

Highworth Pre School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number EY397527
Inspection date 19/11/2009
Inspector Rosemary Davies

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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

Highworth Pre-school has been in existence in various locations for 40 years. It registered at its current premises in 2009. It operates from purpose-designed premises within the Ladybird Children's Centre, adjacent to Westrop School in Highworth, Wiltshire. The children's centre offers a range of services including a crèche, family support worker and access to health visitors. The pre-school is managed by a voluntary committee and is a registered charity. It provides funded early education for three-and-four-year-olds and is part of a pilot project for funding of two-year-olds. Children use a main playroom with ready access to a secure outdoor area. The pre-school opens for five weekdays during school terms. Sessions run from 09.00 am to 03.15 pm. Children may attend full time or for flexible sessions.

The pre-school is registered on the Early Years Register. A maximum of 48 children aged from over two years to five years, may attend at any one time. There are currently 92 children aged from two to under five years on roll. The pre-school currently supports a number of children with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

The pre-school has 17 staff who work with the children, of whom 13 hold appropriate early years qualifications to level 2, including nine staff at level 3; additionally, there are two administrative staff. Regular support is received from the local authority, including a teacher consultant.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

All children have positive experiences of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) in this pre-school. Their uniqueness and individuality is recognised and accommodated. All enjoy learning, make good progress and have their welfare needs met well. Methodically organised documentation helps ensure the pre-school's efficient and smooth day to day management. Evaluation of its provision leads to clear future plans. Senior staff and committee members act on the advice of outside professionals to drive improvement and maintain good capacity for continuous improvement.

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 layout of the indoor environment, encouraging children to help plan it and contribute to keeping it tidy
- continue to develop children's early writing skills by taking a consistent approach to letter formation and modelling writing.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Staff prioritise children's safety. Robust appointment procedures ensure that all who work or volunteer in the pre-school are cleared as suitable to be with children. Clear procedures to record and report any child protection concerns are in place; all staff update training in this area regularly. Induction and probation periods help staff understand their duties, responsibilities and the children's needs. Risk assessments are thorough and records meet EYFS requirements. The complaints system works effectively. It identifies parents' concerns, which the senior management team address; for example, improving safety at the start and finish of sessions. A full range of suitable policies guides the smooth running of the pre-school, although some policies require updating.

The committee chair person and joint managers work well together with a clear understanding of all their roles. The recent re-registration process and move to new premises demonstrates the determination of both staff and committee to provide the best possible care and education for the children. A shared vision for the future continues to drive improvement; for example, the staff re-structuring plan. Evaluation processes encompass all staff's reflections and include guidance from a teacher consultant. These identify suitable areas for development; for example, improving the playroom layout, with which staff continue to experiment, and labelling of resources.

The senior management team deploy staff well. Warm, caring relationships underpin the key person system, which works effectively and supports early intervention for children with additional needs. Staff readily access advice from other professionals based in the children's centre. This helps ensure that those with special educational needs and/or disabilities are quickly identified and their needs met, so all children make good progress. Staff form worthwhile partnerships with all local schools to aid transition arrangements. They engage well with parents and the children, sharing information in a variety of ways, including photographic records of children's progress. Parents speak appreciatively of the pre-school, liking the flexible attendance times and the peace of mind they feel, knowing their children are well cared for.

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

Children develop their independence quickly, moving around the spacious playroom as they wish, making decisions about what to do. They decide when to eat their snacks and whether to play indoors or out because staff arrange daily routines with children's needs in mind. They arrange the indoor and outdoor environments to help children develop as independent learners through exploratory play; for example, mixing paints to produce new colours and dancing spontaneously to music. Children behave well, although systems to encourage them in planning and caring for their environment are not fully in place, so resources often remain scattered on the floor for long periods, presenting potential

trip hazards, particularly to younger ones.

Children enjoy a good balance of child-chosen and adult-led activities. They listen well at group times, listening entranced to stories read clearly and eagerly contributing their views about the book's pictures. Staff plan interesting activities across all areas of learning that adapt to the abilities of individual children, so all can enjoy them. Staff move around the indoor and outdoor environments covering the various activities well to support and develop children's learning; for example, helping them develop an effective pencil grip or asking questions during construction activities to encourage thinking. This helps children develop skills that will be useful in their future lives; however, there is no consistent approach to letter formation, so many staff do not model writing clearly to children, which hampers their early writing skills. All children enjoy many opportunities to be creative; for example, they decide to 'cook dinner' outside and fetch indoor resources to add to outdoor ones, solving the problem of how to make 'enough for us all' as they do so.

Staff plan experiences based on their knowledge of children's capabilities and individual interests. They undertake regular observations of their key children, assessing what they need to learn next and discussing how this will be incorporated into future plans at regular staff meetings. Planning remains flexible so can quickly be adapted to include additional interests. This helps keep children focussed, contributing to the playroom's busy but calm atmosphere.

Children use secure, safe and clean premises. No one enters the playroom uninvited. Staff undertake daily safety checks meticulously. Excellent procedures prevent the spread of cross-infection. Staff keep toilet areas clean through the day and vacuum the floor after meal times. Children learn about healthy living well, serving themselves from a good choice of snacks that include fresh fruit. Their specific health and dietary needs are known and accommodated. All benefit from periods outside in the fresh air. They develop physical skills well through use of a wealth of equipment and encouragement from staff to try new things. They learn to keep themselves safe as they do so and by engaging in regular fire practices.

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	3
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	1
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	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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