

Hawkshead Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number

EY313900

Inspection date

03/06/2009

Inspector

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Setting address

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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

Hawkshead Pre-School is run by Hawkshead Pre-School Committee. It opened in 2005 and operates from one room in a portacabin. The pre-school is situated in the grounds of Hawkshead Esthwaite Primary School in Hawkshead, Cumbria. A maximum of 20 children may attend the pre-school at any one time. The pre-school is open on Mondays and Wednesdays from 09.00 to 15.00 and Thursdays from 09.00 to 11.30. A birth to five-years-old session runs on Fridays from 09.30 to 11.30 where parents stay with their child. It opens during term-time only. All children share access to the school playground. There are currently 13 children aged from two to under five years on roll, and of these, 11 children receive funding for nursery education. Children come from the village of Hawkshead and nearby villages. The pre-school supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The setting is registered by Ofsted on the Early Years Register.

The pre-school employs four staff; three of these, including the manager, hold appropriate early years qualifications, with one member of staff working towards a qualification.

Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good. The group is very well organised and staff pay close attention to children's individual needs. Children are happy and content throughout the session as they eagerly participate in the good range of indoor and outdoor experiences. They are effectively included because staff know each child well and form excellent partnerships with parents and external agencies who also contribute to children's care and learning. This leads to children making good progress in relation to their starting points. The group is committed to continuous development and effective steps are taken to evaluate and improve provision.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- ensure the toilet for disabled use can be accessed easily and is free from potential hazards and that collected rain water in containers outdoors does not present a potential hazard
- consider security, such as which doors are left unlocked when the group is not in the building
- extend planning to include regular opportunities for children to take part in dance, movement and music activities and for more able children to practise and reinforce problem solving and simple calculation skills in practical ways through self-chosen activity.

The leadership and management of the early years provision

Leaders are well supported by the committee. Policies and procedures are robust, clearly reflect the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage and underpin the very good organisation and practice. Leaders and managers are aware of the strengths of the provision and have recently begun to formalise self-evaluation. Aspects for development, including suggestions from parents, are targeted and acted upon.

Close attention is given to the supervision of children and safeguarding policies are rigorous. Detailed risk assessments are reviewed regularly along with daily checks completed by staff. Potential hazards are minimised in the main; however, the toilet area for disabled use currently doubles up as a storage area and rain water has gathered in open containers outside which children have access to. On occasions the external door is left open when children and adults visit Fletcher's Field, which compromises the security of the building. Indoor and outdoor spaces are well organised to provide a breadth of stimulating activities and resources for children. Staff take effective steps to promote children's good health and well-being and the spread of infection by consistently following and reinforcing good hygiene routines.

Partnerships with parents and other agencies, including the host school, are exceptionally well established and ensure each child's differing needs are catered for effectively. The manager regularly exchanges information with other providers of the Early Years Foundation Stage and uses information gained to inform individual planning and assessment. A number of highly effective visual and verbal strategies are in place to keep parents informed about what is happening at the group and their child's progress. Staff offer guidance and support in preparation for children moving on to primary school. Joint activities take place with the school at times. In the summer term children are introduced to the large playground with school children; this enables children to get used to this type of play with familiar adults who can respond to any anxieties a child may have. Parents' views and ideas are actively sought, valued and acted upon. For example, a picnic was arranged to Fletcher's Field so that parents could find out about the value of places children regularly visit. Clear manageable systems are in place for planning, observing and assessing children's learning and development. This enables staff to effectively share information about children with their parents.

The quality and standards of the early years provision

Children engage in and enjoy a good variety of interesting and fun activities both indoors and outside. They have continuous access to the enclosed outdoor play area where they play and experiment with sand and water, explore the climbing frame or role play in the 'kiosk'. They also have opportunity to grow plants and learn what conditions are required to create healthy flowers and vegetables. The extensive wildlife areas, including Fletcher's Field, offer excellent opportunities for children to find out about pond life and vegetation in wonderful surrounds. For example, some children show high levels of interest and excitement as they find

creatures. They use information sheets to compare and skilfully use language to describe what they can see. Staff are vigilant about children's safety on such trips. Children are consistently reminded about boundaries for behaviour, such as always kneeling down when they are dipping nets into the pond and staying within the gated area. Children establish very good relationships with peers and adults and their behaviour is good. Through engaging in activities together they learn to share, take turns and cooperate. As well as enjoying regular exercise and fresh air, children's health is effectively promoted through their enjoyment of healthy snacks when they sample a good variety of familiar and unfamiliar fruits. They confidently discuss the benefits of the vitamins which 'stop us from getting a cold'.

Children show developing skills as they confidently communicate with peers and staff, listen attentively to adult instructions and show interest in early writing skills and simple text. One child spontaneously decided to send a postcard to their parents. The well equipped writing area encourages and supports these self-initiated ideas well. Children show developing awareness of number and simple calculation during adult-led activities. They count together beyond 10 and take turns to work out how many cups are required at snack times. Some older children show a confident grasp of large numbers. Children also have the opportunity to complete computer games which encourage problem solving skills. There are less frequent opportunities for more able children to practise and reinforce problem solving and reasoning skills in practical ways. Children really enjoy role play and the good selection of resources accommodates children's different ideas well. While there is opportunity for children to spontaneously play instruments and sing songs together, plans do not sufficiently include the exploration of a variety of dance, movement and musical experiences.

Overall the provision for learning is very effective and children make good progress towards the early learning goals. This is a result of staff's skilful planning and interactions with children. Clear, manageable systems ensure that each child's achievements are monitored through systematic observations and assessments; information gained is used effectively to inform next steps in learning. This good foundation equips children well for a smooth transition to their next stage in 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?	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?	1
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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