

# Valley Farm Nursery School

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Unique reference number</b>	254332
<b>Inspection date</b>	10/06/2009
<b>Inspector</b>	Lesley Gadd
<b>Setting address</b>	Valley Farm, Sharrington, HOLT, Norfolk, NR24 2PE
<b>Telephone number</b>	01263 861065
<b>Email</b>	
<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 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**

Valley Farm Nursery School was registered in 1995. The nursery is situated on a farm near Holt, in Norfolk. Children make use of an accessible building with an adjoining outdoor play area. The setting is open from 09.00 until 15.00, Tuesday to Friday during term time.

The Nursery is a privately owned facility and led by two managers, alongside a regular childcare staff member. Both managers and the staff member hold relevant early years qualifications and one manager has recently completed additional training, acquiring a Foundation Early Years Education Degree.

The setting is registered for a maximum of 13 children, from two years to five years, at any one time on the Early Years Register. Children attend from two and a half years and there are currently 24 children on roll. The nursery is in receipt of government funding for early education. The setting is also registered on the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. The setting does not have any children attending with learning difficulties and/or disabilities or children who speak English as an additional language. Although all children are welcomed.

The setting receives support from local authority advisors and has made links with other local facilities and services that the children attend to support the continued care and learning of the children.

## **Overall effectiveness of the early years provision**

Overall the quality of the provision is outstanding. Children are secure, happy and exceptionally well supported in their learning as individuals, making rapid progress from an early age. Children's welfare is given excellent consideration and partnerships with others actively supports children's care and learning. The setting reviews its service regularly, which includes discussions with the children, to ensure they make ongoing improvements for the benefit of children and families who attend the nursery.

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

To further improve the high quality early years provision the registered person should consider:

- develop further children's awareness of languages and writing systems other than English, and communication systems such as signing
- develop further the outdoor area where children can tackle a range of levels and surfaces, including flat and hilly ground and compost materials.

## **The leadership and management of the early years provision**

The setting is led by well qualified, committed and enthusiastic leaders who alongside a supportive staff member have high aspirations for the children. Ongoing training helps the setting's managers and staff keep up-to-date with current thinking in the field of children's education and care and they utilise this information effectively to make ongoing improvements to the service the children receive. For example, training initiatives the setting have attended, have led to them rearranging the main play room to include 'child friendly spaces' to hide and relax in and outside play has been transformed, where children make use of interesting and challenging resources such as pulleys and drain pipes in an enabling 'forest schools style' environment for learning. Ambitious targets are set for developing the learning environment for the children and rigorous monitoring and evaluation systems help the setting to ensure improvements are implemented effectively and are beneficial for the children.

Children's safety is paramount for this setting. Staff are consistently vigilant and make use of written risk assessments to ensure every aspect of the children's environment both indoors, outdoors and when on outings is safe, whilst ensuring that children can enjoy the freedom to explore. Every opportunity is taken to promote children's own understanding about keeping themselves safe for future independence. Children are made aware of how to play with sticks and use scissors and other tools safely. Children's welfare is securely safeguarded. They are cared for by a suitably vetted team and managers demonstrate a clear understanding of the possible signs of child abuse, referencing clear written procedures which can be followed in order to ensure children are protected. Children are encouraged to vocalise their feelings and learn about stranger danger to ensure they are further protected. The setting strives and succeeds in providing an inclusive facility where all children regardless of age or ability are actively encouraged to take part in the rich experiences on offer to them at the nursery. Children with particular behaviour needs and their families are positively supported in accessing a range of services to ensure children's needs are actively met.

Partnerships with parents and others are excellent. The setting actively sets out to engage all those connected with the children in making sure their needs are met and securing their learning. Daily conversations, written home books and accessible learning stories containing contributions from parents, children and other settings helps the children to feel good about themselves and reach expected milestones rapidly. Parents' receive ongoing information about events at the nursery and clear information about the setting's procedures and policies which reassures parents that their children's welfare and learning is given high priority by the setting. Parents are very complimentary about the setting, stating that the 'children love' to attend, staff are 'very helpful', children 'learn lots of new things' and have a 'great deal of fun'.

