

Lowdham and Epperstone Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspector Janice Walker

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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

Lowdham and Epperstone Pre-School opened in 1974. It is a committee run provision and operates from the village hall in Lowdham, Nottinghamshire. The provision is all on one level and there is ramped access at the rear of the building. The group have access to the main hall, an adjacent room, use of the kitchen and a grassed outdoor area. The setting is open to children from Lowdham and surrounding villages. There are close links with the local primary school.

The setting is registered on the Early Years Register and also on the compulsory and the voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. It is registered to provide care for 30 children under the age of eight years, all of whom may be in the early years age range. It is in receipt of funding for the provision of free early education to children aged three and four years. It is open during school term times from 9am until 3pm on Mondays and Thursdays, and from 9am until 12pm on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Fridays. There is an optional lunch club which operates Mondays to Thursdays from 12pm until 1pm. Children attend a variety of sessions each week depending on the individual requirements of each family. There are currently 59 children on roll aged two to four years. The setting supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and children who speak English as an additional language.

The setting employs 12 staff to work with the children. Nine members of staff hold an appropriate early years qualification, one of whom has qualified teacher status and three have Early Years Professional status. The setting receives support from the local authority and is a member of the Pre-School Learning Alliance.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is outstanding.

Children flourish in this vibrant and stimulating environment. The exceptionally dedicated staff team work highly effectively with parents and others involved with each child to ensure that they have an excellent understanding of the individual needs of the children in their care. Their comprehensive knowledge of the Early Years Foundation Stage and of how children learn is exceedingly well used to provide an superb range of activities and children are fully engaged. Extensive progress has been made since the last inspection and a highly effective system of ongoing monitoring and self-evaluation results in outstanding and sustained continual improvement of the early years provision.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To further improve the high quality early years provision the registered person should consider:

- developing further the use of the outdoor area to extend the different learning opportunities provided by the outdoor environment.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Comprehensive systems are in place to ensure that children are safeguarded in this setting. Risk assessments contain comprehensive information to help ensure that identified risks are minimised, including those relating to children's activities. The designated member of staff responsible for health and safety diligently undertakes a safety check prior to children's arrival to ensure that all areas of the environment are hazard free and any required safety equipment is in place. All staff are fully aware of their responsibilities relating to child protection and participate in innovative activities under the supervision of the management team to ensure that their knowledge is kept up to date. The designated member of staff has attended relevant training and is provided with clear written information regarding her role. Excellent security procedures ensure that access to the premises is monitored and that staff know who is going to collect every child each day. Robust recruitment and robust vetting procedures help to ensure that all staff are suitable to be in contact with young children and that they have relevant qualifications and experience. A comprehensive range of records, policies and procedures are implemented by staff in a highly effective way to promote children's welfare, learning and development.

The highly skilled and professional joint managers are exceedingly successful in inspiring the highly motivated staff team in providing a service of exceptionally high quality. The staff team work enthusiastically to create an environment which inspires children to explore and learn. Staff are highly skilled practitioners and their comprehensive knowledge of how children learn along with their energy and enthusiasm, actively encourages children's eager participation in exciting, innovative activities. There are exemplary systems for extensive monitoring and analysis of all areas of the provision which include input from the staff team and from parents, children and other agencies. Identified areas for improvement feed into the action plan which all staff share ownership of resulting in a continually improving provision. The setting demonstrates an exceptionally high commitment to sustainability, having already achieved the eco school bronze and silver awards, they are now working towards green.

Excellent relationships are established with parents who receive comprehensive information about the setting through a prospectus and personal induction programme which includes an 'Everything you need to know about pre-school' guide. There is a vast selection of information made available to parents on an ongoing basis, ranging from advice regarding child care issues and children's learning to events in the local community. This is alongside detailed information about the pre-school provision and the ethos and vision of the setting. Parents share detailed information about their children's background, routines, needs and interests which enables staff to respond sensitively to their individual needs. They are kept fully informed of their children's achievements through ongoing dialogue

and regular sharing of assessment records which they take home to share with other family members. Detailed information is provided relating to precise ways parents can support their children's learning at home. Relationships with other providers and professionals are highly effective in benefiting individual children. For example, children with special educational needs and/or disabilities receive individual, high quality support from skilled, knowledgeable staff who have excellent relationships with other professionals involved with the children. Children attending other settings all have 'dual setting' diaries to ensure consistency and continuity of care and learning. The management team have highly effective relationships with other local providers and members of the local community and make excellent use of these to improve opportunities and experiences for children attending.

