

Barlow Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspector Diana Pidgeon

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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

Barlow Pre-School opened in 1974 and is provided by a voluntary management committee. It operates from the village hall in Barlow and most children come from the local rural area. The pre-school has the use of two rooms for play areas and also the kitchen and toilets. Children use a securely enclosed outdoor play area that is accessed directly from the hall. The pre-school opens each weekday during school term time. Sessions are from 9.00am until 12noon each morning.

The pre-school is registered by Ofsted on the Early Years Register and both the voluntary and compulsory parts of the Childcare Register. It is in receipt of funding for the provision of free early education for children aged three and four years. A maximum of 24 children may attend at any one time. There are currently 29 children aged from two and a half to four years on roll. The pre-school employs nine members of staff including two relief staff and an administrator. There are six adults who regularly work with the children, five of whom hold relevant early years qualifications. The pre-school receive support from the local authority.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children thoroughly enjoy their time in the pre-school and make good progress in all areas of their learning and development. Their enjoyment is rooted in the excellent organisation and presentation of activities both indoors and outdoors, which allows them to be independent and active learners. Arrangements to safeguard all aspects of children's welfare are secure and children develop an exceptionally high awareness of keeping themselves healthy. Staff work closely with parents and others involved in the care of children to ensure individual needs are known and transitions between settings are smooth. The staff demonstrate a high level of commitment to the pre-school and successfully make improvements to the service they provide.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- review the organisation and planning of large group activities to ensure these meet the needs of all children participating
- extend the monitoring systems to include evaluations of the effectiveness of teaching in order to support ongoing improvement.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children's health and safety is effectively promoted because staff implement the policies and procedures rigorously. Comprehensive risk assessments underpin safety in the setting and staff are vigilant in their supervision of children at all times. The robust recruitment and vetting procedures ensure staff are suitable to work with children and hold appropriate qualifications and training. This enables them to handle food safely and to deal with any medical emergencies that may arise. All staff have a secure understanding of their responsibilities to safeguard children and describe suitable arrangements to work with relevant agencies to protect children from harm or neglect. Children's welfare is further supported by the maintenance of relevant records and implementation of a comprehensive set of policies and procedures that are regularly reviewed and updated.

Staff work exceptionally imaginatively to create a vibrant, exciting and well-organised learning environment in the community hall and an equally valuable outdoor classroom in the play area adjacent to the building. Innovative ways to display children's work and create a wealth of workshop areas ensure children are excited by the opportunities available to them and develop a real sense of belonging. Staff fully recognise the importance of outdoor play and provide a free-flow system, which provides the maximum choice for children. Staff deploy themselves well during free play and high levels of adult support ensure that children's learning is skilfully enhanced through their involvement. Parents are highly valued within the pre-school and many play an active role on the committee, as volunteers and helping with fundraising. Staff work closely with parents to understand children's individual needs and as children progress through the pre-school their 'learning journey' is shared on a regular basis. Staff provide parents with information about the activities they do in pre-school and ways in which children's learning can be supported at home. The pre-school has clear systems in place to identify and support children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. They have a proven record of working collaboratively with other professionals to promote positive outcomes for individual children. The staff maintain highly positive relationships with local schools, which aids the transition process for older children.

The staff team are highly motivated and clearly place the children's needs at the heart of all they do. Teaching is rooted in a secure knowledge of the Early Years Foundation Stage and how children learn and develop. Staff use a generally good range of teaching methods to engage children and work effectively with individuals and small groups. The pre-school uses a range of evaluation tools to monitor and improve practice although there is less emphasis on evaluating the quality of teaching in order to raise standards even further. The staff have acted upon the recommendations made at the last inspection and constantly set themselves targets which improve the outcomes for children overall.

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

Children come to pre-school knowing that they will have lots of exciting things to do and consequently arrive with enthusiasm and a great sense of expectation. They thrive on the practical nature of the activities provided and the wide choice of well-organised resources, which helps them to become independent in their learning. Younger children quickly learn how to select items such as jugs and bottles to use in the water tray and become absorbed in pouring water from one to the other. This develops their skills, which are later used practically to serve themselves with drinks at the snack table. Children's social skills develop rapidly and they soon start to make friends and play cooperatively with others. Older children enjoy imaginative play and show an ability to negotiate roles and to act out scenarios that are familiar to them as they play in the home corner and outdoor cafe. Children delight in the experiences provided outdoors and become increasingly independent as they put on their coats before going out. They enjoy riding an array of different wheeled toys that provide various levels of challenge, and building with large boxes, crates and planks. Children benefit because the whole curriculum is available through outdoor play and children who prefer this environment have many opportunities to explore, write, solve problems and play creatively. For example, children use magnifying glasses to examine natural objects in the garden and closely observe their plants as they grow. Staff build upon children's self-chosen activities through their interaction, for example by encouraging children to count and calculate when playing target throwing games. Their ability to do this is carefully supported by effective observation and assessment leading to identified learning priorities for each child. However, the organisation of large group activities does not always meet the needs of the wide range of children attending, resulting in children having limited opportunities to express their opinions and some younger children becoming restless.

Children develop an excellent understanding of healthy lifestyles as they follow exemplary hygiene routines with minimal reminders from staff. They understand that they can choose when to eat and drink during session and show great independence as they serve themselves from the healthy array of foods available. They talk knowledgeably about different foods and are developing an understanding of where food comes from through their gardening activities. They enjoy an exceptionally good range of physical activities including opportunities to develop their skills in climbing, balancing and using a wide range of small and large equipment. As children play they demonstrate that they understand how to do this safely. For example, children understand that they should all ride around the track in the same direction to avoid collisions. They take part in regular fire evacuation practices and such opportunities are used by staff to enhance children's awareness of safety. Children develop a strong sense of belonging and show that they feel secure in the pre-school. They enjoy warm relationships with staff and are comfortable to seek help and reassurance when needed. Children's awareness of diversity is supported through planned activities and access to a wide range of resources. Significant days, such as St Patrick's Day, are marked with activities that begin to raise children's awareness of important events in the lives of others. Children behave well and start to take responsibility within the setting. For

example, most children tidy away after themselves in the workshop areas and guide others to do likewise. Children benefit from activities that make use of the local community such as visiting local farms to see new born animals and from walks in the village and countryside. Through their attendance at the pre-school children develop valuable skills for the future. They become confident, sociable and able to think for themselves, which prepares them well for their future learning.

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

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	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	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

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

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	1
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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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