

Claydon Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspection date	21/06/2011
Inspector	Hazel Meadows

Setting address	Former Scout Hut Site, Thornhill Road, Claydon, Suffolk, IP6 0DZ
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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

Claydon Pre-School was originally established over 30 years ago and operates in the village of Claydon, near Ipswich, Suffolk. In November 2010 it moved into new, purpose-built premises. It is managed by a voluntary management committee made up of parents of children at the pre-school and members of the local community. There is level access to the premises. An accessible toilet is available off the main playroom. Children have access to a large, enclosed 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 26 children, all in the early years age group, may attend the pre-school at any one time. There are currently 61 children aged from two to five years on roll. Of these, 37 receive funding for early education.

The group is open Monday to Friday during term time only. Session times are from 9am until 12 noon and 12.30pm until 3.30pm. A lunch club operates between 12 noon and 12.30pm. Children can attend for a variety of sessions. Children come from a wide catchment area. The setting supports children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and children who speak English as an additional language.

The group employs seven staff, six of whom hold appropriate early years qualifications. The group also employs a part-time administrator. The playleader is trained to level 3. One deputy is trained to level 4 and the other deputy is training towards level 4. The other staff are trained to level 3. 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 settle well and thrive at this stimulating and welcoming pre-school and they are making good progress through the Early Years Foundation Stage. Committed and competent staff work well as a team to care for the children, support their play and enhance their learning. Extremely positive and trusting partnerships are established with parents and others. Inclusive practice is well promoted and each child's individuality is embraced and valued. Excellent documentation and procedures work well in practice to promote children's welfare. Rigorous, ongoing self-evaluation effectively promotes the improvement of quality and supports continuous development.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- ensure any identified next steps are used to inform planning and facilitate resources and activities which offer individual children sufficient ongoing challenge and variety to encourage them to become active and inquisitive learners
- further develop and fully utilise the potential of the outdoor area to enhance children's development across all areas of learning.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

All the staff are clear of their responsibilities to protect children. They have all attended safeguarding children training and have a secure awareness and understanding of safeguarding issues. Robust 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 written policy which is currently being reviewed, plus local safeguarding contact details to refer to should they have concerns about a child. Staff are watchful of the children and attentive to their safety. Thorough written risk assessments are undertaken for the premises and for outings to minimise risks to children. Rigorous risk assessments and reviews have been undertaken for the new premises and specific risk assessments have been done for new outdoor equipment. Potential and actual hazards have been swiftly identified and promptly rectified. There are effective procedures for emergency evacuation in place which are regularly practised and recorded.

The dedicated staff team are well deployed and work cooperatively together to support children's care, learning and development. They have a commitment to undertaking training to enhance practice and improve outcomes for children. Honest annual appraisals are in place to support ongoing staff development. Pertinent self-evaluation and reflection on practice contribute to the setting's ability to maintain continuous improvement. Regular staff meetings, discussions and direct staff input support this. Staff have completed an Ofsted self-evaluation form which is used well and updated regularly. The group's self-evaluation accurately outlines current practice plus well-targeted plans and aspirations for the future. Many resources are easily accessible in picture-labelled, low-level storage, enabling children to make some of their own choices and selections and promoting their independence. Further storage is on order to improve the presentation and availability of resources.

The group promotes inclusive practice with a positive attitude and approach towards diversity. Staff actively support and embrace children with special educational needs and/or disabilities or children for whom English is an additional language. Their excellent knowledge of child development and of the individual children enables them to identify early any additional needs a child may have. Staff work very closely with parents, liaising with other childcare or health professionals if required, to ensure each child receives appropriate support at an early stage. Their positive approach is reflected in some of the resources and activities available.

Exemplary, well-organised documentation is in place. 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' wishes. All records are securely kept and accurately maintained. Written policies, which are currently being reviewed, are readily available to parents.

