

Grove Pre-school

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspector Lynn A Hartigan

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ORH

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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

The Grove Pre-school has been registered since 1989. It operates from the Scout Hut in Stanway, near Colchester in Essex. There is an enclosed garden available for outdoor play. The Grove pre-school is registered to care for 20 children at any one time, aged from two to five years.

The pre-school is open each weekday, from 9.15am until 3.45pm during term time. Sessions are from 9.15am until 12.15pm each weekday morning and 12.45pm until 3.45pm on Monday to Thursday. A lunch club is also offered every day. The provision is registered on the Early Years register. There are currently 47 children on roll. There are strategies in place to support children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and children learning

The pre-school employs nine members of staff, including the managers of whom seven members have appropriate early years qualifications. One member of staff is currently training to degree level.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children's learning and development are supported well and they experience good levels of care and attention, making steady progress during their time at pre-school. Children are very happy and settled in their surroundings and enjoy a wide variety of activities which include some opportunities to learn and embrace differences and similarities. Overall, toys and resources provided both indoors and outdoors are interesting and appealing. Very good partnerships with parents have been established and are valued by staff, who have also developed some good links with other early year's settings. A systematic process to monitor and evaluate the provision continues to develop to ensure the outcomes for children are continually improved.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- enhance the two-way flow of information with parents to make clear who has legal contact with the child; and who has parental responsibility
- provide further opportunities for children to self-select toys. Develop the home corner to enable children to express their creativity and imagination and ensure toys and resources are presented in an exciting and appealing way.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children's well-being is safeguarded as good procedures are in place to ensure children are cared for by staff who have completed all required suitability checks and an induction programme. A safeguarding policy is in place and understood by staff who have a sound understanding of how to follow and support any concerns with regard to the children's welfare. Attendance at safeguarding training ensures staff refresh their knowledge and understanding around child protection issues. Detailed risk assessments are completed daily to ensure children play in a safe environment. Good staff ratios and vigilant staff ensure children are supervised well.

The pre-school staff work well with the restrictions imposed within the premises. The premises are tired and in need of refurbishment, however, staff endeavour to create a welcoming and safe environment in which children can play and learn. Good quality resources and equipment that are appropriate for the children attending are mostly, easily accessible. The layout of the playroom ensures all children are able to access the activities provided. Posters, photographs and art work are displayed to create a sense of belonging.

The staff team demonstrate a good understanding of the importance of continued improvement. A systematic procedure continues to be developed to ensure highlighted areas for improvement, such as, the continued development of the outdoor play space are actioned by management to improve outcomes for children. Staff training is encouraged and supported to ensure staff have the opportunity to build on their existing knowledge and further their qualifications.

Good opportunities are available for parents and carers to contribute to their child's time at the setting. For example, the provision of regular questionnaires enable parents to comment on their child's time at pre-school. The pre-school is supported by a strong parents committee. Parents are warmly welcomed into the setting by staff that are friendly and approachable and happily discuss the children on a daily basis. Regular newsletters and a parents notice board ensure parents are offered information in many forms. Parents verbal references suggest they are very happy with every aspect of care and learning opportunities offered to their children. Although good information is gathered at the initial meeting with parents, clarification as to who has legal parental responsibility is not always noted and therefore children's welfare may be compromised.

The managers their staff show a commitment to develop further relationships and links with local schools and nurseries. Some good links are already in place with other settings delivering the Early Years Foundation Stage. As a result, information is shared and continuity of care across different provision children attend is improved and transition into school is supported effectively.

Staff are skilful in identifying children who may require additional help and have good strategies in place to share information with the parents and other agencies involved with the family. Good strategies are in place to support children who learn

English as an additional language. Regular communication with the parents, the introduction of Makaton, signs and visual prompts throughout the pre-school ensure the outcomes for all children are good.

