

Knebworth Pre-School Group

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspector	Jo Rowley
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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.

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Description of the setting

Knebworth Pre-school opened in 1966. The pre-school operates from two rooms, a kitchen and an outdoor area with the optional use of other rooms. It is located within the Trinity Church hall in Knebworth, Hertfordshire and is managed by a voluntary management committee.

The pre-school is open each weekday during term-time only. Sessions are from 9:00am until 3:00pm on Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays, and from 9:00am until 12:00 noon on Fridays with an optional 'drop-off' club from 8:30am each morning. Children attend both full and part-time sessions and all children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

The setting receives funding for early education and is registered on the Early Years Register. A maximum of 28 children may attend the pre-school at any one time and there are currently 45 children aged from two to under five years on roll. The pre-school is also registered by Ofsted on the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. The pre-school serves the local community and supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language.

There are eight staff members. Of these, seven hold an appropriate early years qualification including one member of staff who is a graduate and one staff member is currently working towards an early years degree. The pre-school has held the Hertfordshire Quality Standard Accreditation for the last nine years.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

All staff have developed excellent links with parents and use clear procedures for observing and assessing children. This enables them to acquire a thorough understanding of each child's needs and interests and thereby offer them appropriate support to ensure that all are effectively included. Staff knowledge of the Early Years Foundation Stage is good and they use this along with their knowledge of individual children to ensure that children are offered activities that successfully promote their learning and development. Excellent procedures for safeguarding children and working with others creates a secure environment where children's welfare is promoted and they feel safe. Staff are motivated and have a positive approach to self-evaluation. There are thorough systems in place to support the ongoing review of the setting's work, enabling them to plan and implement improvements. Therefore, they provide a service which is responsive to the needs of children and their families.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- give children time to pursue their learning without interruption, and enable them to return to activities.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children's welfare is very well promoted as the setting has clear and effective safeguarding procedures in place. Staff have attended additional training to ensure that they keep up-to-date with this area of work and they regularly review and update policies to reflect this. They work consistently with other agencies and this helps to ensure that children are protected at all times. A robust recruitment procedure and stringent checks ensure that all staff are suitable to work with children. Thorough risk assessments and daily checks mean that hazards, to children, are minimised. Excellent daily practice, such as ongoing explanations from staff, reinforce children's understanding of safety issues. For example, they understand why it is important to keep all chair legs on the floor so that they do not fall or hurt somebody.

The leaders have high expectations and a clear vision for continuing improvement and this is shared by the rest of the staff team. Staff demonstrate a positive attitude to feedback through parental questionnaires, and sensitively introduce changes whilst monitoring their impact. An example of this is that the setting now offers a 'drop off' club each morning before the session starts to enable parents to work. The leaders support staff in attending further training and this enables them to promote an environment where both staff and children develop positive attitudes to learning. The well-established staff team are very supportive of each other and work well together to ensure that children's care is consistent and that they are fully supported in their everyday achievements. Resources are used well to promote children's learning and development. For example, staff plan a variety of opportunities and experiences with rotated resources to meet the individual needs of all children, promoting inclusion.

The leaders and staff have a good understanding of promoting equality and diversity in their setting. They have policies and procedures in place which are implemented daily, to ensure that they offer a service which is inclusive for all children, and their families. Excellent relationships with parents mean that they work well together to ensure that they understand each child's background and individual needs. Parents receive thorough information about the setting and their child's progress. For example, through newsletters, notice boards, daily liaison books, key person meetings and regular parent evenings. The setting works closely with other professionals, such as the local school to promote continuity of care. An example of this is where children that are moving onto school are able to meet their new teacher in the pre-school environment before visiting the same teacher at the school, therefore, promoting children's confidence and sense of belonging.

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

Children make good progress in all areas of learning because they are well supported by staff who have an effective knowledge and understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage. Clear procedures are in place, and known to all staff, for assessing children and this information is then used to inform the planning of group and individual activity plans. Children are offered activities that are enjoyable and promote their development because all staff take an active role in the planning process. Children are fully encouraged to explore and develop their own play with staff intervening to assist the children when needed. An example of this is where a group of children are building a train track. They begin to build the track confidently, as they come across a more difficult part they ask a member of staff for help. She supports the children in the building of this track whilst using the opportunity to extend their learning by asking 'do you know which pieces we might need to make it fit?'. Children sit and think for a short time before realising that they need a piece with a different end on it so that it fits. Therefore, children take an active part in their own learning and are developing positive attitudes to this.

The environment is welcoming and generally accessible, enabling children to make independent choices. For example, children playing with the train track extend their play by adding child-size chairs to make their own train. The good organisation of the indoor play area means that children are free to move about between a wide range of activities that promote their development. However, children are not always given the opportunity to finish what they start as they are asked to tidy up. Therefore, children's learning is interrupted on occasions. The good use of resources means that children are supported in gaining skills that will help them in later life. For example, children of all ages learn about the uses of information and communication technology as they use the smart interactive board. A group of children use the smart board to draw their own pictures with their fingers. The children are then asked to talk about what they have drawn. One child talks about the rollercoaster they have drawn. Children's learning is extended further as discussion leads onto the different sizes of roller coasters where language, such as big, bigger, fast, little and taller is used.

Children's enjoyment is clearly seen and their learning extended when staff join in with their play. For example, children wear dressing-up clothes as they prepare for a 'wedding'. One child decides on being the bridesmaid as another decides to be the bride. On occasions they struggle to put the outfits on so a member of staff, who has been observing the children, is on hand to help. As the staff member joins in she too puts on a costume as she is invited to the 'wedding'. Children's self-esteem and confidence are very well promoted as staff consistently praise children with comments such as 'you look lovely' and 'well done, that's excellent'. The children are building up strong friendships with each other as for example, they are seen waiting near to the door for their friends to arrive at the setting and holding out their hand to hold another child's hand during physical play. Children are developing a good understanding of maths as they participate in a range of activities and experiences to support this. For example, whilst making Christmas

decorations they talk extensively about shapes.

Children show a strong sense of security and their behaviours demonstrate that they feel safe within the setting. They confidently choose resources, express their views and approach staff for help whenever needed. They have a very good awareness of safety issues and show a mature understanding of taking responsibility for their own and others' safety. For example, each child signs themselves in and out of the pre-school. The very good procedures for working with parents and other professionals mean that children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are offered appropriate and consistent support to enable them to participate and make good progress. Children engage in a wide range of physical activities, including daily exercises and music and movement sessions, thereby increasing their understanding of the importance of exercise in maintaining a healthy lifestyle.

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?	2
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	2

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

How effectively is the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	2
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding	1
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	2
The effectiveness of partnerships	1
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	1

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	1
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	1
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	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