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

Children thoroughly enjoy their time in this outstanding setting. They eagerly participate in a varied and exciting range of adult-led and child-initiated play experiences which support all areas of learning. The environment is highly stimulating; skilful use of fabrics and storage units create cosy 'communication friendly spaces' which are hugely successful in enabling children to focus on their chosen activity. Many resources are freely accessible and those that are not are portrayed in the 'choosing books' which children use to select additional resources as they wish. Excellent organisation of space and routines means younger children are cared for in smaller groups when appropriate and all children can access outdoors for the majority of the session should they wish. The outdoor area is well used to provide opportunities for children to learn in different ways and on a larger scale than when indoors. The rigorous systems for assessing and monitoring children's progress through observations are highly effective in guiding planning, ensuring that children make rapid progress in their learning and development.

The highly skilled and knowledgeable staff team demonstrate a comprehensive understanding of how young children learn and progress. They support planned activities superbly well, for example, by encouraging children to contribute vocally during small and large group times through the use of puppets or silly voices. Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities are exceptionally well supported to enable them to participate during these times at a level that is appropriate to their individual ability. Staff respond in inspirational ways to children's interests. For example, seizing on a child's interest in the 'Jack and the Beanstalk' book, a member of staff leads a spontaneous and hugely enjoyable re-enacting of the story where children display exceptional communication skills as they recall the story and guide the actions. The innovative 'talking table' activities are excellent methods of supporting children's literacy skills as skilled staff encourage their thinking through open questions and record the stories they create from the items on the table. Dynamic staff expertly use daily routines to introduce and reinforce mathematical concepts; children count how many are present at registration time and count to time how long it takes staff to find a chosen game from the cupboard. Children are extremely well settled in this setting. They

demonstrate a strong sense of security, for example, they ask for additional resources with supreme levels of confidence and enthusiastically and consistently contribute their thoughts and ideas. Children have contributed to the development of the pre-school promises which strongly support them to keep themselves safe and enable them to verbalise their dislike of another's actions. Staff plan exciting topics to enhance children's awareness of safety. For example, during 'beep beep week' they learned about road safety through practical activities, reinforced with songs and stories. Through excellent levels of ongoing support, children learn basic safety awareness and safe ways of handling tools such as scissors and knives.

Children follow routines, such as those related to hand washing, which are highly effective in supporting good hygiene practices. This is strongly supported by visual reminders and innovative planned activities. For example, the 'glitter germs' activity, with glitter representing germs, helps them to understand the importance of thoroughness when hand washing and large teeth cleaning resources are used to discuss dental hygiene. Stories, such as 'kind hands' include important messages about using hands for taking care of ourselves and children display an exceptional knowledge of the possible consequences of failing, for example, to clean their teeth or wash their hands. Children enjoy healthy snacks and staff supporting the snack bar gainfully use the opportunity to initiate discussions about the benefits of healthy foods. All children are highly valued as individuals and staff devise innovative activities for them to undertake at home with their families which they then share with their peers. These are highly effective in making each child feel special and raising their awareness of similarities and differences. Staff are excellent role models and through their exemplary role modelling, children learn exceedingly good standards of behaviour. Purposeful and versatile use of equipment such as timers and puppets are hugely successful in enabling them to take turns and listen to others. Through highly successful activities linked to the eco schools programme, such as composting, recycling and growing, children learn extremely well to begin to care for their environment. Overall, they are becoming exceedingly well equipped with the skills required for successful 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?	1
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	1

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	1
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	1
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	1
The effectiveness of safeguarding	1
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	1
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	1
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Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	1
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	1

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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