

Explorers

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspector

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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

Explorers opened in 2003 and is run by an elected management committee. The pre-school operates from a self-contained mobile classroom situated in the grounds of St Nicholas Church of England Primary School in the village of Henstridge in Somerset. There is a separate enclosed area for outside play and the children have use of other facilities in the school grounds. The pre-school is open from 8.50am to 1.00pm on Mondays, Tuesdays and Wednesdays. From 8.50am to 12.00pm on Thursdays and Fridays during school term times. Explorers is registered on the Early years and the compulsory and voluntary Childcare registers to care for a maximum of 16 children aged two to under five years at any one time. It usually accepts children from the age of two years six months. Currently, there are 20 children on roll, of whom 15 receive funding for nursery education. At present, there are four children who have special educational needs and /or disabilities. Explorers employ four staff. Three, including the manager have National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) at Level 3 in Early Years and Childcare and Education. The other member has a NVQ at Level 2 in Early Years Childcare and Education.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Explorers pre-school is a caring, welcoming and inclusive place that highly values each child as an individual. This is its key strength. Overall children make good progress in their learning and development. There are good positive relationships with parents and carers and the pre-school is highly rated by them. Together they work in partnership to meet the individual needs of the children. The manager is fully supported by a very able team who are extremely motivated and passionate in striving to enhance the provision for children. They are confident in knowing what to do to bring about these changes, have been generally successful so far and have a good capacity to sustain further improvements.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- provide more challenging problem solving activities that stimulate children's thinking in all activities but particularly when using computer programmes.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Safeguarding is given a high priority for all of the children. The committee ensures that all staff are thoroughly vetted and undergo the necessary checks. Staff routinely undertake rigorous risk assessments of all of the children's play area and equipment daily. Safeguarding policies are all up to date and reviewed annually so

that the children are kept safe at all times.

The pre-school actively promotes equality and diversity through providing an enriched curriculum which is evident through the various multicultural toys and books used. All of this gives children a wider understanding of the diverse world that they live in. A member of staff, responsible for equality and diversity ensures children understand about the world and the different cultures within it. A parent says, '...from the first minute I came here I was very impressed with the amount of things they do here on diversity. I looked at the displays and saw a large dragon and knew they celebrated the Chinese New Year...' Resources are well organised. Staff provide good support for children in getting them to develop a deeper understanding about the world through play in both the inside and outside areas.

The pre-school has established strong and positive relationships with the parents and carers that begin when staff visit the home to find out information about the children. It continues to develop as parents and carers attend consultation meetings and have regular conversations with the key person who is responsible for monitoring the progress of the child. Parents and carers on the committee help make key decisions that will affect their children's learning and well being. Parents and carers are very informed by the information that is given to them regularly through newsletters and displayed on the notice board and through the regular dialogue with staff.

Good links are established with the school enabling the children to enjoy and explore the extended outdoor area and have access to the big multi gym play equipment in the playground. Staff work closely with the teachers in the school to make sure that transitions are smooth for the children. Established purposeful working links with the speech and language therapists help the smoothness of the referral process for the children.

The committee and the manager are constantly striving for improvement in pursuit of having an excellent provision for the children. Regular staff appraisal ensures training is up-to-date. The manager and her team worked hard in addressing all of the recommendations of the previous inspection. The team rigorously monitor the activities daily and make the necessary adjustments for the children to progress well. Staff meetings are held once a fortnight to keep them informed about any changes and discuss the day-to-day running of the club. Informal discussions also help to decide what needs changing in line with the children's interests. All members of staff are involved in the accurate self evaluation process and are very dedicated and committed to making further improvements.

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

Children benefit from an inclusive caring, stimulating and warm environment where staff have good knowledge of how children learn and develop. Staff spend quality time interacting with each child as a result children love attending the pre-school. One child says, '...if I don't come today I'll be sad...' Children look forward to circle

time where they sit together sharing information and reflecting. Children are excited to guess what is inside the covered container only using their sense of smell. The children are completely involved in the activity and inquisitive and curious to know the answers

Children have many opportunities to go out on visits, such as Zoolab, Quiet Farm Corner to do some apple juicing and a Rainforest Adventure. Outside visitors are invited such as the local postman who comes to collect their Christmas letters. As a result their understanding about the world around them is developing.

Children adopt good healthy habits and hygiene practices as they independently wash their hands each time they come indoors and before settling down at snack time. Children freely drink water and know how important it is. A child says, 'I must drink water because it helps me when I'm thirsty and it helps me to get rid of my hiccups.' Children look forward to snack times as they are provided with a choice of fruit, juice, milk and savoury snacks. They sit at the table enjoying each other's company and have fun sharing information with their friends and with the staff. Children enjoy the opportunities to be outside as they grow their own vegetables and explore nature in the 'willow dome'.

Children feel very secure in the setting as they are able to confidently talk about possible dangers. They know what to do if the fire alarm bell goes off, because of the regular drills. They enjoy sitting on a friendship bench when relaxing and talking to their friends.

Children make good progress in communication, language and literacy skills. Most children can confidently use the mouse on the computer to navigate around the computer screen finding their favourite programmes. Large numbers are displayed in both the indoor and outdoor areas and children often recognise and point to them. Most children are familiar with numbers up to ten. They can apply the recognition of numbers on the computer keyboard, but are sometimes not challenged enough to independently solve calculation problems in computer games. Children use mobile telephones and digital cameras helping them to develop life skills for the future.

Children concentrate well as they play a game with dice. They love the competitive element of using the number from the die to make the body of a ladybird and putting legs on to its body. Children spend a long time concentrating on this game.

Children have lots of opportunity to make choices from the moment they enter into the club. Staff set up a range of resources both inside and outside. Some play independently watering the gardening and making small puddles with a watering can whilst others play together with the tricycles. However the older children do not have enough challenging activities and questions to support their thinking so preparing them for their next stages of 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	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

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	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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Annex B: the Childcare Register

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