permanent members of staff, all hold a relevant early years qualifications. The preschool is a member of the Pre-school Learning Alliance, they receive support from the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership (EYDCP)

Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is satisfactory. The policies and procedures that contribute to the safety and welfare of the children are in place and used effectively. Children are supported by a well established staff team, the individual needs of most of the children are appropriately met. Positive relationships are developed with families and the local community, this contributes to the children's sense of belonging and self esteem. The staff are keen to make improvements for the children and have started to establish some systems of evaluation to support them in this respect.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- develop understanding and confidence in completing and analysing observations and assessments, which includes children's starting points in order to provide challenge and promote critical thinking
- develop staff's ability to support children's learning with the use of open ended questions which support and extend children's thinking and help them make connections in their learning
- develop the partnership with parents to ensure a two way flow of information which will enable parents to become involved in their children's learning

The leadership and management of the early years provision

Managers of the setting are enthusiastic and endeavour to be good role models for the well established staff team. Managers and staff are committed to up-dating their training and skills, they share good practice within the staff team to the benefit of the children. Children are protected because appropriate policies and procedures are in place such as efficient risk assessments, accident and incident records. These are implemented effectively by the staff team to manage the children's health, safety and well-being. Staff have a sound understanding of inclusive practice. They have detailed knowledge of children in the setting who have particularly complex needs. They support these children sensitively and effectively. However, the ability of the staff to ensure they meet the needs of all children with regard to learning is sometimes limited by the weaknesses in the assessment and planning.

Children are safeguarded because there is a robust recruitment procedure in place. This ensures appropriately qualified and experienced staff are working with the children. Information from the Local Safeguarding Children Board is readily available to staff and parents. Staff are familiar with the documents and have attended recent training in this important aspect of child care.

Managers and staff are beginning to develop more appropriate strategies for evaluating the effectiveness of the provision to bring about improvements for all children. For example the staff appraisal system recently implemented gives the staff opportunities to evaluate their own practice and professional status. The manager works with them to plan for training opportunities. Staff are developing an understanding of their strengths and areas which need improving. An effective evaluation process takes place during the regular staff meetings. Action plans are drawn up in relation to overall practice, the need to review and improve resources and practical aspects of the building. The action plans are used effectively to improve resources such as the book area and role play equipment. The setting has worked hard to secure substantial funding for the complete refurbishment of the outside area.

The setting is proactive in seeking community links, they provide student placements and work experience opportunities. They work closely with the local Children's Centre family services to support children with medical needs, learning difficulties and who speak English as a second language. Staff at the setting have developed good relationships with parents and other family members. Staff are approachable, they obtain information from parents and carers in order to meet their wishes and the care needs of the children. Parents are well-informed about the setting and local support services. The notice board keeps parents informed of day to day issues such as fund raising events. The resource box containing information on the Early Years Foundation Stage and local Surestart support services is readily accessed by all parents.

Parents are encouraged to stay during the settling in period. Visiting adults are encouraged to take part in all the activities, they are good role models for the

children as they see adults involved in all aspects of their play. However, parents and carers are given less information about the child's learning and development and consequently are less able to become involved in their own children's learning in meaningful ways.

The quality and standards of the early years provision

Children's safety, health and well-being is particularly strong at this setting. For example, simple reminders at registration time encourage children to keep themselves safe and to be aware of the needs of others. They are reminded about simple rules that keep them safe, not to run and to use their listening ears when the adults are speaking to them. The environment is set out by staff with safety in mind, consequently children are able to move around the activities freely and safely.

Children behave well and are happy in the setting settling quickly to play and to the activities provided for them. They are enjoying and achieving in most areas, they are starting to develop skills for the future.

The café style snack time works well. A large display outlining a healthy eating lifestyle supports the children's learning. Staff are aware of the children's dietary needs. Children are effectively supported and their independence is developed at this time as they wash hands, help themselves to drinks from a water cooler and milk dispenser. They find their name labels and settle at the table to select and cut their fruit or vegetable pieces. The use of closed questions limits the children's mathematical and problem solving skills. Simple concepts such as half, how many and comparing shape and size are not fully promoted.

Children are learning some language and early reading skills as they access the newly refurbished book area. The library display enables children to select a book, have a story with a member of staff and take the book home to share with their family. A recording system is in place to ensure all children have this opportunity through the week. Since many of the books reflect diversity and positive images most children are gaining a sound understanding of other cultures and beliefs. Staff offer appropriate support for children who speak English as a second language with the use of key words from home. They also participate enthusiastically in singing and action rhymes, although they are not always sure what they are singing about as the theme is not always clearly explained to them or they do not have any understanding of the subject.

As part of the evaluation process the setting identified the need to refresh the imaginative play area and a new pretend shopping village is now in place. The children have great fun and are very keen to explore the new structure and although the area had not been planned for the children soon found play foods, tills and baskets for shopping. Some added dinosaurs and items from around the play room. Children use their imagination well, asking for and adding resources to the new role play equipment to develop their games.

The setting has appropriate systems for collating observations and assessments to record the children's learning. Records indicate that most children are making

progress in most areas of the early learning goals. The staff are starting to use the information they gather to plan activities which interest the children and to promote skills to extend their learning. However, missing information such as the children's starting points, their ages and time at the setting means that some focused activities are not always planned to meet the children's individual needs and many opportunities are missed that would enable staff to extend and challenge children learning.

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

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?	3
How well does the provision promote inclusive practice?	3
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement.	3

Leadership and management

How effectively is provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	3
How effective is the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement?	3
How well does the setting work in partnership with parents and others?	3
How well are children safeguarded?	2

Quality and standards

How effectively are children in the Early Years Foundation Stage helped to learn and develop?	3
How effectively is the welfare of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage promoted?	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?	3
How well are children helped to make a positive contribution?	3
How well are children helped develop skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being?	3

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