

Walton Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number 203482
Inspection date 29/06/2010
Inspector Sarah Williams

Setting address Walton Youth Centre, Standley Road, Walton-on-the-Naze,
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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).

The setting also makes provision for children older than the early years age group which is registered on the voluntary and/or compulsory part(s) of the Childcare Register. This report does not include an evaluation of that provision, but a comment about compliance with the requirements of the Childcare Register is included in Annex B.

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Description of the setting

Walton Pre-School opened in 2000 and operates from a large hall and additional areas in a youth centre in Walton-on-the-Naze, Essex. The setting is registered by Ofsted on the Early Years register and the compulsory and voluntary Child Care registers. A maximum of 26 children may attend the pre-school at any one time. The pre-school is open each weekday from 8.45am to 12.15pm during school term times. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 33 children aged from two to under five years on roll. Care is also provided for children aged up to eight. Children come from the local area and surrounding villages.

The pre-school employs 22 members of staff. Of these, 13 hold appropriate early years qualifications and six are working towards a qualification.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children and families are warmly welcomed into this inclusive environment where children are confident, happy and secure. Staff are warm and welcoming, and have created a child centred environment where each child's uniqueness is valued and cherished. All children make good progress in their learning and development as staff plan and deliver a programme of worthwhile, safe and age-appropriate activities and experiences based on the Early Years Foundation Stage. The setting has made good progress since the last inspection and plays a highly valued part in the local community. The self evaluation is thorough and effective, and serves to highlight strengths as well as areas for further development.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- consider ways of ensuring that information is shared as appropriate for children who attend other early years settings, to aid continuity of care and keep parents fully informed

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children at this well-established setting are cared for by a highly dedicated and very well-qualified staff team. The managers and all staff have a secure understanding of safeguarding issues, and are confident of the procedures to follow for any concerns. A comprehensive set of written policies and procedures, which are systematically reviewed, is freely available to parents and carers so they can be aware of the group's responsibilities in regard to child protection. Systems

are in place for staff to be fully checked and vetted to ensure suitability to work at the setting. They are vigilant about the security of children, all visitors and students are closely monitored. Daily risk assessments ensure that equipment and the premises are safe, both inside and outside. Children confidently demonstrate how to evacuate the premises in emergencies, and staff keep a detailed log book identifying any issues, to ensure future safety.

The managers have taken positive steps to improve the outcomes for children by appropriately addressing the recommendations of the last inspection report. Children now have access to fresh drinking water and are able to pour their own drinks at snack time, encouraging independence and self-care. The self-evaluation has been completed and kept up to date. It very effectively details achievements and progress, as well as identifying areas for development, which may include a move to new premises in the near future. The group has been instrumental in setting up several outreach projects and they provide a valuable and professionally-run crèche service, staffed by qualified and experienced practitioners, at various locations in the area where parents can access classes and talks on a variety of child care related matters, and to offer advice and suggestions about behaviour management, play and nutrition among other things. This serves to strengthen the partnership with parents and has been successful in making parents enthusiastic about becoming involved in their child's learning and development.

The highly inclusive nursery has an experienced special educational needs coordinator who is able to access support for children's additional needs, where required, children have an individually tailored plan to help them access activities and make good progress. Staff have a good knowledge of each child's background and home circumstances, enabling them to tailor care and learning accordingly. Children are developing a positive attitude towards diversity through staff example and by using a range of multicultural resources, and are able to further develop their natural curiosity and understanding of world cultures and the similarities and differences between their own and others' lives. Partnerships and links with the local primary school, to support children's transition and to enhance continuity in their care and learning, are valued and are highly effective.

Children benefit from very good relationships between staff and parents, who confirm that they are kept very well informed about their children's achievements, well-being and welfare. Parents have many opportunities to become involved with their children's learning at home by continuing topic activities and by accompanying the group on outings to local places of interest. Parents attend regular formal and informal parents' meetings where they can view the children's development records and are actively encouraged to contribute with comments and opinions. This effective liaison with parents enhances the children's self-esteem, well being and development. Parents are particularly appreciative of the staff's approachability and the settling-in period which allows them to be reassured that their child is contented and ready to be left.

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

Children very much enjoy their time at the setting, and respond eagerly and enthusiastically to the excellent learning opportunities, activities and resources available to them. They engage with the resources showing good concentration and perseverance, for example, experimenting with filling and emptying containers at the water tray. They enjoy painting and imaginative collage and craft activities with a range of materials and textures to explore. Children show pride and ownership of their work, for example a lion mask. Most paintings and pictures are taken home, with some examples added to the children's records. Children are curious and spend time experimenting with brooms, trying to sweep away rainwater in the outside area, where they notice what happens and discuss where the water goes. Children dress appropriately for outside play, most are adept at putting on their shoes and coats, or ask for help when they need it.

Children develop good habits which promote a healthy lifestyle. They have physical play opportunities indoors and outside with balls, tyres and on wheeled toys which they enjoy taking up and down the sloped ramp. They eat nutritious snacks in a relaxed atmosphere at snack time; this is offered as a rolling snack bar and offers a substantial snack mid session to keep children's energy levels up. Children are fully involved in preparing and serving the snack, developing confidence and independence and showing a good understanding of routine. Simple pictorial cues in the bathroom area remind children of hand washing routines. Children show that they can independently take care of their personal needs, taking a tissue and disposing of it in the bin provided.

Staff are always on hand to assist as required and position themselves well throughout the different areas of the setting so as to be supportive yet unobtrusive, allowing children to work and play without dominating them. An inviting book area is available with a broad selection of both story books and non-fiction books. Circle time rounds off the sessions and is a valuable time for developing the skills of both speaking and listening. Children participate actively by choosing the story and responding to questions and pictures, naming characters and predicting events.

The activities provided are based on the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage and deliver high quality results for the children, helping them to achieve the early learning goals and ensuring all areas are covered. The continuous provision includes a well-resourced role play area with an adjacent selection of dressing up clothes and props which is in constant use. Children use the outside play house to develop a spontaneous, complex game based on a talent show, all playing cooperatively and harmoniously and solving problems by active discussion.

Observations and photographs, along with examples of children's work, build into an excellent, comprehensive overview of every child's progress and achievements and clearly identify the next steps in learning. Parents have ample opportunities to discuss and contribute to their child's record and many appreciate this, along with

the availability and approachability of staff for any informal discussions, as a positive feature of the group. Children are consistently busy and engaged in their work and play, having largely free choice and time to complete activities and investigations that interest them. Children make good progress in relation to their starting points and capabilities, working through the stepping stones at their own pace. Diligent staff attention and respect for each child's uniqueness ensures all children have a strong sense of belonging, they develop confidence and feel safe within the setting. A sensitive approach to individual family circumstances ensure children's individual needs are recognised. Those requiring additional help are very well provided for, with sensitive individual learning plans in place and , where appropriate, incorporating advice from outside professionals.

Children benefit from this stimulating and child-focused environment, which allows them to develop in all the six areas of learning, supporting their skills for the future. They develop firm ideas about the outside world and their local community, for example, by participating in the local carnival annually. All staff have a sound knowledge of the Early Years Foundation Stage and their enthusiasm and dedication motivates children to learn effectively and supports their all round development in this warm, welcoming and caring environment.

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

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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	1
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	1
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	2

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Annex B: the Childcare Register

The provider confirms that the requirements of the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are: Met

The provider confirms that the requirements of the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are: Met