

Widcombe Pre-school

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspector Linda Dawe

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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

Widecombe Pre-school has been established for over 30 years and is situated in the centre of the rural village of Widecombe-in-the-Moor located in the heart of Dartmoor. The pre-school is run by a committee of parent volunteers.

The pre-school is open Tuesdays from 09.00 am to 3.15 pm, Wednesdays 09.00 am to 12.45 pm and Fridays 09.00 am to 12.00 noon, term time only. Children with learning difficulties or disabilities can be cared for although there are some accessibility problems due to the nature of the building. The pre-school is registered on the Early Years Register to care for up to 20 children in the early years age range. Funded nursery education sessions are available for children aged three and four years old. They also offer places for up to four two-year-old children per session, in the term before their third birthday. There are currently 11 children on the register; eight of whom are in receipt of funding.

The pre-school operates from the Church House, which is a listed National Trust building. The group use the first floor hall for its main accommodation with the ground floor hall used for physical activities. Toilet and kitchen facilities are available. Included in the registration is a fully enclosed outdoor play area, laid mainly to grass and an additional outdoor area with raised beds for planting.

The pre-school employs two members of staff, the play leader who holds the N.N.E.B nursery nurse certificate and her assistant has a level three childcare qualification. There are additional persons that the pre-school can employ to provide cover if necessary. The pre-school is a member of the Pre-School Learning Alliance from whom they receive support and advice.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children are happy, safe and settled and enjoy taking part in a wide range of activities provided for them by the pre-school staff. The strong links that the pre-school have with the local community and primary school give children a sense of security. This along with the good partnerships shared with parents ensures that the needs of all the children are met. The staff team are proactive in seeking advice and support to enable them to make improvements to their practice, which benefits the children in their care.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- develop the current assessment and planning system in order for each child's learning journey to take a personal path based on their own interests, linked with the Early Years Foundation Stage framework

- develop children's language for thinking through involvement in their play
- encourage children to drink water regularly throughout the session by making water more accessible.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The pre-school is run by an active voluntary committee who work closely with the staff to improve outcomes for the children in their care. Staff are keen to make improvements to current systems; particularly regarding observations, assessments and planning. They seek, and act upon, advice from other professionals to develop their practice. There are robust systems in place to ensure that children are cared for by staff who are suitable to do so. Children clearly have good relationships with the staff, which is enhanced by the strong partnerships that the staff have with their parents. For example, parents are invited to spend fifteen minutes in the pre-school at the beginning of sessions reading with their children to settle them in for the day. Staff have also built good partnerships with the local primary school and community. For example, children recently took part in an Easter egg hunt walking around the village to find the eggs that were hidden in various shops. The local community have been very supportive of the pre-school; particularly regarding fundraising, which benefits all the children.

Current planning of activities ensure that all areas of learning are covered during sessions. However, they do not clearly identify children's individual needs and steps for progress based on children's interests and this is an area for development. Staff support children well in their play, but do not yet use open questioning effectively to encourage children's language development. The pre-school has a good range of resources that children can freely access throughout the session, ensuring that children become actively involved from the moment they arrive. The layout of the areas for play is challenging for a small staff team as they are on two levels, but this is generally managed well. The staff acknowledge that boys may need more opportunity for physical play and provide ample provision for this both inside and out.

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

Children settle quickly as a result of the warm welcome they receive from the staff on their arrival. They play well together and strong friendships are apparent in this small rural group. Children enjoy exploring the natural world that they live in. For example, by going on walks on Dartmoor where the local National Park Rangers provide valuable learning activities to make the trip both fun and educational. Visitors to the pre-school provide children with other learning opportunities, for example, a parent brought their puppies in for the children to see and children have also had opportunity to visit a local farm and feed the lambs. This provides children with a strong sense of community and belonging.

Children enjoy circle time and snack times, which provides them with opportunities

to chat with staff about events in their lives such as birthday parties that they have been too. At these times they are also reminded of the pre-school 'rules', which ensures that their behaviour is good. Children learn good skills for the future as they tidy up together at the end of the sessions. Their health is promoted as they discuss the benefits of healthy eating at snack time and enjoy regular exercise in the pre-school garden where they also grow vegetables. Children's independence is encouraged as they are given special jobs to do such as filling the water tray using the hose pipe. This also boosts their positive self-esteem. Children do have access to fresh water at snack time and also if they ask for it. However, they rarely do, particularly when in the garden meaning that they have limited drinks throughout the session.

Children learn how to keep themselves safe with staff reminding them to be careful as they negotiate the stone steps and to hold onto the rails. They develop their small muscles as they become competent with pens and pencils that are provided for them and their large muscles as they negotiate the equipment in the garden. Labels around the setting provide children with the knowledge that print carries meaning and they have access to a good range of books, which they enjoy looking at. They have fun being creative such as when painting and show a sense of achievement when, for example, they discover that by mixing blue and yellow they can make green. These experiences are encouraged by positive reactions from the staff and parent helpers.

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	3
The effectiveness of partnerships	3
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	2

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

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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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