

Verwood First Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	EY264409
Inspection date	19/05/2009
Inspector	Kevin Wright

Setting address	Verwood First School, Howe Lane, Verwood, Dorset, BH31 6JF
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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).

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

Verwood First Pre-School is registered on the Early Years Register, the compulsory part of the Childcare Register and the voluntary part of the Childcare Register. It opened in 1991 and is based within a self contained unit on the Verwood First School site. It operates from two linked play rooms, a kitchenette, children's toilets, an outdoor play area and has use of the school grounds, the school hall and surrounding outside play areas. The pre-school is situated in Verwood, Dorset and serves the local community. A maximum of 26 children in the early years age range may attend the setting at any one time. There are currently 76 children on roll, which includes 68 children who are in receipt of nursery education funding. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The setting is open Monday to Friday 08:45 to 11:45 and 12:35 to 15:05 term time. The pre-school employs six staff, five of whom are qualified at level three. The manager is currently undertaking an early years level four qualification and one member of staff at level three; one member of staff is undertaking an Early Years Foundation Degree. They are supported by the parent committee and an administrator. The team receives support and guidance from the Early Years Partnership.

Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good and children enjoy their learning and are keen to participate in the good range of opportunities offered as staff have the skills to stimulate children and encourage them to follow their interests. The management and staff ensure children's individual needs are addressed and that they make good progress because assessment and monitoring systems are effective. They have further developed their links with parents to ensure that information flows well in both directions. There is a strong commitment from staff and management to provide high quality education and care, which is evident in the regular evaluation of the provision in order to enhance the learning opportunities for children. This indicates that the setting has a good capacity to continue to improve.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- develop the assessment records to provide a clear picture and overview of children's progress in all the areas of learning and development

The leadership and management of the early years provision

The leadership of the pre-school sets a clear direction with a strong emphasis on personal development, achievement and well-being. The recommendations from the previous inspection report have all been successfully addressed. Useful links with external agencies and the initiation of new systems and procedures have

played a part in addressing those recommendations and demonstrate the effectiveness of the leadership and management of the pre-school. There is a clear vision about the improvement of the pre-school through the development of the Early Years Foundation Stage framework. New approaches to organisation and planning have been introduced and refined to allow the pre-school to meet successfully the demands of the framework. Particularly, the restructuring of the day to achieve the right balance between adult-led activities and child-initiated ones, and the redevelopment of the assessment and monitoring systems to provide the right information for planning for individual progress. Effective self-evaluation has allowed the school to focus on these developments. Procedures to ensure the health and safety of children are fully in place. Staff training is regularly updated and pertinent to the pre-school's requirements. The pre-school works closely with parents and they are complimentary about the work of the pre-school and the way it is run. It is a place that runs smoothly on a day-to-day basis.

The quality and standards of the early years provision

Children move easily between guided activities and those they initiate themselves. Members of staff are alert to children's needs and, where needed, are able to help children sustain interest in activities that are relevant for their individual development. Children generally show they are able to take the initiative and make choices. They work well together, cooperating with one another in the use of equipment or utensils, and collaborating effectively in activities that require role play or partners. They are able to follow instructions when required and respond well to requests from staff. Language development is good. Children's good communication skills are evident in their dialogues with peers and in their question and answer activities with staff. The pre-school has linked with external agencies to support language development, for example, one child has speech therapy. A parent interviewed reported that the pre-school was particularly effective in developing her child's verbal communication and confidence in speaking. Writing is modelled well by staff and children engage in early writing and mark making in, for example, drawing up lists as part of shopping role plays. Staff members give value to children's early writing and the children are confident in their use of writing tools. Some older children have mastered the use of capital letters and can write and recognise their own name and other key words. The use of name tags and signs is well developed, so that children begin to associate sounds with letter shapes. Children show their awareness of language and the broadening of their vocabulary by participating in story telling activities where particular words are singled out for actions, and through songs that associate naming with actions. Children use numbers for counting and grouping. For example, in counting out plates around a table for their afternoon snack. There are too few opportunities for children to use these numeracy skills in a wider range of activities. Children explore their surroundings through a variety of avenues both structured and unstructured. For example, in an outdoor session, two children enjoyed themselves working independently using trowels to investigate the earth and mini-beasts around the plants and seedlings that are grown. During the same session, a child successfully worked with a member of staff studying the sky and clouds in response to a sign board about weather. Children appear confident in using a variety of climbing equipment, walkways and a slide. They show an awareness of others and, in

general, show that they know how to move safely. Children enjoy singing and can mark out simple rhythmic patterns using percussion instruments. Children are alert to their own immediate environment and have helped the staff create a picture-based checklist in relation to safety for them to monitor.

Children's progress files are well maintained and contain evidence of progress across the areas of learning and development with much use of photographic evidence, 'Stepping Stones' sheets are used well to record how children are doing in the various areas. A key person system works efficiently to provide a good level of knowledge about each individual child. Parents report that the key person system has been very effective in providing a good channel of communication between them and the pre-school. They feel that they are kept well informed about their child's progress and general well-being and that they, in turn, are able to inform the school about things affecting their child. However, there is a need to develop the assessment records further to provide a clear picture and overview of children's progress in all the areas of learning and development. The school provides a welcoming environment that addresses the emotional and social needs of the child and this was confirmed by a parent who said that her child's severe trepidation at starting at the pre-school was quickly dissipated once the child had experienced being at the setting.

Partnerships with external agencies are effective in meeting children's needs. For example, one child receives portage and another speech therapy. Children with specific needs are supported well by staff. The pre-school networks well with other settings and agencies so that information on progress and well-being can flow usefully to and fro between the settings via the link-book for children who attend more than one setting. Partnerships with parents are a key part of the process and a new system has been set up so that parents can communicate contextual information about their child. For example, what they have been doing at home or what events they have attended. Assessments are regular and monitor the child's progress so that potential difficulties can be picked up at an early stage. The assessments enable staff to plan effectively the next steps for individual children. The pre-school's policies and procedures are followed by all staff, ensuring that the setting runs efficiently. The children are helped to stay healthy through physical exercise and healthy eating and by being taught to conduct themselves in a safe manner. Safety checks are carried out regularly during each day to ensure children are free to enjoy a safe and secure environment.

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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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