

# Fordham Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

---

<b>Unique reference number</b>	EY218234
<b>Inspection date</b>	24/03/2010
<b>Inspector</b>	Martyn Richards

<b>Setting address</b>	1 Isleham Road, Fordham, Ely, Cambridgeshire, CB7 5NL
------------------------	---

<b>Telephone number</b>	01638 724183
-------------------------	--------------

<b>Email</b>	
--------------	--

<b>Type of setting</b>	Childcare on non-domestic premises
------------------------	------------------------------------

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It rates council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

Royal Exchange Buildings  
St Ann's Square  
Manchester  
M2 7LA

T: 0300 123 1231  
Textphone: 0161 618 8524  
E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
W: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

© Crown copyright 2009

## 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).

Please see our website for more information about each childcare provider. We publish inspection reports, conditions of registration and details of complaints we receive where we or the provider take action to meet the requirements of registration.

## Description of the setting

Fordham Pre-school opened and was registered in 2002 on the site of the primary school in Fordham, a small village close to Soham. It operates from purpose built premises consisting of a main play room, a smaller quiet room, kitchen and toilets, office and lobby. It also has a weather-proofed outdoor play area, and a small grassed area. It serves the local population, and has close links with its neighbouring primary school. The pre-school may take up to 26 children aged from two years to under five years at any one time. There are currently 65 children on roll. Children attend for a variety of sessions during the week. The pre-school receives some funding for nursery education. It supports children with learning difficulties or disabilities, and has appropriate access and resources for them. It can also support children who speak English as a second language, although there were none on roll at the time of the inspection. The pre-school opens five days a week for two sessions each day, in term time only. Sessions run from 9:00am to 11:30am and from 12:30pm to 3:00pm. Six staff work with the children. Most of them have early years qualifications and all have first aid, and food hygiene certificates. The pre-school uses a parent helper in some sessions, and provides placements for child care students. It also runs a breakfast club and an after-school club which some children in the early years age group attend. The pre-school receives support from a teacher from the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership, and is a member of the Pre-school Learning Alliance. It is on the Early Years Register.

## The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Fordham Pre-School is a calm and well-run provision. It provides a safe and caring environment in which children thrive. Relationships are warm and supportive. The pre-school's welcoming and inclusive character is typified in its good provision for children with particular difficulties or disabilities. Children enjoy the well-planned activities provided, and, because their individual interests are recognised and addressed, they achieve well and make a good start to their education. Staff are keen to see further improvement in the pre-school, and have a good capacity to bring this about.

## What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- implement a more systematic process for self-evaluation to enable priorities for future improvement to be more clearly identified
- ensure that children's creative activities express their own original ideas and skills
- plan activities which make imaginative thematic links between outdoor and indoor learning.

## **The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision**

The pre-school is led and managed with skill and enthusiasm. Staff rightly give the highest priority to ensuring children are safe. The management committee carefully checks the suitability of anyone applying to work in the setting. The activity rooms and the outdoor play areas are secure from intrusion, or from children slipping away unseen. Staff hold regular fire drills, and emergency evacuation plans are clear. There are detailed and thorough arrangements for circumstances in which a child might not be collected at the usual time, or might be collected by an unexpected person.

All staff are trained in child protection, and are fully aware of their responsibilities in this regard. They also have training in key areas such as first aid, and food hygiene. Additional training, together with their willing acceptance of advice from their local authority early years mentor, has enabled them to implement statutory early years requirements with confidence.

Partnerships and engaging with parents are both outstanding. Because staff work extremely closely with parents, they know the children very well. This enables them to adjust the programme they offer to take full account of a child's learning difficulties or disabilities, personal interests, food intolerances, or medical requirements. A very good Key Person scheme is in place, ensuring that there is a named staff member overseeing each child's development and welfare. Staff liaise very closely with external support agencies, for special needs, and speech and language. Links are also very close with the neighbouring primary school. An early years teacher visits the pre-school frequently to get to know the children prior to transfer, and the school speaks in very appreciative terms of the good foundation for learning the setting provides. These relationships help the pre-school to ensure continuity in children's learning and development across different settings.

This is a time of change in the pre-school. A new coordinator will be in position very shortly, and is already working in the setting. With help from their early years mentor, staff are beginning to develop a more systematic process for evaluating the strengths and weaknesses of the pre-school. Although the process is still at an early stage they are keen to use it to draw up priorities for future improvements.

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

Children enjoy coming to the pre-school, where they feel extremely safe. They settle very quickly, and are confident. They decide which activities they wish to play with first. Some go immediately to dressing up, trying a range of garments until they fix on a set which appeals – they sometimes wear this throughout the session. Others join an adult in trying to learn a new table-top game, or to practice carpet bowls. Some head for the outdoor play area playing with mobile toys, or balancing on a track of wooden blocks. Two children sit at a mark-making table,

drawing and cutting out Mother's Day cards with pretend writing inside. Adults are on hand for most of the activities, chatting informally with the children. While careful not to take the initiative away from the children, these conversations contribute to a broadening of children's vocabularies, or refinement of manual skills. A particular favourite among outdoor activities consists of pouring water down a switch-back of wall-fixed guttering and down pipe lengths, eventually washing model cars into a bucket at the bottom. Children learn how to predict the speed of the water flow, and what happens when the gradient of the channels is altered. They also learn that wet clothes are colder to wear than dry ones.

Staff planning is good. It provides a balance of adult-led and child-selected play, and promotes learning across all six areas required under early years legislation. It arranges both indoor and outdoor learning opportunities, although thematic activities in which learning moves naturally between the two, is limited. As a result of this good programme, children achieve well in the pre-school. They grow in self-confidence, behave safely, take turns when necessary, and chat easily with staff. Children have a good understanding of the need to keep their hands clean, and seldom need reminding to wash before eating. They listen very well to stories, identify many different sounds and the associated letters, and their marks begin to represent standard written letters. Some can recognise numbers, and count, to at least 10. They can identify regular shapes such as triangles, rectangles and circles. Children know a lot about healthy eating, having enjoyed a visit to a local pizza restaurant, and heard a talk from a visiting expert. They know a little about the changing seasons from their walks in the local woods. They are developing good manual skills with pencils, brushes and scissors, and they show a sound level of control in balancing and jumping on outdoor apparatus. They know how to use paint and other creative media, but on occasions adults over-structure the activities, leaving children little more to do than to fill in given outlines.

Staff keep careful notes and illustrative photographs of significant instances of each child's learning journey. These are assembled into individual record books which can form the basis of periodic parent consultations. The records are organised to illustrate clearly how each child has progressed towards the learning goals expected of early years children during their time in the pre-school. This successful learning will stand them in very good stead in their future education.

## 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

<b>How well does the setting meet the needs of the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?</b>	2
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	2

### The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

<b>How effectively is the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?</b>	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	1
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	1

### The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
--	---

### Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

<b>Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	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	2
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	2

Any complaints about the inspection or report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

