

Easton Pre-school Group

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspector	Sarah Williams

Setting address	Easton Pre-School, The Street, Easton, Woodbridge, Suffolk, IP13 0EF
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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

Easton Pre-school opened in 1974 and operates from the village hall in Easton, Suffolk. The setting is registered by Ofsted on the Early Years register. Children have access to a secure, enclosed outdoor play area.

The pre-school is open during term time only on Monday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday mornings from 09.15am to 11.45am and Monday, Wednesday and Friday afternoons from 12.30pm to 3.00pm. They also operate a lunch club on Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 11.45am to 12.30pm.

A maximum of 24 children may attend. There are currently 27 children on roll.

Five members of staff are employed four of whom hold appropriate early years qualifications. Two staff are currently working towards a further 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. They benefit from a variety of worthwhile, safe and age-appropriate activities which help them make good progress towards the early learning goals. Staff recognise the uniqueness of each child and work in partnership with parents and carers and with other Early Years Foundation Stage providers, to ensure appropriate support for children's welfare. Staff are reflective practitioners but currently the self-evaluation system is a work in progress so not yet fully efficient in identifying areas for development.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- review the presentation of books and the use of labelling on displays and around the setting, both indoors and outside, and the provision of informal mark-making materials in order to encourage children's awareness of print and uses of print in their play and learning, and daily routines
- broaden the scope of multicultural activities and resources so that children can explore aspects of various cultures and begin to understand diversity between their own and others' lives
- continue to complete the self-evaluation in order to show how the setting celebrates strengths and achievements and approaches areas for development and improvement.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children are cared for by a dedicated and qualified staff team. The managers and staff have a secure understanding of safeguarding issues and are confident of the procedures to follow for any concerns. Written policies and procedures are systematically reviewed and are freely available to parents and carers so they can be aware of the group's responsibilities in regard to child protection. Staff are checked and vetted to ensure suitability to work at the setting and they are vigilant about the security of children. All visitors and students are closely monitored. Daily risk assessments ensure that equipment and 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 started, however, due to staff and management changes has not yet been completed. It is therefore not yet able to fully identify the nursery's strengths and priorities for development to ensure an improving quality of provision for all children.

The highly inclusive nursery has a special educational needs coordinator with a good understanding of where and how to access support for children's additional needs. Staff have a good knowledge of each child's background, their uniqueness is recognised and complemented within individualised care and learning programmes, tailored to their needs. Children are developing a positive attitude towards diversity through staff example and by using a range of multicultural resources, however, this is an area of the curriculum which staff identify as in need of improvement in order to further develop children's curiosity and understanding of world cultures and the similarities and differences between their own and others' lives. Partnerships with other settings delivering the Early Years Foundation Stage are well established and there are good links with the local primary school to support children's transition and to enhance continuity in their care and learning.

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. They 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 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 achievements, 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

Staff have a very secure understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage and of how young children learn. Children are happy and content and enjoy their time at pre-school as staff treat them with genuine warmth and kindness, encouraging development of self-esteem and a good sense of belonging through feeling safe and secure. Children make good progress towards their early learning goals and demonstrate a positive and active approach to learning new skills, for example, as they make a grass seed caterpillar to complement the favourite story about a hungry caterpillar and extend their understanding of growth and life cycles. Children have an opportunity to choose books as they visit the library on a regular basis. Books are used well at story time and by staff sharing stories informally with children, however, the presentation of books generally does not encourage spontaneous use by all children and could be improved. Similarly, the ambience of the setting is enhanced with plentiful child-generated displays; some of these are labelled, but some lack any supporting text, thereby limiting their effectiveness as a learning resource.

Staff undertake sensitive observational assessments and adapt plans and activities to meet children's specific needs and abilities; they informally discuss how to meet the children's various needs every day following the sessions. Each child has a development profile covering the six areas of learning and including children's next steps and parental comments. These are very well presented and include copious information and photographs illustrating children's participation and achievements. They are regularly evaluated to identify gaps in children's learning and to ensure the provision of sufficient challenge for children's continuing development. Care of children with additional needs is particularly sensitive; staff are unobtrusive yet attentive, ensuring that all children are sufficiently challenged and included.

Children engage in a wide range of stimulating indoor and outdoor activities, understanding the importance of keeping healthy and the activities which contribute to good health. They demonstrate an understanding of healthy practises, such as hand washing and the use of tissues to keep themselves clean and germ free. An understanding of healthy foods and keeping themselves hydrated with regular drinks of water all contribute to children's understanding of health and well-being which will stand them in good stead for the future.

Children's freedom to indulge in imaginative play is a particular strength at this setting. Children readily engage with the wide choice of costumes and props to enable them to take on new roles and enact scenarios such as mums and dads, schools, shopping, being a policeman, astronaut or construction worker, or fantasy characters. This encourages complex, sustained play and language development as children re-enact scenes and invent new games. Currently, this is not always supported with free access to mark-making which would enhance the learning even further.

Staff help children to develop skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being, for example, early literacy skills such as linking sounds to letters or

counting and calculating in practical situations, such as how many children can sit on the bus made from chairs. Children develop independence as they pour their own drinks and seek out their hats for wearing in the garden when the sun is strong. They have some opportunities to explore and question differences, for example, when washing the boy and girl baby dolls. They are developing an awareness of other languages and communication systems, for example, by using sign language at various times. Children's behaviour is very good, they understand routines and respond to clear and consistent directions from staff. Some firm friendships are formed and children are able to co-operate and share resources as well as staff's time and attention. They are helpful at tidy up time and clearly enjoy being part of this happy setting.

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	3
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	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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