

Ickleford Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspector

Lynne Kathleen Talbot

Setting address

Village Hall, Arlesey Road, Ickleford, Hitchin, Hertfordshire,
SG5 3TG

Telephone number

0773317 8879

Email

Type of setting

Childcare on non-domestic premises

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Royal Exchange Buildings
St Ann's Square
Manchester
M2 7LA

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

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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*.

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Description of the setting

Ickleford Pre-School registered in October 1992 and has been operational since 1987. The provision operates from two rooms within the village hall in Ickleford, Hertfordshire. The building is accessed via a ramp. Children have access to a secure outdoor play area.

The provision is open each weekday during term-time only. Sessions for the nursery group are from 9.05am to 12.05pm Mondays to Thursdays with playgroup sessions from 9.15am to 11.45am Mondays to Fridays. Lunch club runs from the end of the sessions until 1.00pm on Mondays to Thursdays. The setting operates Friday sessions for the nursery group from 12.15pm to 3.15pm. A maximum of 41 children may attend the provision at any one time. The setting receives funding for Nursery Education and is registered on the Early Years Register.

There are currently 40 children on roll, all of whom are within the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). Six children attend other settings such as the early years unit of the local primary school or childminders. There are eight staff members. Of these, five hold relevant childcare qualifications and one to attend training to achieve a recognised childcare qualification.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is satisfactory.

Planning for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) covers all areas of learning using a good range of resources ensuring that children receive experiences that foster good progress overall. Staff create a very welcoming environment, using good safeguarding procedures and sound risk assessments, ensuring they have accurate knowledge of each child's needs to ensure that every child is included. Partnerships with parents are well-developed helping to promote partnership working and foster children's development whilst partnerships with other settings are developing. Procedures for self-evaluation and internal review, to ensure continued improvement and outcomes for children, are being established and broadened to address all areas of management as well as learning and development.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- develop the planning to fully incorporate children's next steps and individual interests, and provide opportunities for children to consistently practise and extend their skills with particular reference to health and hygiene awareness, problem solving and the development of independent learning to enhance their good progress towards the Early Learning Goals
- develop opportunities for children to gain an increased knowledge of other

- cultures and beliefs
- develop further the links with all other settings providing for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage to ensure continuity and coherence to support outcomes for children
- develop further the use of self-evaluation and quality improvement processes as the basis of ongoing internal review; ensure staff appraisals serve to identify the training needs of staff and implement a programme of continuing professional development for staff to ensure those needs are met and continue improving outcomes for children.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Thorough safeguarding procedures and good staff knowledge ensure that children are fully protected. Staff are vigilant in ensuring that only vetted persons have access to children by monitoring all entry to the setting and by having clear procedures for seeking clearances for any volunteers or bank staff. Clear recruitment and induction procedures ensure that staff working with children are suitable to do so and hold the required clearances. Staff use sound risk assessments to minimise hazards. Managers and committee have clear expectations for development and support staff to attend training. However, whilst self-evaluation processes have been begun these have not addressed a system to use appraisals to identify staff training needs or implement a programme of development for staff or for the continued review of systems of management to ensure ongoing internal review.

Children's individual learning styles are respected, as shown by the opportunities for active learning in all areas, thereby ensuring that children achieve. Staff are well-deployed throughout the setting. The environment is conducive to learning, safe and well-cared for; staff re-evaluate the use of the rooms used to ensure that children have opportunities to use space designed for both younger and older age groups, and time spent to learn from each other. Resources are mostly well-used to achieve the planned goals for learning and development. However, opportunities during daily care are not utilised sufficiently to enable children to benefit from independent and spontaneous learning during their chosen activities. This includes problem solving and health and hygiene. Consequently outcomes for children are good overall. Managers and staff work well with parents to ensure that partnerships are established. Methods of communication such as questionnaires, a website and parental consultations support the relationship. One consultation session was organised for a weekend showing a good attitude towards including all families and parents. Parents are invited to review the learning journals and to contribute to them helping to develop a shared learning approach between the setting and home. Staff have worked to develop a relationship with other settings when children move and provide summary development sheets for children to share with those settings but there is yet to be an ongoing system to support cohesive and ongoing learning whilst children attend more than one setting.

The setting places the promotion of children's personal, social and emotional development at the heart of their work. They are aware of children's individual

learning styles, as shown by the next steps identified for each child, ensuring that each child is able to achieve. They use some planning and play provision to promote diversity and social awareness however, there are only limited opportunities for children to fully explore diversity, cultural awareness, the local and wider community, and the needs of others around them.

The quality and standards of the early years provision and outcomes for children

Children are offered a range of activities that help them make good progress overall in their learning and development. Assessment through recorded observations is clear and the information gained is used effectively to identify next steps. Systematic and spontaneous observations track progression. However, planning is built around long-term themes and does not build on the next steps as identified within learning journals or build from child-led interests or child-initiated learning. This means that while activities are planned to offer children learning opportunities within all areas of learning some opportunities are not used to capitalise on children's own interests as they emerge and build.

Children show an avid interest in stories and reading. They enjoy using large picture books without text to discuss and tell the story to staff. They are able to anticipate and make considered choices regarding what may be happening on the page using good imagination and creativity. Children show interest in initial sounds and letters and are able to begin identifying letters that start popular words. Children of all ages are imaginative and engage in role play easily and for extended periods of time. For instance, older children organise an aeroplane by themselves bringing keyboards to use, discussing passengers, deciding who will be pilots and animatedly telling staff where they are going on holiday estimating how long it will take to arrive. They use skill as they estimate time and describe what they are doing. Younger children explore care for others as they care for baby dolls telling adults that they must care for them because they are sad and going through routines of cuddling them, feeding them and changing them making links between what they know and see and their imagination. All children show that they are becoming aware of social behaviours. They listen carefully, respond to requests and enjoy using the display boards which show examples of positive behaviours praised by staff and attached to picture boards to share with others. Children are seen to comfort other children when they are sad bringing puppets for them to play with and trying to include them in their play. Children are keen to explore technology independently confidently using laptop computers and listening stations with audio books. These skills will prepare them for their future education and society.

Outdoor play is enjoyed each day with a good variety of wheeled toys as well as using most activities that may be used indoors in the outdoor area. Children explore growth and the natural world taking part in planting in raised beds and growing potatoes, strawberries, tomatoes and carrots. Some items, such as sunflowers, are planted to both observe and compare, measuring the height at the setting, whilst others are taken home to share with families. Children explore natural materials such as water and sand where they explore mark-making using

their fingers in the sand and on the table beginning to explore letters. Children have some ownership of their health and hygiene and follow daily routines. However, staff fail to take advantage to encourage children to understand independence and take control of their own health such as regarding the use of tissues or preparation for meals and snacks. Children become aware of environmental issues and are working towards the environmental schools project. They help to collect food scraps, take part in recycling materials and participate in garden open days within the village. They also take part in a 'litter pick-up' in the village helping to encourage their awareness of sustainability and care for the 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

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

How well does the setting meet the needs of the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?	3
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	3

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

How effectively is the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	2
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding	2
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	3
The effectiveness of partnerships	3
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	2

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
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Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	2
The extent to which children feel safe	3
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	3
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	2
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	2

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