

Weldon Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspector	Hazel White

Setting address	Village Hall, Bridge Street, Weldon, Corby, Northamptonshire, NN17 3HR
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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

Weldon Pre-school is a community group managed by parents. It opened in 1971 and operates from two rooms and associated facilities in the village hall in Weldon near Corby in Northamptonshire. The pre-school group serves the local and surrounding areas and has strong links with the school. It is accessible to all children and there is a fully enclosed area available for outdoor play.

A maximum of 30 children may attend the pre-school at any one time. There are currently 35 children on roll who are within the early years age range. The pre-school is registered on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register.

The nursery employs five members of childcare staff. Of these, three hold appropriate early years qualifications. The manager has an Early Years Foundation Stage degree. The nursery receives support from the local authority.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children flourish in this welcoming and child-friendly pre-school group. They make excellent progress as they take part in a vast range of interesting and rewarding activities that cover all aspects of their learning and development. Staff offer a fully inclusive service, supporting all children to actively participate in activities. Exceptionally good partnership with parents and other agencies help to ensure that each child's care and education is tailored to their individual needs. The committee, manager and staff demonstrate a strong commitment and ability to sustain continuous improvement. Documentation is generally well organised although because it is a pack away facility, some records are not easily accessible.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- improve the accessibility of children's medical records.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Staff have an excellent understanding of child protection issues and are fully aware of the procedures to follow should they be concerned about a child in their care. A comprehensive safeguarding policy is in place and this is shared with parents. All staff members receive child protection training to keep their knowledge up to date which helps to protect children from harm. Robust and vigorous procedures ensure

that all adults working with children or having unsupervised access to them are suitable to do so. Thorough risk assessments are undertaken and regularly reviewed which enables the manager and staff to be proactive in ensuring children's care and safety is given the highest priority. They cover all aspects of the learning environment including outings and are added to as and when necessary. For example, looking at potential hazards of the Christmas tree and lights. Staff routinely verify the identity of visitors to the setting and are vigilant about the safe arrival and collection of children. Staff are deployed effectively to ensure children are supervised safely at all times.

Positive outcomes for children are attributed to the good use of time, space and resources. This is a pack away setting which means that all furniture, equipment and resources are put into storage at the end of every session. Staff work very hard and give high priority to making the environment welcoming and child friendly. Because of this children's learning is fully supported and they make rapid progress towards the early learning goals. Children's health, safety and well-being is enhanced by the effective maintenance of documentation. However, although staff are aware of each child's medical history, some medical records are not easily accessible. This could potentially delay contacting the necessary persons in the event of an emergency.

The pre-school has established outstanding partnerships with parents and others involved in the children's care and learning. In-depth information is gained about the child before they commence at the pre-school. As a result the care provided is consistent and appropriate to their individual needs. The effective key person system strengthens links with parents and fully supports children's well-being. Parents access a wealth of information regarding the group. For example, information about the setting's ethos, the full range of policies and procedures and regular newsletters. These are all displayed on the parents' table and notice board. The daily diary outlines what activities children have been involved in during the day and parents write about what their children have been doing at home. This successfully supports the children's care and learning further. Parents also see many examples of their children's work attractively displayed around the rooms. They expressed very positive views during the inspection, commenting on how very pleased they were with the excellent care and learning opportunities that are provided and that they find staff caring, friendly and supportive. Parents value the opportunities that they have to speak with their child's key person and to look at their child's learning journal. Communication with parents is constantly being developed to ensure that the views of all parents are valued and new parents feel full included.

Staff are committed to working with external agencies to support the inclusion of children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Children's individual identities are nurtured and staff are skilled in adapting the provision to meet the constant changing needs of the children who attend. The manager has also established superb partnerships with external agencies and with other settings delivering the Early Years Foundation Stage, ensuring continuity of a high level of care and learning for all children. There is a shared vision for inclusive practice, ensuring that every child can achieve as well as they can whilst taking into account their background.

The new manager leads by example and has a clear vision for the setting. Staff's personal and professional development is encouraged and training has been identified to help ensure that their knowledge and skills are kept up to date. Reflective practice is encouraged and the views of staff, parents and children are beginning to be used to help inform the setting's self-evaluation. Staff demonstrate a strong commitment to further enhance the quality of the early years provision. They are experienced and the majority hold early years qualifications. Recommendations made at the previous inspection have been met and have had a positive impact on children's learning and well-being. The child protection procedure has been reviewed, resources which reflect positive images have been added to and there is now a suitably qualified named deputy to take charge in the absence of the manager. In addition parents have input into the assessment process.

