

Wheelock Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspector

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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

Wheelock Pre-school was registered in 1987. The setting is committee run and operates from Hancock hall school rooms in Wheelock. Children are cared for within three ground floor rooms. There is a secure area available for outdoor play. A maximum of 20 children aged from two to five years may attend the setting at any one time. The setting is open five days a week from 9.15am to 3.30pm during term time, with a lunch club to provide wrap-around care. Children attend from the local community and surrounding areas.

There are currently 50 children on roll aged from two to four years. All of these are within the Early Years Foundation Stage. The setting receives funding for nursery education. The setting is currently supporting children who speak English as an additional language and is also able to support children with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

The setting employs six members of staff including the manager. All six staff are qualified to level three in early years and one is looking to fast track their early years professional training. The setting receives support from the local authority early years advisory team.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children's needs are met well and the uniqueness of each child is fully recognised. All children receive good support in a highly stimulating environment. Consequently, they make good progress in their learning and development. Children's welfare is promoted extremely well and safeguarding procedures are outstanding. Children are exceptionally safe, healthy and engaged. They display good social behaviour. Partnerships with parents are flourishing very effectively, but partnerships in the wider context are less developed. Regular, outcome-based planning for continuous improvement and self-evaluation processes mostly work well.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- extend the usefulness of the individual learning record by making initial and periodic summaries, assessments and next steps plans, to share with parents and other providers
- obtain information from parents about any other childcare used concurrently with the pre-school and about the schools which children will subsequently attend. In addition, obtain parental consent for the sharing of progress and next steps plans with these providers in order to promote consistency
- develop a system to ensure that staff are aware that they are expected to

declare anything which may affect their suitability.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Standards of safeguarding are outstanding. Staff are knowledgeable and well organised with respect to child protection procedures, the implementation of health and safety advice, use of risk assessments and the maintenance of essential staff and child records. Information is clear, up-to-date, available, and displayed for easy reference by staff or parents where appropriate. Policies are relevant to the setting and comply with the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage; discs or paper copies are given to parents so that they are in possession of all necessary information. Details of children's individual needs are clearly known and documented before new placements start, and parents are extremely confident that staff are suitably vetted and trained. Staff meet regularly, plan and train together and know their responsibilities to disclose anything which may affect their suitability to work with children; however, there is no system in place for staff to provide a declaration of this. Arrival and departure systems work particularly successfully. They balance security with warm welcomes for families and fruitful exchanges of information. Daily checks, vigilance and head counts assure safety throughout sessions. Issues are dealt with efficiently and quickly because staff are proactive and work effectively as a team at all times.

The whole staff group has an ambitious vision for the continuous improvement of the setting and work together with great enthusiasm and commitment. They have made the play and learning environment rich and accessible, allowing children to free-flow between the rooms and spend time choosing and developing their own play and activity choices. The staff successfully combine child-initiated and adult-led activities so that children are making very good progress and are highly confident and engaged. Key persons diligently record regular observations of what individual children can do and tailor their input to maximise each child's progress. However, the staff are not using the children's individual records to the full because they are not making clear, regular summative assessments of progress or next steps plans which can be shared with parents and other childcare providers. All staff attend frequent training and strive as a team to develop best practice in their planning and provision. They also use quality assurance and self-evaluation tools to help them review and enhance their practice; for example, they identified a need for a more enabling environment and more active, creative, outdoor based learning, all of which is now successfully offered.

Engagement with parents is excellent because all key-worker staff make warm and welcoming relationships with families which foster confidence and openness. Newsletters, displayed information about activities and regular availability of children's development record books, all add to these very positive relationships. Many parents actively contribute their skills to sessions and all are pleased with their children's developing social and emotional skills. The pre-school facilitates good transitions to the local school, for example, by using assessment documents preferred by the reception teacher. Within the pre-school, staff enthusiastically prepare children for going to 'big school' so that they are confident about it. Links

with other involved professionals and childcare providers, such as childminders work well when the parties have direct contact at the setting. However, when there is no direct contact, no information is being exchanged; this slightly holds back consistent and complementary care when children attend more than one childcare setting.

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

All children are making significant gains in their learning and are thriving in the setting because they are secure and have fun here. Staff plan interesting themes and good opportunities for children to learn about the world and community they live in. They provide good challenges for children to discuss and consolidate what they know as they talk, eat, play and clear up together. Children come in happily, choose a coloured peg for their things and find their name card to post in the mini letter box. They go straight to play, choosing from versatile, inviting, easily accessible resources. They confidently move between the rooms and choose to play indoors or outside. They are active and engaged, asking questions and thinking about how things work. Staff sensitively challenge them to solve their own problems and to help and consider others, so that their social and emotional skills develop well and they make an excellent contribution. They pretend to be builders enthusiastically hammering, but reduce their noise when reminded that others near them are listening to a story. They enjoy their learning and laugh out loud when the manager counts them using the funny voice of a king, as chosen by the children.

Children explore and experience a real ambulance on the day of inspection as part of their theme on 'people who help us', they try out the bed, seats, ramp, steps and siren. They also meet a mother who brings in her new baby and talk about how to look after it. They make links in their learning through dressing up, books, painting, craft and modelling work, role play, construction or small world play. Staff are skilled at weaving new learning and problem solving into games and general activities; for example, using a home-made banner of numbered pockets with numbered teddy shapes to match into the pockets. Water play activities also provide an opportunity to show children how a pump can make water go uphill. Similarly, staff work alongside children as they work out how to unhitch the obstacle course pieces and release the hoops which they want to use to see how far they can jump. Children participate in everything and are helpful and enthusiastic as they use the brush and their hands to collect the spilt oats to put back in the bowl. They fill the water jug from the water dispenser and cooperate well with tidying up.

Children are extremely healthy and safe in the setting, and have an excellent understanding about how to make healthy choices of food, drink and exercise. All their play and learning is through active participation and opportunities to choose what interests them. They move about safely and consider one another as they ride bikes, shoot balls into the net or wait to wash their hands at the sink. The children can play confidently alone, perhaps painting at the easel or making a train track game, but they work together too, devising roles for each other in creative

games or sitting in groups at snack time. They work out how many drinking cups they need and enthuse about the new brightly coloured cups. Children behave very well and adopt good manners and politeness, which are modelled to them constantly by vigilant, warm staff. They show concern for one another, for example comparing the remains of their chicken pox. They love to talk about one another's families and what they have been doing at home. Staff take every opportunity to extend children's interests and discuss ideas about healthy and safe lifestyles with them.

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

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|--|---|
| 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

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|--|---|
| 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 | 1 |
| The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity | 2 |
| The effectiveness of safeguarding | 1 |
| 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

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|--|---|
| 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

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| 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 | 1 |
| The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles | 1 |
| The extent to which children make a positive contribution | 1 |
| The extent to which children develop skills for the future | 2 |

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