

# Hail Weston Pre-School Activity Group

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Unique reference number</b>	221741
<b>Inspection date</b>	28/01/2010
<b>Inspector</b>	Anna Davies

<b>Setting address</b>	Hail Weston Village Hall, High Street, Hail Weston, St Neots, Huntingdon, Cambridgeshire, PE19 5JS
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<b>Type of setting</b>	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*.

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## **Description of the setting**

Hail Weston Pre-school Activity Group is run by a voluntary management committee. It opened approximately 23 years ago and operates from one main room within the village hall in Hail Weston, Cambridgeshire. All children have access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area. The setting opens each weekday during term time only and sessions are from 9.30am to 12.00pm. There is also a lunch club from 12.00pm to 1.00pm each day. Access into and out of the pre-school is via a concrete ramp and there are disabled toilet facilities.

The setting is registered on the Early Years Register. A maximum of 26 children may attend the setting at any one time. There are currently 37 children aged from two to under five years on roll. The setting currently supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

There are seven members of staff, four of whom hold early years qualifications to National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) level three. Two staff hold NVQ Level two qualifications and both of these are working towards a Level three qualification. One other member of staff is working towards a Level three qualification. The setting provides funded early education for three and four-year-olds.

The setting has achieved the Pre-School Learning Alliance 'Aiming for Quality' accreditation award and this is reviewed annually.

## **The overall effectiveness of the early years provision**

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

The friendly and inclusive nature of the pre-school ensures that all children receive a warm welcome and settle well with the support of trusted, enthusiastic and caring adults. Pre-school staff have developed good systems and skills for observing and assessing children's progress towards the early learning goals and planning for their future learning. This together with the provision of a stimulating range of activities, toys and resources, ensures that children make good progress in their learning overall. Good partnership working with parents and carers ensures that the staff know the children well and are able to effectively respect and meet their individual needs.

The setting is very positively led by the two newly appointed joint managers who together with a committed staff team and committee, constantly strive to develop the provision in consultation with the parents and children. There are clear aims to continuously improve and further develop the practice of the setting.

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

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

- extend opportunities for children to further develop their creative and imaginative skills, this particularly relates to enabling children to freely access a range of resources for joining things together and combining different materials
- develop closer links with other settings providing for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), to further support children's learning and development
- look at different ways to make the maximum and most effective use of the outdoor play space during sessions.

## **The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision**

Systems to ensure that children are appropriately safeguarded are robust. Recruitment procedures are secure and all staff have undergone the necessary checks to ensure their suitability. As well as this, there are good systems in place to ensure staff's continued suitability throughout their employment. All staff have attended training with regards to safeguarding children, they have a good understanding of the signs and symptoms of abuse and the procedures to follow should they have concerns about a child in their care. Staff have clear roles and responsibilities during the sessions as well as involvement in the planning and assessment arrangements. The premises are safe and secure both indoors and outdoors and staff show a clear awareness of promoting children's safety. For example, they cornered off areas unsuitable for children to play such as where the roots of the tree have raised the tarmac. Risk assessments are of good quality and effective in identifying and minimising potential risks to children. Fire safety is carefully considered and staff encourage children to become involved in learning about this aspect of safety. For example, children help to test the smoke alarms and use a 'thumbs up' signal when they hear the 'beep' which they know means that they are working correctly.

All required records and documentation are in place to support children's safety and wellbeing. Policies are currently being reviewed and updated. The pre-school is bright and welcoming, clean and safe. Staff set up a good range of activities prior to children arriving. They have considered further ways to enable children to self select toys and resources. For example, they use a photographic inventory and album which shows children's past activities and other toys stored elsewhere which they can indicate they wish to use. Children use the spacious outdoor area every day, usually at a set time each session. This means that this space is not used to maximum effect during all of the session to enable children to make their own choices about indoor and outdoor play and learning. Children's views are valued. For example, they are asked which activities they have enjoyed at the end of the session and requests made by children are included in future planning.

