

Netherton Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspector Janet Skippins

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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*.

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Description of the setting

Netherton Pre-school was registered in 1980. It is managed by a voluntary management committee of parents. It operates in the Methodist Church hall in Netherton, Huddersfield. Children are accommodated in one large playroom with access to an enclosed outdoor area. The playgroup is registered on the Early Years Register. A maximum of 24 may attend the playgroup at any one time. There are currently 35 children aged from two and a half to under five years old on role, some on a part-time basis. The playgroup supports children with learning difficulties and disabilities. It is open each weekday morning from 9.30am to 12pm during term time. There are four members of staff who work directly with the children, all of whom hold relevant childcare qualifications. The manager of the playgroup is a qualified teacher. The playgroup is a member of the Pre-school Learning Alliance.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children are happy and settled at the playgroup and benefit from a warm and welcoming environment. They are making good progress towards the early learning goals and their welfare is promoted well. The provider is able to assess the setting's strengths and weaknesses, and has a positive attitude to improvement. However, some aspects of the provision are in development. All documentation for the safe and efficient management of the setting is in place. Parents have a high level of involvement with the playgroup.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- continue to develop the observation and assessment records to show the next steps for children's learning
- extend resources and activities to support children's learning about diversity especially with regard to disability
- arrange for drinking water to be more accessible so that children help themselves
- continue to develop the system for self evaluation
- continue to develop the outdoor area so that children are able to access resources for large scale construction.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The manager and staff have a good knowledge of safeguarding children. There is a clear, detailed policy in place and the playgroup works well with parents ensuring that the welfare and protection of children is a high priority. Staff vigilance ensures

that visitors are closely monitored and adults working with children are suitable to do so. The playgroup premises and outdoor area are safe, because of detailed written risk assessments are used effectively. Children are taught to be safety conscious, for example, by learning about the danger of fire through practising regular fire evacuations.

The setting runs very smoothly on a day-to-day basis, with staff having a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities and resources are used well to ensure the children have all the equipment they need. Consequently, all the areas of learning are covered continuously. The stimulating environment both indoors and out helps children progress well towards the early learning goals. Staff have gained a high level of knowledge and understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage through attending training. They put this knowledge into practice by planning a good range of stimulating activities based on children's interests. This results in the children showing a positive attitude to their learning, and having good levels of achievement in relation to their starting points and capabilities. However, although the playgroup staff observe and record the children's development well, the records do not show the next steps for children's learning. The playgroup is working hard to develop systems to build relationships with childminders to maintain continuity for the children. There are very good partnerships with parents. Relationships of mutual trust are maintained, because parents are made to feel welcome when they bring their children to playgroup. Most parents take turns to help at the playgroup and some join the management committee. They receive information in regular newsletters about the planned activities. This helps them to support their children to learn through play at home. Parents say they are very happy with the playgroup. They say they find the staff very approachable, and feel they can stay and settle their children for as long as necessary.

At the last inspection a number of recommendations were made. The playgroup was asked to develop children's awareness of healthy lifestyles. The children are now more actively involved in preparation of snacks, for example, they spread toppings on crackers and talk with staff about which foods are healthy and which are not. Staff have now familiarised themselves with the Local Safeguarding Children Board procedures and their policy on safeguarding children has been updated. This enhances the safety of children. The playgroup was also asked to ensure that all required documentation such as records of committee members was available for inspection. This has been given attention and all written documents, with the exception of the self evaluation form are available for inspection. The playgroup was asked to provide additional resources to encourage large scale construction outdoors, and to enhance opportunities for the children to design and make in the continuous provision. The playgroup has applied for a grant to improve their outdoor area to make the large construction materials more readily available. Opportunities to design and make are always available indoors, for example wooden construction shapes are in constant use. Some children use these to replicate features of their local environment, for example, during the inspection a three-year-old child built a tower with blocks which was topped by a cylindrical shape then a triangle and said it was Castle Hill. This is a well-known Huddersfield landmark which can be seen from the playgroup. Books have been introduced into the various play areas to stimulate interest and extend challenge in

activities, for example, there is a book about sandcastles near the sand tray, one about scissors on gluing table and one about washing laundry in the home corner. Also, a variety of challenging activities are now planned for the outdoor environment.

The playgroup is starting to use a formal self-evaluation system, but this was not available for inspection. However, through working closely with the local authority a quality development plan is in place, shows the playgroup staff and committee are aware of the strengths and weaknesses of the playgroup. For example, it includes keeping the self-evaluation form up to date and making the improvements to the outdoor area. This demonstrates the playgroup's commitment to continuous improvement.

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

Children's learning and development is good in relation to their starting points and capabilities. Children are confident and learning independence and social skills. They are well motivated, very happy and settled in playgroup. The environment is well organised in clearly defined areas and the children have sufficient space to move about freely. They are able to self-select from a good range of toys and resources. Children stay healthy because they have daily access to the outdoor area. Here, they take part in growing potatoes, digging in soil and riding their trikes. They enjoy healthy snacks of fresh fruit with milk or water to drink. However, although drinking water is available, it is not presented so that is easy for the children to help themselves to. Children make a positive contribution to the running of the playgroup and develop skills for the future. For example, when they arrive at playgroup they recognise their name on their coat hook and hang their coats up. They help themselves to cartons of milk, then clear away when they have finished. Children behave well and learn to keep themselves safe by responding to the rules, such as walking rather than running indoors and being very careful when they go down the stairs to the outdoor area.

Children have high levels of concentration and spend long periods working independently using the computer to develop their I.T. skills. Messy play is given high priority in the playgroup with children being free to access paint, glue, dough, sand and water at all times. They independently help themselves to books and look at them in the comfortable book corner. They also use the many reference books which link to the play activities. Counting skills are developing well because children enjoy singing number rhymes and they are encouraged to count during play activities. They also enjoy visits to the local fire station where they learn about the dangers of fire. They are beginning to learn about people from different backgrounds when parents come in to the playgroup to explain about their culture. They also use resources, such as, books and dressing up clothes and celebrate festivals from around the world. However, resources, displays and planned activities to support their learning about differences between people, especially those with disabilities, are limited. Staff spend time talking to the children, supporting them and they provide a good balance of adult-led and child-initiated

activities. The children relate well to staff, for example, they talk to them confidently and staff take time to listen and extend their language.

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	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

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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	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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