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

All staff demonstrate a good knowledge and understanding of how children learn and of the welfare requirements within the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Children's development is promoted to a good standard as a result. Some good systems established for communication with parents and carers ensure staff are fully informed and are intuitive of the children in their care. Staff are able to effectively support their individual needs. The provision of an informative notice board for parents, regular newsletters and a pre-school website ensures parents are informed with regard to every aspect of the setting.

Good observations are recorded within the children's learning journey records, along with meaningful photographs and this information is used to identify the children's next steps in learning. Parents are encouraged to support their children's development and have opportunities to contribute to the initial assessment and ongoing learning. Children are encouraged to initiate their own play and leaning and this is successfully supported by the staff. For example, children interested in sea creatures and fish are offered resources to extend their interest and develop their fascination. They are able to see first hand what a fish looks like as staff purchase a Red Mullet for them to observe.

Although the outdoor environment continues to develop, children relish their time in the garden. They are fascinated by the sky and talk about the clouds. They dig channels in the mud and fill with water to see what happens. They make puddles and enjoy jumping in them. The provision of Wellington boots enable children to really enjoy their time in the outdoors. Children make early attempts at mark making as they paint with water on the walls. They develop their physical skills and sense of space as they steer their bikes through cones.

Cosy book areas are used well. A good selection of books are readily available to the children. Number lines and sequences displayed around the setting and singing favourite number songs reinforce children's understanding of mathematics. They count beans and are able to complete simple subtraction. Children are able to use sand, water and compost in the outdoor environment, this due to the restrictions imposed, within the hall. They have fun bug hunting using a log pile both indoors and outdoors. They can express their creativity as some opportunities are available to dress-up, paint and make models. The home corner/shop is less inspiring and some resources are not presented to encourage children's interest, therefore learning opportunities are not always maximised. Children are able to use everyday technology, such as, a laptop, mobile phones and calculators. They show sustained levels of interest at the computer and have good eye and hand coordination when using the mouse.

Staff listen with interest to the children who have formed close attachments. Staff are good role models and promote positive behaviour. For example, children are praised for sharing, are thanked for helping each other or when tidying up. They are quietly reminded not to use certain language and an explanation is offered at their level of understanding. As a result children's behaviour is very good.

Diversity is reflected in most areas of the pre-school. Some good resources are readily available, such as, a selection of musical instruments, dual-language books and dressing-up clothes. Posters depicting positive images prompt conversation and children are beginning to understand about the wider world through topic work and celebrations acknowledged within the planning. For example, children learn about Diwali, Chinese New Year and Christmas.

This helps support the children in making sense of the wider world. Each child's unique background is celebrated and children learning English as an additional language are supported well. Staff attendance at training, such as, 'Every Child a Talker' refreshes the practitioners understanding. The recent introduction of Makaton and visual time lines to the pre-school assist all children in communication.

Through daily routines and real life situations children are beginning to understand the importance of how to stay safe. For example, when walking in the environment road safety is introduced and discussed. Organised visits to the pre-school from the local police and lollipop lady supports discussion with regard to personal safety and reinforces their understanding. Children participate in fire evacuation drills and are familiar with the routine.

Children benefit from healthy snacks, such as, savoury crackers, apple and bananas. Their independence is encouraged and supported as they pour their own drinks and butter their crackers. The introduction of lunch club has proved popular and children bring their lunch boxes from home. They sit and chatter to their friends whilst enjoying their meal. Pre-school staff discuss healthy foods and children are encouraged to bring a nutritious, healthy lunch to pre-school.

Opportunities for children to play outdoors ensure they have sufficient time for fresh air and exercise and children clearly relish their time in the garden. Children have a good understanding of how to stay healthy. For example, they take themselves to the bathroom and understand the importance of washing hands, even young children are able to explain about germs. They use tissues for their noses and dispose of these appropriately. Organised visits to an allotment give children first hand experience of how to grow and care for vegetables. They relish their time at the allotment, digging for carrots and picking blackberries that they taste and share with their friends back at pre-school.

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

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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

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