

Hatfield Heath Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	EY396055
Inspection date	22/03/2010
Inspector	Kelly Eyre

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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

Hatfield Heath Pre-School opened approximately 38 years ago and was re-registered at its current premises in 2009. It is run by a voluntary management committee and operates from a demountable classroom within the grounds of Hatfield Heath County Primary School, Essex. Children have access to a fully enclosed outdoor play area.

The setting receives funding for early education. It is open each weekday during term-time only and sessions are daily from 8.45am to 11.45am, with afternoon sessions from 1.00pm to 3.00pm on Monday and Thursday and from 12.30pm to 3.30pm on Tuesday and Wednesday. The setting is registered on the Early Years Register to provide 24 places and there are currently 44 children on roll who are within this age group. The pre-school serves the local community and surrounding areas. A small number of children attend other settings such as childminders and other pre-schools. The setting maintains close links with the school on which it is sited.

There are seven staff members. Of these, five hold relevant childcare qualifications and one is currently working towards a qualification.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

The needs of all children are met and they are offered appropriate support because staff have excellent procedures for working with parents and are therefore able to build up a thorough understanding of children's needs and interests. They use this information to inform daily planning and ensure that children are offered activities and resources that promote their learning. A further strength of the setting is their excellent planning to enable children to gain skills for the future and to support their transition to school. The setting has a positive attitude to self-evaluation and thorough procedures to support the continuous review of their work. This means they can devise clear action plans and implement improvements, thereby providing a service which is responsive to children's needs.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- ensure that the setting's policy for safeguarding children reflects the guidance and procedures of the Local Safeguarding Children Board
- develop further the assessment and planning procedures to show how children's next steps are consistently fed into the overall planning in order to provide further experiences which are appropriate to each child's stage of development.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children's welfare is promoted because staff have attended appropriate training and have a good understanding of their responsibilities relating to safeguarding children. Although thorough, their written procedure for safeguarding children does not fully reflect the guidance of the Local Safeguarding Children Board and this could result in a delay in implementing the correct reporting procedure. Stringent checks are carried out to make sure that all staff are suitable to work with children. Thorough risk assessments and daily safety checks mean that hazards are minimised and children's safety is promoted. Children are building a good understanding of safety issues as staff offer them clear explanations. For example, they understand why it is important to allow each other space when sitting together at group times.

The manager has an ambitious, yet realistic vision for the future. She involves staff, children and parents in reviewing the setting's practice, thus ensuring that this reflects the views of all. The ongoing evaluation and ability to prioritise improvements means that changes are introduced sensitively to improve the outcomes for children. For example, recent changes include the introduction of communication books, thus improving communication and helping to ensure that children's needs are recognised and met. Staff work well as a team, helping to ensure that children's care is consistent and they are offered appropriate support. Space and resources are used well to promote children's learning and development. For example, the room is well organised to promote children's safety and accommodate a wide range of play options.

All staff demonstrate a clear understanding of anti-discriminatory practice. They review their work and thereby ensure that the setting's policies and procedures are consistently implemented to support them in providing a service which is inclusive for all children and their families. They work closely with parents and carers to ensure that they fully understand each child's culture and needs, taking these into account when planning activities. Children's self-esteem is promoted because their views and contributions are valued and their interests are noted and promoted as much as possible. Staff have excellent relationships with parents and carers, enabling them to exchange information and ensure that children are consistently offered appropriate support. Parents are kept very well informed of their child's progress and activities, for example, through the good use of daily communication books, open days and the displaying of activity planning. The setting also works well with other professionals. For example, they have strong links with the school and can therefore work with them to prepare children for this transition.

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

Children make good progress and are well supported because staff have a confident understanding of the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. They implement thorough procedures for assessing children, using this information

to inform activity planning and ensure that children are offered appropriate activities that promote their development. However, this is not fully promoted because the assessment and planning procedures do not clearly show how children's next developmental steps are consistently fed into the overall planning. Children are encouraged to develop their own play and staff make informed judgements about when to intervene in order to extend children's understanding. This enables children to play an active role in their learning, developing skills that will help them in the future. For example, children make independent choices about their resources and activities and work well together, sharing ideas and thus extending their play and thinking.

Good staff interaction means that children are encouraged to think critically. For example, when children participate in water play, they are encouraged to think about which items float or sink and to explore the reasons for this. The good provision of resources and support in using these means that children can explore and experiment. For example, children constructing a marble run are encouraged to look at which sections work best, to think about why the marble speeds up at certain points and to experiment with different types of construction. Children learn about healthy lifestyles as they participate in activities such as food tasting and discussions at snack time about which foods help make bones and teeth strong.

Children are gaining a thorough understanding of appropriate behaviour as staff act as good role models, gently explaining to children the implications of their behaviour and encouraging them to work together to resolve issues. Thoughtful daily procedures mean that children are offered opportunities to develop social skills as they express themselves and learn to appreciate the views and interests of others. An example of this is group time, where children take turns to choose their favourite songs, eagerly joining in with these and with the actions rhymes.

Sensitive planning means that children feel valued and are offered opportunities to understand other ways of life. For example, all children learn daily words and greetings in the home languages of children attending the setting. Their understanding of other forms of communication is extended as they learn basic sign language and use a visual timetable. The good procedures for working with parents mean that children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are offered appropriate support to enable them to participate meaningfully.

The thoughtful provision of resources means that children's development is promoted. For example, their early writing and communication skills are developed as they use pens and paper to make lists in the role play areas. Children are encouraged to count, solve simple problems and recognise written numerals. For example, children enjoy a group activity where they count the number of objects they have been allocated, find the correct written numeral to match this and then add and subtract items from their collections, correctly stating the final total.

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	2
The effectiveness of partnerships	2
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	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	1

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