

Herne Farm Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	109855
Inspection date	05/03/2010
Inspector	Michele, Karen Beasley

Setting address	The Leisure Centre, Herne Farm, Petersfield, Hampshire, GU31 4PJ
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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*.

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).

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Description of the setting

Herne Farm Pre-school is managed by a committee and mainly serves the local community. It opened in 1979 and operates from a large hall in Herne Farm Leisure Centre in Petersfield, a residential area of Hampshire. The group opens five days a week during school term times only. Sessions are from 9.30am to 12.30pm on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday, and 11.45am to 2.45pm on Wednesday. Children have sole access to a secure outdoor play area.

The setting is registered to provide care for a maximum of 26 children at any one time, all of whom may be in the early years age group. There are currently 26 children from two years to four years on roll. Of these, 22 children receive funding for early education. Children mainly come from the local community and attend for a variety of sessions. The pre-school supports children with special educational needs, disabilities and children who speak English as an additional language. This provision is registered by Ofsted on the Early Years Register.

The pre-school currently employs two full time members of staff, four part-time and one relief staff member. Six members of staff are qualified and one is working towards a foundation stage degree in early years. The setting receives support from the local authority and 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.

The setting provides children with a stimulating place to play and learn. As a result, children are making progress with their development. Staff plan activities for the children, however, assessment records are not kept on the premises; this is a breach of regulations. Observations and children's next steps are not identified clearly to inform the planning. The staff team are aware of this weakness and improvements have been made in the setting since the last inspection. Children are safeguarded through risk assessments and the reduction of hazards. The provision has a supportive committee and has established positive links with parents. Staff work as a committed team to continually improve their practice and attend training. This has a positive impact on the outcomes for children and their families.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To fully meet the specific requirements of the EYFS, the registered person must:

- ensure children's records are easily accessible and available for inspection by Ofsted at all times (with prior agreement from Ofsted these may be kept off the premises) (Documentation)

19/03/2010

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

- ensure the knowledge gained from observing children is used effectively so that records of children's progress clearly show the actual stage of development they are at in relation to the stepping stones of the early learning goals and what the intentions are for progressing them onto their next steps ensuring all children are supported to reach their full potential
- develop systems of self evaluation within the setting to identify and maintain continuous improvement.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

There are procedures in place to safeguard children. Staff in the setting have an understanding of safeguarding procedures and know what to do if they should have concerns about a child. They are aware of the possible signs of abuse to ensure that the needs of vulnerable children who attend the setting are met. The provider carries out checks to ensure staff are suitable. Appraisal procedures are in place to identify and address staff training needs. Staff carry out risk assessments of the premises, practices and equipment, and minimise hazards in order that children enjoy a safe and secure environment. The provider has made improvements since the last inspection. Written policies and procedures support staff in their work and provide parents with clear information about the care their children receive. They are updated to reflect relevant legislative changes.

The staff work as a cohesive team. The committee support the staff to develop in their roles through mentoring and supporting, and encourage ongoing training to enrich their practice. They are dedicated and committed with the shared belief that children learn best through play and some adult led activities extending their own thoughts and interests. They treat the children as individuals and plan a range of varied and stimulating activities covering all areas of learning. Staff are beginning to use self-evaluation systems to monitor and reflect on practice. They view this as a positive area to identify their strengths and areas for improvement.

Parents have access to their child's records at any time and are invited to look at and contribute to them at open events. However, children's 'Learning Journeys' are not always kept on the premises and are not always kept up-to-date. Consequently, this does not ensure inclusive practice for all children in the setting. Parents report that they are very happy with the care and education their children receive in the setting and find the staff approachable and friendly. They receive information about the setting and its policies through regular newsletters, the parents' notice board and displays at the hall. Parents are welcome at any time; they can stay for as long as they need to settle their child and have opportunities to help out in the sessions. There are systems in place to work with other settings that the children attend who use the Early Years Foundation Stage, to ensure progression and continuity of care.

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

Staff arrange the available space well so that children have access to a particularly wide range of attractive play resources. This means that all children can select activities that interest them and many become completely engrossed in purposeful play. They concentrate for extended periods of time in mastering how to make something out of junk modelling materials by using tape, glue, various sized boxes and tubes. They develop their social and verbal skills by cooperating in elaborate and imaginative role play with one another. Their behaviour is very good. The layout in the hall allows children to play together, alongside others or independently according to their individual preferences and stages of development. Staff respect children's wishes if they want to play alone, welcoming them into groups when they are ready to join in. This helps children to feel comfortable and secure in the setting. Staff are deployed to support each child's development. For instance, they provide caring assistance to help children who are still learning to socialise independently.

Children learn about people who keep them safe such as the police and lollipop crossing people. This is extended through reference books and information available on an interest table. Throughout the sessions children gravitate towards the table and explore the 'people who help us' figures and the books put out for them. Children know the reasons for rules such as not running indoors. Children develop control as they pedal tricycles quickly outside without colliding. They learn to follow good personal hygiene practices to minimise the risk of cross infection. Staff display different words and phrases of languages in the setting, providing opportunities for children to become aware of different scripts. Children are encouraged to learn about other cultural festivals such as Diwali and Chinese New Year.

Staff carry out observational assessments of children's learning which informs their individual learning journeys. However, because only a handful of children's records are kept on the premises, from those sampled it is evident that observations are being made on the children. Some of these are inconsistent in covering all the areas of learning. Therefore, children's next steps cannot be clearly identified to inform the planning and promote children's learning aims through adult-led and child-initiated activities. The staff and committee have identified this already as an area for improvement and are currently working on a more systematic way of recording children's achievements against the stepping stones. Staff know the children very well, which together with their understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage, helps children make good progress in their learning and development.

Staff form very warm and caring relationships with children. Children experiment and play with resources, such as hole punchers, post it notes, calculators, key boards and telephones. Children learn to negotiate with others and solve any minor disagreements. Children use their knowledge of shape and space to solve practical construction problems such as how to make cars out of large boxes. Staff make good use of incidental opportunities to count and compare numbers for real

purposes, such as ensuring there are enough chairs at snack time. Children use large tape measures to measure their large box cars and spontaneously race cars down lengths of guttering outside. Children begin to understand how to keep themselves healthy. They pour their own drinks, with staff support when necessary. They have a sociable snack time with staff, and parents provide healthy snacks in line with the setting's policy. Children participate in parachute games, exercise and play outside. Children delight in participating in a role play traffic system outdoors, and practise emergent writing on white boards in the garden.

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	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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