

Hazeldene Heights Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	219093
Inspection date	29/04/2009
Inspector	Kelly Eyre
Setting address	Putnoe Heights Methodist Church, Putnoe Heights, Bedford, Bedfordshire, MK41 8EB
Telephone number	01234 326685
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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

Hazeldene Heights Pre-School originally opened over 30 years ago and has been registered since 1992. The provision is run by the Church Council of Putnoe Heights Church. It operates from three rooms in Putnoe Heights Church, Bedford. A slope to the main entrance means that the premises are accessible. 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 and sessions are daily from 09.30 to 12.00, with an afternoon session from 12.30 to 15.00 on Monday and Wednesday. There is also a lunch club on Tuesday and Thursday from 12.00 to 12.50. The setting is registered on the Early Years Register to provide 62 places and there are currently 75 children attending who are within this age group. The setting serves the local and neighbouring communities. Approximately three quarters of the children attend other settings such as local nurseries, childminders and other pre-schools. The setting currently supports a number of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and several children who speak English as an additional language.

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

Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall, the quality of the provision is good. The excellent procedures for self-evaluation mean that the setting has a comprehensive picture of its strengths and weaknesses, enabling staff to formulate thorough plans for ongoing improvements and to remain responsive to the needs of the children. The conscientious daily assessment of children and the flexible approach to planning are key strengths, ensuring that children are offered a balanced range of activities that interest them and support their development. Staff consistently offer children appropriate support, ensuring that they are included in the activities and routines and benefit from the opportunities offered.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- develop further the planning procedures to consistently reflect the next steps for individual children
- develop further relationships with all others providing care for the children.

The leadership and management of the early years provision

The manager offers ongoing guidance to staff, helping to ensure that children's care is consistent and their daily experiences are positive. The rigorous staff checks, good staff induction and daily implementation of policies support the

efficient running of the setting, ensuring that children are offered a safe environment. Comprehensive risk assessments are completed and staff carry out daily checks of the building and outdoor area. Children gain an excellent understanding of safety through good daily practice and ongoing explanations from staff. For example, they take turns to carry out the 'Children's Daily Risk Assessment', working with staff to identify risks and ensure that the play areas are safe. Thorough procedures for safeguarding children ensure that their welfare is promoted.

The manager and staff have an excellent understanding of the relevance of ongoing self-evaluation, demonstrating a genuine enthusiasm and commitment to continuing to improve the outcomes for children. They maintain a positive attitude to feedback, actively seeking this from children, parents and other professionals, and acting on the information obtained. Examples of recent improvements include the improved use of initial assessments of children to ensure that they are offered appropriate support and activities from the time they start at the pre-school.

The setting works well with parents, ensuring that there is a thorough exchange of information in order to promote children's learning and development. There are good procedures to obtain information from parents about children's preferences and abilities and to incorporate these into the planning. However, this area is not promoted to the optimum as the setting has not fully developed links with others providing care for the children.

The quality and standards of the early years provision

Children participate in a wide variety of activities that support them in making good progress in all areas of learning. The good procedures for gathering information about children mean that staff are aware of their interests and individual needs and can include these in the daily planning. Exceptionally thorough assessments mean that staff carefully monitor children's progress. Most of this information is used to inform activity planning to ensure that children's needs are met and they are offered activities to promote their development. However, this is not fully promoted because the next developmental steps are not consistently included in the overall planning.

Children's emotional development is promoted and they have secure relationships with staff who know them well. The sense of security is prevalent throughout the setting, with children independently choosing resources and happily trying new activities. For example, children experiment with clay, using tools and manipulating this to make models. Children's learning and understanding are developed because staff play alongside them and offer support. For example, children enjoy counting and recognising numbers as they play hopscotch with support from a staff member. Children are encouraged to be active in their learning and think critically; children exploring magnets test various items around the room and go on to discuss why the magnets attract or repel objects.

The thoughtful planning of the environment means that resources are accessible. Children's independence is therefore promoted as they explore and make choices

about their play. For example, children making collages choose their own resources from the nearby trolley, competently using glue and scissors and writing their names on their work. Good use is made of outdoor areas to offer children further opportunities. For example, children grow flowers and vegetables, noting the conditions needed for these to thrive.

Good planning means that children are encouraged to explore their environment and their learning is gently reinforced. For example, whilst looking at 'growth', children discuss healthy diets, examine tadpoles and talk about life cycles, read relevant stories and plant cress seeds. Access to a wide range of books and the provision of associated activities encourage children's appreciation of books and reading. They enjoy group stories and independent reading and participate in activities such as re-telling stories with puppets and taking part in 'World book day' by dressing up as their favourite characters.

Children are becoming competent in the use of information and communication technology, for example, selecting and completing programmes on the computer. They are gaining a good awareness of the relevance of healthy lifestyles through discussions about the effects of exercise and what the body needs in order to thrive. Children are gently encouraged to understand turn-taking and appropriate interaction with their peers. For example, they write their names on a waiting list for the computer and competently use a sand timer to time their turns.

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?	2
How well does the provision promote inclusive practice?	2
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement.	1

Leadership and management

How effectively is provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	2
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?	2
How well are children safeguarded?	2

Quality and standards

How effectively are children in the Early Years Foundation Stage helped to learn and develop?	2
How effectively is the welfare of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage promoted?	2
How well are children helped to stay safe?	1
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

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