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

Children make rapid progress in their learning at this setting as the provision on offer is outstanding. Managers and staff have a thorough understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), using this effectively to plan for and nurture children's growth and development in all areas of learning. The setting make very effective use of observations and information held about children's interests and skills to provide a planned, challenging and appropriate environment for all the children as individuals to explore. Ideas for projects often come from the children themselves which leads to children being enthusiastic, motivated and independent learners. For example, a child's interest in pirates develops into a mini-project about ships, treasure and concludes with making maps. This helps to develop children's sense of place and knowledge about different geographical landscapes. Managers and staff are pro-active and very skilled in supporting children at play. They show a genuine interest in what children are doing, offer encouragement and get involved in the thinking processes that children undertake when playing. This actively supports children in developing their critical thinking and making connections in their learning. For example, a child blowing bubbles in the water is encouraged to consider how bubbles are made, their size, shape and the effect of their wind power blown through the straw.

The managers and staff are caring, affectionate and responsive to children's individual needs, building trusting relationships and encouraging children to be confident, curious and explore. Information about what children know and can do when they start is gathered from parents to ensure that a firm foundation is set for their future learning. Children delight in the enticing opportunities offered to play and learn outside. A good proportion of the day is spent outdoors honing their problem solving skills as they work out how to winch a bucket of mud into the air and developing their knowledge about nature as they collect beetles, worms and snails from under piles of stones, to be examined later with magnifying glasses. Nursery grown butterflies and chrysalis provide opportunities to learn more about living things, how they are created, what care they need and early maths skills are developed as children discuss the symmetrical patterns on butterflies wings, their size and shape. Boxes carefully decorated with a range of butterflies and flowers made from craft materials are prepared for the chrysalis to go home with the children, showing children's flair for design and creativity. During spontaneous drama and movement sessions, children also get to roll into a ball like a chrysalis and fly like butterflies, exploring what their body can do and sharing their imaginative interpretation of how butterflies move.

Children's basic skills are exceptionally well promoted. Children relish opportunities to use reference books with staff, identifying different types of grass collected on field walks and they delight in the opportunities provided to hear stories, actively fostering early literacy skills. Children's writing skills are supported effectively from an early age as they use tools competently and write their own names. All children develop their early letter sound recognition skills through games and 'board time' discussions with staff and more able children can spell out simple words such as 'peg', recognising that print carries meaning. Number rhythms are reinforced routinely when counting blueberries, fingers and solving more complex maths

problems which are built into everyday play. Children talk and communicate with exceptional ability and staff are providing excellent opportunities for children to develop a positive awareness of their local community and the wider world. Children explore how to dress in saris and make use of positive resources in play such as wheelchairs and sight sticks. Children demonstrate excellent abilities when using technology as they make use of the computer during project work and re-wire remote control toys.

An enchanting, very well organised learning environment, both indoors and outdoors, actively fosters children's self-reliance and independence as they choose their activities and undertake self-care routines. Children have a strong idea about what to eat to keep their body healthy as they enjoy a nutritious, seasonal snack menu, drinking home-made elderflower cordial and munching juicy strawberries in the summer. Children's social skills are exceptionally well developed for their young age and they are very well behaved. They share and co-operate effectively with friends and are treated with respect and courtesy by staff, who are excellent role models. Clear boundaries around acceptable behaviour help children to feel secure and develop a strong sense of right and wrong.

## 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>	1
How well does the provision promote inclusive practice?	1
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?	1

### Quality and standards

<b>How effectively are children in the Early Years Foundation Stage helped to learn and develop?</b>	1
<b>How effectively is the welfare of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage promoted?</b>	1
How well are children helped to stay safe?	1
How well are children helped to be healthy?	1
How well are children helped to enjoy and achieve?	1
How well are children helped to make a positive contribution?	1
How well are children helped develop skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being?	1

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## **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