Staff establish excellent, trusting partnerships with parents, which is conducive to children's welfare and continuity of care. Parents are welcome to review their child's development records at any time and are encouraged to contribute to them on a regular basis. Parents also freely share 'wow moments' regarding their child's learning and development. Several parents are actively involved on the committee and there is a voluntary parent rota system. Parents are kept updated through frequent discussions with the staff, well-presented notice boards and newsletters. Their views are welcomed and actively sought through questionnaires and comments, which are heeded by staff. Comments received from parents during the inspection were extremely positive. They find staff friendly and approachable and are well-informed about their child's progress and ongoing developments at the pre-school, such as 'Every Child a Talker'. Staff are exploring ways, such as displays in the lobby, of sharing more with parents about the different areas of learning.

The setting has established very good links with the local primary school that children are due to attend to promote smooth transitions for the children into nursery or reception. The group receives support from local authority advisory staff and other professionals who support children with additional needs as required.

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

Children are keen to come into the setting and swiftly settle to an activity or head straight to the outdoor area. Staff are caring and attentive to the children and get to know them very well as individuals. Information gathered from parents and initial observations offer staff an insight into each child's individuality and the starting points in their learning. This helps staff to support them accordingly. Children form open and trusting relationships with staff and one another and many know each other's names. They are developing positive self-esteem and are very confident communicators, freely approaching and talking to staff and visitors to share their comments and views and to ask questions.

The experienced staff have embraced the principles of the Early Years Foundation Stage and clearly recognise the importance of children learning through play and first-hand experiences. They play alongside the children and enter into their play to focus their attention and extend their learning. For example, they encourage children to find the trains in number order as they build a train track together. Staff build on some activities and children's interests to extend their learning. For example, following on from a sound lotto game indoors, they developed 'listening ears' to focus and raise children's awareness of different sounds outdoors. Children concentrate for some time with this game, accurately identifying a broad range of objects within earshot, including a helicopter and hedge trimmer.

Staff have developed a very effective method of monitoring children's progress towards the early learning goals using 'Learning Journey' development records. Relevant observations are clearly linked to areas of learning and often supported with photographs or examples of the child's work. The observations are used to identify the child's next step, however, these are not always transferred to the weekly planning to aid children's individual progression.

Children learn to recognise their names as they self-register and some are beginning to recognise other labels around the room. They have many opportunities to make marks and write for a purpose in their play and examples of their writing are displayed on the wall. An appreciation of books is very well fostered through an appealing selection and children delight in taking home a pre-school book in their book bag. During the session children enthusiastically look through favourite books together in the cosy book area. Children have regular opportunities to explore a wide variety of media and materials, and examples of their artwork and crafts adorn the walls, helping them feel their efforts are valued. They delight in playing with the chocolate play dough and make marks and tracks in it using a fork and then the wheels of a toy motorbike. Children are becoming competent users of technological equipment as they use the digital camera and programmable toys. A local high school teacher brings laptops for the children to explore and the group has recently taken delivery of their own computer, which is to be installed in the near future.

Children's awareness and appreciation of diversity is subtly promoted and enhanced through the positive attitudes of the staff, along with some resources and books. The setting encourages parents to share aspects from their particular culture, for example, one parent came and sang to the children in Thai and shared the alphabet in her own language. Staff are positive role models, treating children with kindness and respect, which helps them feel safe and secure. Children's behaviour is generally very good and positive behaviour is readily acknowledged and praised.

Staff are vigilant regarding hygiene to minimise the risk of cross-infection. They wear gloves when handling food and for changing nappies. Children are learning good hygiene practice through regular routines, songs and explanations, such as hand washing after using the toilet and prior to eating. The setting provides an excellent variety of healthy and nutritious snacks, promoting children's understanding of healthy eating. Children develop their skills and independence through daily routines. For example, at snack time they cut up the bananas and spread their own crackers with butter. Afterwards they wash up their own plate and cup. Water is readily available, ensuring the children are well hydrated.

Children flourish in the liberty of the large outside play area where they enjoy fresh air and exercise, promoting an active and healthy lifestyle. They have free access to outdoors, enabling them to choose their preferred play and learning environment. They develop coordination and balance on the bicycles and scooters and work out how to reach the hanging compact discs by standing on a chair. They learn their limitations and how to keep themselves safe by being given the freedom to take achievable risks and through reminders and explanations of staff.

Children have some opportunities to learn about living things and have planted some sunflowers, but the development of the outdoors is an area for ongoing consideration and action. The group has designated a section of the plot for a future nature area.

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	1

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

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