

New Road Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspector	Naomi Brown

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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

New Road Preschool moved to the current premises New Road Methodist Church in January 2003. Previously, they were based at the Community Centre in Croxley Green. The provision operates from two rooms, a large hall and another room for small group activities and story time. There is an outside play area, kitchen and toilets which has facilities for nappy changing. The premises has access for those people who are physically impaired and suitable toilets.

New Road Playschool serves the community of Croxley Green. There are currently 26 children from 2 years 6 months to 4 years 4 months on the roll. This includes 16 funded three year olds. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The setting currently supports a number of children with special needs.

The group opens four days a week during school term. Sessions are from 9.00 am until 12.00 pm A lunch club operates on Monday, Tuesday and Thursday from 12.00 pm until 1.00 pm.

Four full-time and three part-time staff work with the children. Half of the staff have early years qualifications to Level 2 and the manager is qualified to Level 4. The setting receives support from a teacher/mentor from the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership (EYDCP).

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is satisfactory.

The staff have clear knowledge of each of the children's individual needs, as a result staff promote the children's welfare and learning development. Staff ensure children enjoy their time in the setting as most activities are suitably planned and engaging. The setting has firm partnerships with parents and outside agencies, which benefits and enhances the care of the children. Strong systems for self-evaluation have been developed in the setting, ensuring that improvements continue to be made.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- improve the organisation of indoor activities to ensure that every child is suitably challenged by the learning experiences provided.
- make use of information gained from the existing evaluation process to ensure that next steps for learning inform daily activities

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children benefit from a safe environment because they are cared for by a qualified and suitably checked staff and manager who demonstrate commitment to improvements and provide well for children's welfare and learning. The manager and staff carry out regular risk assessments to ensure children are cared for in a safe environment. Staff demonstrate a good knowledge and understanding of child protection and have attended training in this area to ensure children's safety and to make sure they know what to do if they have any concerns about the children in their care. All documentation, including policies and procedures and written consents from parents, is in place and meets required standards. Staff are mainly aware of their roles and responsibilities as communicated to them by the manager, however, some indoor activities are not well organised which means that children are not always fully engaged and at times they are not suitably challenged.

Children are made aware of the wider world through some resources and planned activities. For example posters with a number of languages on them and books depicting animals from other countries. Resources that children use are safe and set out at child-level so that children are encouraged to make independent choices and decisions during free play sessions, especially in the well stocked book corner. Staff interact warmly with the children and are clearly aware of their individual needs. Children are encouraged to take ownership of the setting, for example using a system of self-registration. This makes children feel welcome, underpinning self-esteem and creating an inclusive environment.

Staff are developing systems of observation and assessment to ensure that children's progress is suitably recorded and evaluated. Observations are meaningful and linked to the Early Years Foundation Stage. However, while all necessary information is recorded, observations do not currently inform planning for next steps and this is an area that the manager has identified for improvement. She has developed links with outside agencies to access training for her staff team and to improve their practice. Systems are in place to share information with parents and other settings to ensure that learning is consistent across all the settings children attend. Parents are provided with suitable information about their children's progress, which supports continuity of care from home to nursery and parents offer positive feedback on the care their children receive. All recommendations raised at the last inspection have been suitably addressed and the manager has developed partnerships with the local authority to support her to improve the service for children. The manager is clearly committed to encouraging staff to increase their knowledge and access further training. Well thought out self-evaluation systems are in place to support the pre-school's vision for future improvements and the manager has a clear understanding of the changes that need to be made to move the setting forward and improve outcomes for children.

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

Children arrive happily at the setting and part confidently from their parents and carers. They are content and settled and willingly take part in activities, which adequately cover all areas of learning. They make choices about which activities they wish to take part in and move around the space confidently. Staff demonstrate a sound knowledge of the learning and development requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage and children are making suitable progress in their learning and development. Staff have made a good start with their assessments of the children in their care. Individual files are in place for each child, which reflect their personalised learning and include basic observations of the children, linked to the six areas of learning.

Children enjoy their time in the garden area, spinning hoops, driving cars and jumping on the trampoline. Children share the resources well, taking turns on the slide and small trampoline and clearly understand the concept of taking turns. Children are encouraged to share at the planting area as they pat wet earth into pots, describing that plants need water and sun to grow. They are encouraged to be independent in much of their play, picking up leaves in a wheelbarrow or spinning hoops to each other and riding bikes and trikes with growing levels of independence. Most children behave well because staff implement the clear rules and boundaries consistently. As a result, the children know what is expected of them and are keen to please the staff, cooperating when the time comes to tidy up.

Staff at the setting are warm and friendly. However, at times they do not provide a level of challenge which is sufficient to interest and engage children. For example, during free indoor settings children sometimes become aimless as staff do not consistently encourage them to extend their learning. Some children draw for extended periods of time as they are absorbed in their free flow mark making, while others use stencils and once they have drawn around this they leave the area with no clear idea as to where they are going next. The book corner is clearly enticing to children and they enjoy selecting both well known favourites and new titles from a well maintained range of fiction and non fiction books. The construction area of duplo, however, does not capture children's attention as it is not well laid out and children seem reluctant to spend much time there and as such it presents limited learning opportunities. Children's developing language and thought processes are promoted as they are encouraged to identify colours when they are drawing and to identify pictures and simple words when they are sharing books with staff. Mathematical language is used when children count beads that they have threaded and they demonstrate problem solving abilities when they try to tie pencils into their threaded beads, talking about 'knots' experimenting with ways to hold the pencil on the string. This among other activities also provides children with opportunities to develop their small motor skills.

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?	3
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?	3
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	3
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	3
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Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
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	3
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	3
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	3

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