

# Podz

## Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Unique reference number</b>	EY390048
<b>Inspection date</b>	18/08/2009
<b>Inspector</b>	Susan Marriott
<b>Setting address</b>	The Old Stone Barn, Westfield Terrace, Higham Ferrers, Northamptonshire, NN10 8BB
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<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).

Children only attend this setting before and/or after the school day and/or during the school holidays. The judgements in this report reflect the quality of early years provision offered to children during those periods.

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

Podz offers sessional, out-of-school and holiday care and was registered in 2009 under new ownership. It operates from The Old Stone Barn in Higham Ferrers. The accommodation is spread over two floors and includes a kitchen and toilet facilities. Podz is close to Higham Infant and Junior Schools and serves the local community, which is predominantly English-speaking.

The club is registered by Ofsted on the Early Years Register and the compulsory part of the Childcare Register for a maximum of 32 places. There are currently 68 children on roll, of whom 15 are in the Early Years age group. The club is open five days a week during school term times. In the mornings, the club runs from 7.30am to 8.45am and in the afternoon from 3.30pm to 6.00pm. Staff accompany children to and from Higham Infants and Junior Schools. During school holidays, Podz also operates as a playscheme and is open Monday to Friday from 7.30am to 6.00pm. There are five members of staff who work with the children, of whom two hold an appropriate Early Years qualification. One member of staff is working towards an appropriate childcare qualification.

## Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall, the provision is satisfactory. Podz promotes many aspects of children's welfare with success. Staff give inclusive support to ensure that every child receives an enjoyable out-of-school experience, although this is not based upon any form of observational assessment and there are some minor weaknesses in the implementation of systems designed to protect children's safety. There is a practical working partnership with parents through the daily dialogue between staff and parents and required information is displayed in the reception area for parents' perusal. The club has begun to use a system of self-reflection to monitor the quality of provision and identify areas for improvement.

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

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

- increase the frequency of fire drill practice
- verify the identity of any visitors and ensure the system for recording children's arrival and departure is accurately maintained at all times
- undertake sensitive observational assessment in order to improve planning to meet young children's needs.

## The leadership and management of the early years provision

Staff are working in partnership with their local authority adviser to improve the outcomes for children. A recent review of all policies and procedures provides a sound basis for the efficient management of the provision and worn furniture and

equipment are being replaced with new examples. The staff have a clear understanding of child protection and the procedures to follow in accordance with the Local Safeguarding Children Board guidelines. However, some minor lapses in implementation of these procedures reduces their effectiveness and potentially compromises children's safety. For example, visitors are not always asked to produce verifiable identification, before being admitted to the premises and the registration system is currently insufficiently robust to ensure children's safety and welfare at all times. There are sound systems in place to check the suitability of the staff and to ensure that they hold or are working towards early years qualifications. For example, a training and development action plan has been drawn up and put in place. Basic risk assessments are carried out but fire drills are not practised with sufficient frequency to ensure that all children are familiar with the evacuation procedure.

Staff know the children well and this helps them to provide appropriate term-time activities for the beginning and end of the school day. This also means they are aware of children's interests, enabling generally effective planning during the school holidays. Children benefit because the staff ensure that they are available to them for support and guidance or to facilitate their play and activities throughout the session. However, staff are not yet using the Practice Guidance document to inform their planning and they have not yet devised a suitable system of assessment for their setting to ensure that activities build upon children's interests. Staff offer good opportunities for daily verbal communication with parents when they collect their children about how their child has been and the activities they have enjoyed. Basic links are in place with the schools to ensure that information is passed on when children arrive at the provision. The setting has begun to reflect upon the newly established practice to ensure that areas of weakness are identified and acted upon to improve the quality of the provision.

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

Children are provided with suitable opportunities which suitably complement the main Early Years Foundation Stage provision in school. Children relate well to staff and are happy, relaxed and engaged in activities of their choosing. All ages play together harmoniously in this busy environment and children who wish to be quiet and play alone are equally well supported by the staff who check that the children are content and offer to keep them company. Children can independently access play materials which are stored at child-height around the room and staff respond readily to individual requests to share play. For example, staff sit and offer assistance and encouragement to children who wish to complete a challenging jigsaw puzzle. However, staff have not yet established a suitable and manageable assessment system based upon observation of children's play. Consequently, staff are not always able to develop and extend play appropriately to meet the needs of the children and this sometimes limits children's progress and development.

Nutritious snacks and drinks are freely available to sustain the children until they go home. Children's views are increasingly sought regarding menu choices within healthy eating guidelines. For example, children enjoy making their own coleslaw for filling pittas and hot dogs and crisps are allowed once a month as a treat.

Children can make purchase requests for specific toys and equipment such as the recent acquisition of 'Peacemakers'. The children have regular access to outdoor play at the nearby park where there is fixed equipment to promote the development of physical skills. Staff willingly clear indoor floor space to enable indoor physical activities which help the children to burn off any remaining energy. The staff promote positive behaviour and respect in the provision through their consistent management of unwanted behaviour and frequent praise for desirable behaviour. Staff remind children to be careful of the traffic when walking to and from the setting and vigilantly supervise them when crossing the road. In this way, children learn to keep themselves safe and learn valuable skills for the future.

## 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>	3
How well does the provision promote inclusive practice?	3
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement.	3

### Leadership and management

<b>How effectively is provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?</b>	3
How effective is the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement?	3
How well does the setting work in partnership with parents and others?	3
How well are children safeguarded?	3

### Quality and standards

<b>How effectively are children in the Early Years Foundation Stage helped to learn and develop?</b>	3
<b>How effectively is the welfare of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage promoted?</b>	3
How well are children helped to stay safe?	3
How well are children helped to be healthy?	3
How well are children helped to enjoy and achieve?	3
How well are children helped to make a positive contribution?	3
How well are children helped develop skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being?	3

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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
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The provider confirms that the requirements of the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are:	Met
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