

Qwackers Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	253514
Inspection date	22/04/2009
Inspector	Sharon Waterfall

Setting address	The School Premises, Hanby Lane, Alford, Lincs, LN13 9BN
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Type of setting	Childcare on non-domestic premises
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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

Qwackers Pre-school opened in 1960. It has been based in a portacabin within the grounds of the John Spendluffe Secondary School, near the centre of the town, for the past 14 years and is committee run. There is one main room, which is partitioned into two and one smaller room, available for activities. There is direct access to a fully enclosed and secure outdoor play area which is partly grassed. The pre-school serves the local area and the surrounding villages.

There are currently 69 children from 2 to 5 years on roll. This includes 49 funded three year olds and four year olds. Children attend for a variety of sessions.

The group opens five days a week during school term times. Sessions are from 09.00 until 11.30 and 12.45 until 15.15 Mondays to Thursdays with only morning sessions available on Fridays.

There are 12 part-time staff who work with the children. All staff have early years qualifications to NVQ Level 3 and are supported by two staff that work lunch club. The setting receives support from a teacher from the local authority.

Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good. The setting has very effectively used evaluative systems to implement improvements in all aspects of children's learning and development. The children are actively encouraged to initiate their own learning and make decisions for themselves. Their learning is further extended by staff using information from sensitive observations to lead activities from the children's interests. Excellent partnerships with parents, agencies and other child care facilities locally ensure children's individual needs are supported and their transitions are eased. This ensures children are settled, secure and happy.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- extend opportunities for children to develop spoken language through sustained conversations between children and adults and children themselves within small groups. Allow children time to initiate conversations, respect their thinking time and silences and help them to develop the interaction.

To fully meet the specific requirements of the EYFS, the registered person must:

- ensure there is a record of the risk assessment clearly stating when it was carried out, by whom, date of review and any action taken following a review or incident (Documentation).

29/05/2009

The leadership and management of the early years provision

Evaluation procedures within the setting are ingrained in practice, with all staff and management being involved in the process. Small informal changes such as reorganising the creative area benefits children's ability to access it more freely and create more comfortably. In monitoring the areas, resources and how children play with them, staff identified that they needed to adapt resources and the role play areas for the differing ways children played with them. This has been done successfully and enhances their choices and development of imaginative and fantasy play. Within this self-evaluation, it was also identified that although the setting had resources such as books and celebrated a range of cultural festivals through the year, they felt they needed a much more inclusive way for the children to learn about diversity and to respect and acknowledge differences and similarities in a variety of cultural contexts. They have been supported by local agencies and a children's centre in obtaining dual language resources and are working well in partnership with parents to promote the ability of children with English as a second language to fully benefit from the setting and to value their home languages. The very effective key person system, sensitive observations, knowledgeable special needs co-ordinator and excellent team work of the staff ensure that all children are included and valued as individuals. The staff team are committed to the continued improvement of the provision and are reflective of the service being offered with definite plans for future development in place.

Children's welfare is safeguarded as staff have attended child protection training and demonstrate a clear knowledge of correct reporting and referral procedures. They work regularly with relevant agencies to support children and their families. Children's safety is promoted as the environment is secure and hazards are identified and minimised. Younger children have a small, specific area for both their indoor and outdoor play which has a homely feel and ensures they are not bumped by older more energetic children. Risk assessments have been undertaken formally but these are not dated and do not state who has completed them and when they will be reviewed. Even when off the premises staff ensure children's safety as they carry out comprehensive risk assessments for each outing. The children demonstrate that they are aware of how to keep themselves safe as they talk to each other about using scissors carefully and put a safety mat back into place at the bottom of the slide after each turn; lessons obviously learnt from safety conscious staff.

Partnership with parents and carers are extremely positive and parents comment that they are very happy with the provision. Home visits take place before the children start and information gathered is used to make the children feel secure during their settling in visits and that their transitions into the setting are supported. Information gathered is also used to ensure key persons know children's starting points and can immediately begin to plan and provide learning opportunities that meet individual needs. The parents are very involved in their child's learning as progress records are shared with them regularly, a book sharing scheme is in place and they attend craft sessions through the year. In addition, the

active committee is formed by parents and some parents help within the sessions as well. These systems develop secure partnerships with parents that give children a strong sense of security.

The quality and standards of the early years provision

The planning is very distinct to children's current interests and through constant observation this information is used very effectively to extend the activities in the curriculum that support all areas of children's learning. Assessment is ongoing and links in well with planning through weekly staff discussions and evaluation of the learning outcomes. Premises, routines and resources are well planned to take into account the varying ages of the children who use the facility throughout the year. Low-storage and active encouragement enables the children to self-select resources and extend activities as they wish. The 'plan, do, review' system is adapted from the Highscope philosophy and supports children in making and discussing decisions about their play. The key person takes this activity with the children each session in addition to a planned key group time, this is effective in building profiles of children's interests and areas for further support in their development.

Activities are interesting and provide children with opportunities for awe and wonder such as finding treasure buried in the large walk-in sand pit with metal detectors. The sand-pit is an excellent resource and used by the children in many ways such as working together to fill a wheel barrow with sand using spades or as the children describe it 'Bob the buildering'. They also build sandcastles and add water to change the consistency and properties of the sand. The outdoor area is used extremely well to provide the children with an alternative area for play. They can develop their imaginations as they look out to sea from the top of the climbing frame, role play in the garage area and sail away in the pirate ship the children made themselves. Every opportunity inside is mirrored outside, mark-making with chalks, paint and brushes with water, reading books, problem solving and exploring. More large physical opportunities are available outside such as using wheeled resources, kicking balls and sliding and climbing. The outdoor, physical play and nutritious snacks ensure children learn the importance of a healthy lifestyle.

Young children use their initiative when playing skittles, the aim and speed a child can manage with the ball is not enough to knock over many skittles, so after checking the coast is clear a foot is used to encourage the rest to fall over. Staff explain the rules of the game gently and motivate the child to use the expected method by giving lots of praise for their achievement. These very positive behaviour management strategies are implemented consistently by all staff, who always discuss with the children appropriate ways of resolving issues. If none can be fairly decided upon together, staff use sand timers to encourage fair turns and sharing. Even the very young children explain to one another what it means to be fair and demonstrate concern for one another.

Older children have developed their skills of discussion and conversation and use verbal language to arrange, negotiate and inform one another of their ideas and

needs. They can switch in and out of conversations in role play to discuss significant events that happened in their lives and back again. They play imaginative games, discussing roles and acting them out, changing and developing them as they play. During the 'plan, do, review' sessions much of the conversation is between child and adult rather than encouraging the children to discuss, question and analyse each others decisions.

Through practical activities, they are beginning to learn about problem solving, reasoning skills and numeracy as they use simple calculation in number rhymes, regularly count items in the environment and solve problems as they play. Literacy skills are being developed, as the children enjoy listening to stories, looking at books and the environment is print rich, supporting their awareness of print having meaning. Children are developing good habits as active learners.

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.	2

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?	2
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?	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

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