

# Explorers Link Club

Inspection report for early years provision

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**Unique reference number** EY394947  
**Inspection date** 08/12/2009  
**Inspector** Susan Patricia Birkenhead

**Setting address** Penketh South Community Primary School, Finlay Avenue,  
Penketh, WARRINGTON, WA5 2PN  
**Telephone number** 07759 310 435  
**Email** linda.lowe15@btinternet.com  
**Type of setting** Childcare on non-domestic premises

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

T: 08456 404040  
Textphone: 0161 618 8524  
E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
W: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://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*.

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).

Children only attend this setting before and/or after the school day and/or during the school holidays. The judgements in this report reflect the quality of early years provision offered to children during those periods.

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

Explorers Link Club was registered in 2009. The setting is privately owned and operates from Penketh South Community Primary School situated in the Penketh area of Warrington. Children are cared for within the community room and the school hall located on the ground floor. There is a secure area available for outdoor play. A maximum of 30 children may attend the setting at any one time. The setting is open five days a week from 7.45am to 8.45am and 3pm to 6pm during term times and 8am to 6pm during school holidays all year round. Children attend from Penketh South Community Primary School and St Vincents Catholic Primary School next door.

There are currently 56 children on roll aged from four to 12 years, of these, eight are within the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). This provision is registered by Ofsted on the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. The setting supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

The setting employs four members of staff including the manager who is also the owner. Three staff hold early years qualifications. The setting receives support from the local authority early years advisory team.

## The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is satisfactory.

Children's welfare requirements are promoted well and the positive links the manager develops with outside agencies in support of children with special educational needs and/or disabilities contribute to the inclusive environment. The implementation of the learning and development requirements of the EYFS are in the early stages and staff begin to develop a appropriate understanding. Positive relationships develop with parents and links with the teaching staff within the school are suitably developing. Suitable systems for evaluating and monitoring the setting's practices and procedures are in place and others are planned for the future. The manager demonstrates a strong commitment to the continuous improvement within the link club and identifies some areas for the ongoing development of the club.

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

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

- further promote children's self-help skills, for example, by allowing them to pour their own drinks at snack time and serve food to others
- ensure risk assessments include all areas accessible to children, for example, the adventure play materials in the outdoor area
- enhance the planning of activities and further develop observations to ensure they are linked to the children's individual interests, their next steps and all

- areas of learning
- further develop links with other providers to ensure children's progress towards the early learning goals is clearly monitored and activities complement the delivery of EYFS.

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

Children are appropriately safeguarded because staff have a sound understanding of the indicators of abuse, know the procedures to follow should they have concerns, and the recruitment and vetting procedures in place ensure their suitability. The detailed written policy, which is shared with parents and staff, highlights the procedures should allegations be made against staff, therefore contributing to the protection of children. Organised systems are in place to ensure all the required records for the safe, efficient management of the setting and children's needs are accessible. The detailed policy file is accessible to parents and they receive information regarding complaints and safeguarding. Written risk assessments, which are reviewed regularly, generally reflect associated hazards and how these are minimised; however, the adventure play area accessible to children outdoors has not been included.

A good level of qualified staff are employed and effective key person system is in place. They hold regular staff meetings to discuss the link club practices and the manager conducts regular appraisals to review staff performance and training needs. The manager uses various different approaches to evaluate and monitor the effectiveness of the setting, which include children's questionnaires, snack evaluation forms they complete and the suggestion box. The manager is clearly motivated for the continuous development of the setting and identifies aspects she wishes to develop. These include the creation of a planting area outdoors, involving parents in the evaluation of the setting by providing questionnaires, and the completion of the self-evaluation where the club's strengths and future plans can be outlined to promote better outcomes for children.

Positive relationships develop with parents who are welcomed into the setting and engage in discussion regarding their child's day and well-being. A good level of information is shared with parents initially. This includes the parent prospectus, which informs them of club's practices, the EYFS curriculum and reference to the club's policies. Positive comments from parents outline how they are more than happy with the care their children receive and refer to staff as 'incredible' in the support they offer to children with additional needs. The manager attends parent evenings organised by the school to share information about the club and informally discusses children's development with the reception class teacher to suitably support a consistent approach to the delivery of the EYFS.

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

The manager and staff are in the early stages of developing their approach to the delivery of the learning and development requirements of the EYFS. They interact appropriately to support children's fun, learning and enjoyment. They begin to complete some more focused observations and work sheets to determine children's understanding of number and letters, which are entered into their individual files. However, entries are minimal and not linked to their developmental starting points or the areas of learning. As a result, a clear picture of their developmental progress towards the early learning goals is not effectively maintained. The basic weekly planner for activities focuses on the whole group rather than reflect children's individual interests, learning needs or their next steps in learning. As a result, it is not clear whether activities cover all areas of learning in sufficient depth over a period of time. The bright, well organised setting and the display of children's artwork and information about the setting for parents contribute to the welcoming, inclusive environment and promotes children's sense of belonging. Through the good deployment of the wide range of resources and a resource book children can freely select from the resources available, promoting choice and independence in their play. Planned activities are organised around the times of the year and themes the club follow, such as 'exploring the world'. This provides children with an appropriate balance of adult-led and child-initiated opportunities.

Children have many opportunities to develop their imagination, which promote fun and enjoyment. Older children involve the younger children in creating the club restaurant using many resources and young children explain they are the dancing girl. Young boys play together enthusiastically, have fun with the large racing cars and use their imagination to create a 'pit stop for changing the tyres'. Children develop their understanding of technology through the good provision of the games consoles and laptop computers. They learn about the wider world through the celebration of festivals, such as Christmas, Chinese New Year and Halloween, which incorporate discussions, creative activities and associated foods. Some resources and activities further promote their understanding of the wider world. They develop their creativity and use a range of different media, such as paper plates, coloured paper and glue to make holly wreaths in recognition of Christmas. Their understanding of numbers and problem solving is incorporated into the provision of activities through positive staff interaction to extend their learning and provide sufficient challenge. They have opportunities to select from the books, chat with friends and relax in the cosy area of the setting. They come together in smaller groups to colour pictures and give meaning to the marks they make as they produce a pretend menu for the restaurant, which suitably promotes communication, literacy and early handwriting skills.

Children learn about personal hygiene through the daily routines, engage in regular physical activities in the outdoor play area, which contributes to the promotion of their good health. Children have access to a range of varied, healthy nutritious snacks, reflected in the written menu on display, which includes fruit kebabs and wholemeal bread for sandwiches. They enjoy the social interaction at snack time, but they have little opportunity to develop their self-help skills because

staff pour their drinks and serve their foods. They freely access drinking water made available during the session and drink juice at snack times. Children say they feel safe because 'the teachers are with them' and 'nothing scary happens'. They learn to stay safe because they practise evacuation drills and staff make them aware of hazards and the consequences of their actions. Children's behaviour is appropriately managed, staff develop close links with parents if concerns arise and incidents are recorded when necessary. Children are instrumental in devising the club rules on display, therefore taking responsibility for their behaviour. As a result, they behave well and begin to show care and consideration for others, share resources and develop positive relationships. Activities suitably contribute to the children's future economic well-being.

## 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

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|--|---|
| <b>How well does the setting meet the needs of the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?</b> | 3 |
| 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>                          | 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  | 3 |
| 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                                | 3 |

### The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

|  |   |
|--|---|
| The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage | 3 |
|--|---|

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

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|--|---|
| <b>Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage</b> | 3 |
| The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning    | 3 |
| 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       | 3 |

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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