

Wenhaston Acorns Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number EY346837
Inspection date 10/05/2011
Inspector Hazel Meadows

Setting address Wenhaston Primary School, Hall Road, Wenhaston,
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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

Wenhaston Acorns Pre-school originally opened in 2001. In 2007 the setting moved into purpose-built premises, attached to Wenhaston Primary School in Wenhaston village, near Halesworth, Suffolk. The pre-school is managed by a voluntary management committee made up of parents of children at the pre-school, past and present. There is ramped access to the premises. An accessible toilet is available off the main playroom. Children have access to a shared outdoor play area.

The pre-school is registered by Ofsted on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. A maximum of 24 children, all in the early years age group, may attend the pre-school at any one time. There are currently 17 children aged from two to five years on roll. Of these, 14 children receive funding for early education.

The group is open Monday to Friday, term time only. Session times are from 9am until midday, with an optional lunch club available from midday until 12.45pm. On Friday session times are from 9am until 2.45pm, with an optional club in the middle of the day. Children can attend for a variety of sessions. Children come from a wide catchment area.

The group employs two staff who both hold appropriate early years qualifications. The group is a member of the Pre-school Learning Alliance and receives support from local authority advisory staff.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children are happy and settle well at this stimulating and welcoming pre-school. They enjoy a variety of play and learning experiences and, overall, the outcomes for children are good. The group has a positive attitude to diversity which is reflected in some resources and activities. Committed staff work well as a team to meet children's needs and the group is well resourced. Trusting partnerships are established with parents and carers and comprehensive documentation and procedures mostly work well in practice to promote children's welfare. Self-evaluation is relatively limited but leaders and managers are motivated to seek further improvement.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- improve self-evaluation to accurately identify, monitor and rectify areas for development and improvement
- use observations effectively to identify a child's next steps and to inform

future planning, ensuring it is tailored to meet individual children's learning needs

- ensure children are provided with sufficient ongoing interest and challenge, encouraging them to become active and inquisitive learners and to continue to make progress
- develop and fully utilise the variety of activities and experiences outside to increase children's learning opportunities.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children are well safeguarded. All staff have attended safeguarding children training. They recognise their responsibilities to protect children and have a clear understanding of safeguarding issues. Secure recruitment procedures are in place to ensure staff's suitability to work with children, and all staff have had a Criminal Records Bureau clearance. The group has a thorough written safeguarding policy, plus local contact details to refer to should they have concerns about a child. Staff are watchful of the children and attentive to their safety. Written risk assessments are undertaken for the premises and for outings to minimise risks to children and effectively identify potential hazards. There are effective procedures for emergency evacuation in place which is regularly practised and recorded.

Staff are experienced and work cooperatively together to aid the running of each session. Required training is up-to-date or booked for renewal. However, staff have not undergone any form of appraisal to review and evaluate their training and development needs. Staff endeavour to make improvements and undertake basic reflection of their practice through informal discussion. However, systematic self-evaluation is limited. An Ofsted self-evaluation form was completed last year. This offers a mostly accurate reflection of practice, aspirations and improvements. However, not all of the recommendations from the previous inspection have been fully addressed.

The group has a positive attitude and approach towards diversity and this is reflected well in good quality books and resources. Staff work closely with parents and carers, liaising with other childcare professionals, if required, to ensure that children with any additional needs receive appropriate support at an early stage. Comprehensive details are obtained about each child to support their welfare and signed consents are obtained to ensure children are cared for according to their parents' or carers' wishes. Written policies, which are currently being reviewed, are readily available to parents.

Staff establish trusting partnerships with parents and two-way communication is encouraged, which promotes children's welfare and continuity of care. Comments received from parents during the inspection are generally positive. They find staff friendly and approachable and state that their children are happy and settled. They receive some verbal feedback about their child's progress and most have seen or had opportunity to contribute to their child's development records. Parents are kept well informed of general information through discussions with the staff, noticeboards and newsletters. Some parents are actively involved in supporting the

pre-school as they take on roles within the management committee. The pre-school has close links with the adjacent school to promote smooth transitions for the children. There are some limited connections with other settings children attend. The group receives support from local authority advisory staff to help with ongoing improvements.

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

Children are happy at the group and independently explore the activities available. They form positive relationships with staff and their peers, and are developing a healthy self-esteem. Many confidently approach staff and visitors to share their news and views. Children's individuality is valued and children are treated with kindness and respect. Their behaviour is generally good and staff use a consistent approach, offering children clear explanations and reasonable boundaries. For example, children learn to keep themselves safe as they are reminded to walk within the pre-school.

Staff have a sound understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage and offer a suitable variety of play and learning experiences covering all the areas of learning. Children are encouraged to be independent in their play and can freely help themselves to resources. Toys are easily accessible in picture-labelled trays on low-level shelving. They have regular opportunities to explore a broad variety of media and textures, such as play dough, sand and paint and thoroughly enjoy playing with the gloop. Examples of the children's artwork adorn the walls, helping them to feel valued. Several of the children can competently use scissors and enjoy practising this skill at the craft table. Their imaginative play is encouraged by a variety of dressing-up clothes and props in the home area plus small world toys.

Children listen attentively to an audio lotto game and patiently wait for their turn. They learn to recognise their names as they self register or find their name on their coat peg or at snack time, however, this is more difficult for very young children. They practice mark making on white boards or painting the walls outside with water. Children use technology such as the computer and mini recorder with increasing skill and concentration. Problem-solving skills are encouraged as they do puzzles of varying degrees of difficulty. Children have regular periods for fresh air and exercise outside. They develop confidence and competence on climbing equipment and ride-on toys. Children delight in being outside. However, the learning potential and experiences of the outdoor environment are not fully utilised and exploited.

Staff have established a way of monitoring children's progress using Learning Journeys. Observations are recorded regularly and supported by photographs of the children and examples of their work. However, the observations are not always used to identify a child's next steps and to inform the weekly planning, which could result in children's progress not being maximised. There is a broad age range of children at the setting, ranging from just two-years-old to four-years-old. Younger children busily explore the resources available. However, the activities sometimes lack sufficient challenge and interest to engage and extend the older or more able

children.

Good hygiene practices are employed by staff to minimise cross-infection, and nappy changing is done discreetly to respect children's privacy. Older children independently access the toilets and mostly remember to wash their hands. Children learn to make healthy choices as they are offered foods such as fruit and vegetables at snack time and parents are encouraged to provide healthy options in their children's packed lunches. Water is available most of the time for children, to ensure they are well hydrated. Children increase their skills and independence by peeling and cutting up fruit for rolling snack and sometimes pouring their own drinks.

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	3

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	3
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

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	3
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	3

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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