Partnerships with parents are good. Parents state that settling in procedures are sensitive to the needs of the children and parents. A good range of information is obtained from parents about their children's likes and dislikes and aspects of their learning and development so that staff are aware of children's individual needs prior to starting. This ensures that children settle well. Parents are encouraged to

support children's learning by helping out during sessions, borrowing books from the pre-school with their children and looking after 'scruffy teddy' when he comes home with their child to enjoy family experiences. Weekly notes inform parents about the topics and activities their children will be doing and ways that parents can help support these. They are kept up to date about children's progress through parents evenings, an annual written report and daily discussions with staff. Pre-school staff have initiated communication with other settings that children in their care also attend. However, they have not taken this any further to ensure that information, particularly in relation to children's learning and development, is shared between settings in order to promote a consistent learning experience.

The newly appointed joint managers share the same vision for the pre-school, to constantly strive and improve the quality of care and learning for all children. They have created clear action plans along with the use of other methods of self evaluation to ensure that they are able to identify the settings key strengths and areas for development. As a result, their capacity to maintain continuous improvement is good.

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

There is a secure key person system in place which benefits children. Staff have a good understanding of individual children's needs and next steps of learning. They spend time at children's level supporting the activities on offer. Staff effectively adapt activities according to the individual abilities of the children taking part. For example, when a child finds it difficult to complete a jigsaw puzzle the member of staff breaks the task down into manageable, smaller tasks, going back to look at the picture on the box, finding all the straight edged pieces and looking for pieces with the same colour on to begin piecing together. As a result of such support, children persevere and are proud of themselves when they complete the puzzle.

Weekly planning takes account of children's requests, next steps of learning and interests. Key activity planners illustrate the learning objectives and prompts for staff about how to extend the activity. Regular snapshot, in-depth and mapping observations are recorded for all children to identify what they know and what they enjoy. This information is used to identify next steps which informs the planning of activities. These systems are regularly monitored by the joint managers to ensure they are effective.

Children display a strong sense of belonging. For example, they have their own coat hooks and drawers and share fruit at snack time and items at 'show and tell' that they have brought in from home, with their friends. They are very familiar with routines such as stopping still and raising their hands when staff call out 'tall trees' to deliver a message to the group. Children work well together as they wash cups and plates in the home corner, some washing, others drying. They have opportunities to recognise their own name as they self register at the snack bar and find a sticker with their name on to label their art work. They have opportunities for mark making on white boards, chalk boards and using the pens, pencils and paper from the graphics trolley. They enjoy reading, pretending to

'read' to others, holding the book so that their friends can see the pictures. Numeracy is successfully filtered through into everyday activities such as counting the number of children present. Some children independently use number language in their play, for example, telling each other during a board game, how many more playing cards they need to get. Children enjoy belonging to a 'gardening club' where they help to grow fruit, vegetables, bulbs and plants. They help to hoe and weed and to feed the birds. This gives children good opportunities to learn about the natural environment. They learn about other countries and cultures through stimulating displays and resources reflecting diversity.

Children have satisfactory opportunities to develop their creative and imaginative skills. For example, they describe what 'hot' and 'cold' custard tastes like, paint at the easel and spend much time using small world toys. A good range of art and craft activities are planned and adult led. However, there are limited opportunities for children to freely access and experiment with, resources for joining things together and combining different materials. Children use their large physical skills as they ride the scooters and sit and ride toys outside, negotiating the painted roadway and pretending to pay for petrol. Their fine motor skills are developing well as they take part in more intricate activities such as cutting play dough and threading cards.

Children's welfare is supported well. Most staff have current first aid qualifications which ensures that they are able to deal with injuries effectively. Accident records are accurately maintained to ensure that relevant information can be shared with parents. A lovely, healthy and nutritious range of snacks are offered, children enjoy this 'rolling' snack and make healthy choices. A lunch club enables children to share a relaxed, social experience with packed lunches brought from home. Specific dietary and medical needs are well documented. This information is shared, for example, with the parent helper preparing snack, to ensure that children's safety and wellbeing is promoted. Children generally follow good hygiene routines. Staff are fair and consistent in their approach towards behaviour management. Children understand the expectations of the staff and as a result, behave well.

## 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

<b>How well does the setting meet the needs of the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?</b>	2
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	2

### The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

<b>How effectively is the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?</b>	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	2
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	2
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

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### Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

<b>Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	2
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	2
The extent to which children feel safe	2
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	2
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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