

The Discovery Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	EY341225
Inspection date	06/07/2009
Inspector	Lynn Lowery
Setting address	Discovery Primary School, Mountsteven Avenue, Peterborough, Cambridgeshire, PE4 6HX
Telephone number	01733 571001
Email	
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).

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

The Discovery Pre-School is managed by the Pre-School Learning Alliance and registered under its current ownership in 2006. It is situated within Discovery Infant School in Walton, Peterborough. It operates from a large room within the school, which it shares with the after school club, which is also managed by the Pre-School Learning Alliance. It has daily access to the school's playground, trim trail and grassed area. Twice a week the children use the gym in the school. The room and grounds are fully accessible to disabled children and adults.

The pre-school is open every day during term time only. It opens from 09.00 until 15.00 from Monday to Wednesday. On Thursday it runs from 09.00 until 12.45 and on Friday from 09.00 to 11.45. The after-school club opens from 15.00 until 18.00 each weekday, during term-time only. It opens during the holidays if numbers permit. Discovery Pre-School is registered on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. It is registered to take a maximum of 26 children between the ages of two and five years at any one time. There are currently 40 children on roll, 27 of whom receive early years funding. It supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those for whom English is an additional language.

The setting employs five staff who hold suitable Early Years Foundation Stage qualifications.

Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

This provision at The Discovery Pre-School is good and meets children's needs well. It provides a bright and stimulating learning environment where children thoroughly enjoy their learning and make good progress towards achieving the early learning goals. Good leadership and management, based on accurate self-evaluation, ensures continuous improvement and a good capacity to improve still further. Well-qualified staff work very well together as a team and provide a good role model for the children. The pre-school is inclusive and provides good support for children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and for whom English is an additional language.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- introduce a system to monitor the children's activity choices, to ensure each child has a balance of experiences
- make better use of adult-led activities to ensure children of differing ages and abilities are suitably challenged.

The leadership and management of the early years provision

Good leadership and management work effectively with the school and parents. The parents say they are well informed about ongoing activities and their children's progress. They feel very welcome and find the acting manager and her staff very helpful and approachable. They appreciate the chance to talk informally with their children's key workers and to attend parents' meetings each term to discuss their children's progress. Safeguarding procedures meet requirements and, together with regular risk assessments, ensure that the children are kept safe from harm. All the required policies and procedures are in place. Staff regularly attend training to ensure their knowledge is up to date and continually being extended.

There has been good improvement since the last inspection and all the recommendations in the last report have been fully addressed. New staff have been appointed and the learning environment, planning and assessment, resources, and the staff's understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage requirements have all improved. There are strong links with the infant school and the children benefit from the opportunity to use the school's outdoor facilities and the hall. A new assessment system provides the reception teacher and parents with helpful information about their children's achievements. There is a strong sense of teamwork and staff are committed to developing the setting and improving practice. Self-evaluation is good. Together, staff have begun to complete the Ofsted self-evaluation form and have put together an action plan which accurately identifies the areas requiring development. They have worked hard to submit a bid to secure funding to develop the outdoor area and to provide additional resources. The pre-school runs very smoothly on a day to day basis and resources are thoughtfully selected, used well and carefully maintained.

The quality and standards of the early years provision

Children achieve well because teaching is good and activities engage their interest, so they are enthusiastic and well motivated. All the six areas of learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage are covered each week and there is a good balance of adult-led activities and those initiated by the children. Staff use their knowledge of individual children's interests to plan activities they will enjoy. For example, they investigated what plants need to grow, because one of the children received a plant as a present. However, there is no system in place to monitor children's choices to ensure they choose a balance of activities from the wide range available. Written planning is detailed, but it does not show how activities will be adapted for children of differing ages and abilities. This means that occasionally a few children are not fully challenged in their learning. Frequent and detailed observation and assessment of children takes place and key workers regularly use this information to identify the next steps in children's learning.

Children have a timetabled outdoor session each morning and afternoon when they use the Reception class' playground. Access to the school's gym twice a week further supports effectively the children's physical development. Children are carefully encouraged to show curiosity and independence. A good example of this

was seen during the inspection when children searched for worms and ants in the soil and then examined them with magnifying glasses. Creative development is promoted well. Children enjoy role play and have daily access to paint, collage and model making materials. For example, children love making collages using dried leaves, seeds and grasses and they quickly become engrossed in making things with dough. Children enjoy singing together and doing the actions that relate to the songs. Staff encourage children to develop their language skills well and staff regularly engage children in conversation. Children enjoy reading at the end of the session and many choose to look at and share books. Mark-making opportunities are provided and children are encouraged thoughtfully to try to write words if they want to.

Children's welfare is very important to staff and children are well cared for. Occasional accidents are dealt with professionally by staff with first aid qualifications. Children are taught to handle equipment, such as scissors, carefully and to move around safely showing an awareness of others. They eat together very sociably and serve their own healthy snacks. They know about healthy foods and that they must wash their hands before eating. They learnt a lot in the 'Health Bus' when it visited the school. Children are also taught how to keep themselves safe. For example, they understand they should not talk to strangers. Children's personal development is good because staff are good role models and create a very supportive atmosphere. They are quick to praise children for being polite, thoughtful and helpful. Behaviour is good and children are happy to share and help each other. Children clearly enjoy their time at pre-school and are fully engaged throughout the session.

Staff are very supportive of children who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities and have established good links with external support agencies. This means that they can provide effective and individualised support. Currently, staff are all learning to speak Polish so they can better support the Polish children who are due to start pre-school in September. Close links with the school and opportunities to visit the reception class before they start, help ensure a smooth transition, as do the home visits to children before they start pre-school.

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