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

Children receive a very warm welcome from staff. Space, both indoors and outdoors, is imaginatively organised allowing children to make choices about their own learning and play. Children respond to challenges with great enthusiasm and show good levels of independence, curiosity and imagination. There is a good balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities that result in children being creative and active learners. Staff skilfully interact with the children and support children as they play. They have an excellent understanding of children's individual needs as they frequently observe and record information. Information gained is evaluated and used to inform future planning. As a result all children make outstanding progress towards the early learning goals. They have an individual learning journal which contains both photographic and written information of children's learning, achievements and records of children's own work. These are shared regularly with parents who are encouraged to add any information about their child's learning and development at home.

Staff have created an inspirational learning environment for the children. Children have fun and enjoy the company of adults and their friends. They are cared for in a calm and welcoming environment where they can actively explore their surroundings both indoors and outdoors with curiosity and interest. Children access a superb range of first hand learning experiences. For example, there is great excitement as children explore sand, using spades to fill the cement mixer and buckets to carry the water. Children play co-operatively, helping one another to use the mixture to build a wall, carefully placing bricks on top of one another.

Children are developing a love for books as they freely access the welcoming and comfy reading area where they enjoy looking through books with their friends. Staff read individual children their favourite stories. They sit attentively, listening and participating enthusiastically. This supports children's understanding that print has meaning. Staff help younger children develop their communication skills with positive interactions at their level, using picture books and by singing their favourite action rhymes and songs. Older children engage easily in conversation

because they listen carefully to adults and are able to recall past and present experiences. Children learn to recognise their own names as they self-register at each session and also have many opportunities to develop their mark-making skills. For example, making notes and appointments in the role play areas and forming patterns in paint and sand.

Children's creativity is fully supported through an excellent range of role play equipment and access to a wide range of media, such as, paint, water, sand, play dough and chalks. For example, children decided that they wanted to make and paint dinosaurs. They cut out the shape and when children asked for pink paint staff encouraged them to think about what colours they could mix together to make pink. Children quickly realised that the more red or white they mixed, the darker or lighter the colour became. As a result their intellectual skills are developing well. Children's physical development is supported superbly as they access an exciting and very well-resourced outdoor area. They build large constructions for climbing and balancing, skilfully pedal bikes and throw and catch balls. Children learn about their natural environment and about how things grow. They are encouraged to plant soft fruit and vegetables in the pre-school garden including strawberries, potatoes, broad beans, lettuce, cabbage, onions, sweet corn and herbs. Most produce grown by the children is used within the session at snack time. Children understand that they need to water their crops and watch with delight as they grow.

Staff talk to children about the importance of eating healthily and the setting has achieved a 'Healthy Heart Beat Award' for their healthy snacks which include a wide variety of fruits as well as a choice of toast, tea cakes, crumpets and cereal. Children engage in discussion with staff about which foods are good for healthy living. Their independence is significantly enhanced because they have a self-service snack time. They pour their own drinks and clear away their cups and plates. Children learn about effective hygiene routines. Younger children are supported to wash and dry their hands before snacks, whilst the older children manage their personal care needs very well through independent toileting and automatically washing their hands before eating. Visual aids remind children of the importance of these routines.

Children develop an excellent understanding of how to stay safe as staff skilfully use everyday opportunities to reinforce their knowledge. For example, children regularly engage in emergency evacuation procedures and are gently reminded how to use equipment safely. In addition the setting has very good links with the community police officer who regularly attends sessions to talk with children about stranger danger and road safety. Also the local fire service visit to talk about the importance of not playing with matches. Children develop a clear understanding of the wider world through planned activities, discussion with staff and through access to resources that are representative of diversity. For example they celebrate festivals such as Diwali and Christmas and use dual language books and small world toys. Children learn to negotiate, share toys, take turns with equipment and show great consideration for others as they play together. They respond well to praise and encouragement. Consequently children's behaviour is very good and they are extremely confident and self-assured.

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	1
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	2
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