

Weaving Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspector

Karen Scott

Setting address

The Village hall, Weaving Street, Weaving, Maidstone,
Kent, ME14 5JN

Telephone number

01622 631274

Email

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

Weaving Pre-School

is managed by a committee. It opened in 1971 and operates from three rooms in the village hall at Weaving, on the outskirts of Maidstone. There is a secure outdoor play area and the pre-school also uses the public play area adjoining the car park and the car park itself for outside play. The pre-school serves the local area. It is open each weekday from 9.30am to 12.30pm with the option of staying open until 2pm on Tuesday, Thursday and Friday, term-time only. During the summer holidays the group offers places to school children up to eight years of age, as well as those in the early years age range, on selected dates. The pre-school has goldfish. The pre-school is registered on the Early Years Register and both the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. A maximum of 42 children aged under eight years may attend the pre-school at any one time. There are currently 70 children aged from two to under five years on roll, some in part-time places. The pre-school supports children for whom English is an additional language and children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. There are 12 members of staff, eight of whom have appropriate qualifications to at least National Vocational Qualification level 2. Two members of staff are working towards a further qualification. The pre-school is in receipt of funding for the provision of free early education to children aged three and four and receives support from the local authority.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children play in a bright and welcoming environment where they are fully included, safe and secure. They participate in a good range of adult and child-led activities that promote their all-round learning and development successfully. The organisation of some group activities results in children's loss of interest and over guidance from staff, so do not offer sufficient challenge in children's individual learning. Exemplary partnerships with parents, other agencies and settings involved in children's care are extremely successful in making sure that the needs of all children are met, ensuring that children progress well, given their age, ability and starting points. Regular self-evaluation involving staff and service users ensures that priorities for development are identified and acted on, resulting in continuously improving outcomes for children and their families.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- improve the planning and organisation of adult-led activities so that they are appropriate for all of the children involved, with particular regard to group

- activities and the use of worksheets
- encourage further the development of children's self-help skills, such as pouring their own drinks at snack time.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children play in a safe and secure environment as thorough risk assessments are regularly undertaken and staff continuously think about how to minimise risks to children. Staff deploy themselves around the setting at appropriate places helping them to monitor children's safety and teach children to be safety conscious when playing. All staff receive training on safeguarding and are extremely secure in their knowledge on this subject. They are clear about the procedures to follow should they have any concerns about a child's welfare. Children's welfare is further promoted by staff who engage them in activities and discussion that helps them to understand the importance of a healthy lifestyle.

Toys and resources are in good condition and offer children a vast range of experiences across all developmental areas. Staff monitor the provision and use of resources to ensure all children benefit from what is on offer. Staff offer children support and guidance as children go about their play and provide a balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities. Staff are particularly skilled at using open-ended questioning, allowing children to expand on their answers, listening with interest to them. They help children to undertake difficult tasks such as learning to use scissors, giving guidance and praise for achievements; they encourage children to try new challenges, for example, encouraging children who are nervous about crawling through the play tunnel to do so as part of a fun game of rolling balls through them. The pre-school routine generally works well but sometimes the planned group activities can interrupt the flow of children's play and some children are not interested in the group activities. Also on occasions work sheets are used to expand on children's learning but they do not help children to make creative connections in learning and are not suitable for all the ways in which individual children learn. These weaknesses impact upon how successfully children progress across all aspects of their learning.

The pre-school evaluates their setting accurately, valuing the input from the families that use the setting and from advisors so as to help them make improvements. Areas for improvement are clearly identified and focus on improving outcomes for children whilst acknowledging that staff training, for example, will also help to do this. Staff regularly update their knowledge, cascading what they have learnt through training to their colleagues. Regular staff appraisals identify aspects for personal development that also benefit the group.

Recommendations made at the previous inspection have been acted on. For example, regular fire drills are undertaken and a record is kept and monitored to ensure that everyone has a chance to practise and become familiar with the emergency evacuation procedure. The pre-school staff are keen to offer an ever evolving service and view evaluation as an on-going tool to do this.

A good knowledge of each child's needs and background helps the setting to meet their individual needs. Differences are celebrated and families are invited to share their celebrations with children through cookery, for example, when children are encouraged to try a range of foods. Toys and resources reflect diversity and

regular use of the toy library helps the pre-school to access items that are relevant to the children that attend. When English is an additional language the pre-school ensures that children see words in their home language as well as English.

Parents and carers are welcomed warmly to the setting. The welcoming entrance hall provides a place for them to meet with staff and each other and to read the range of helpful information available to them. Excellent two-way communication takes place. Staff routinely speak with parents and daily diaries document what children have done in the setting. Policies and procedures are available to parents via the internet as well as in hard copy form. Translation is provided for those for whom English is an additional language. There are many opportunities for parents and carers to be involved in supporting their children's learning and development. They are encouraged to follow the planned pre-school themes at home and to help children think about what they would like to bring in from home that reflects the theme. They are encouraged to stay and play with their children and to talk to the group about their job roles, as children learn about the wider community. Parents and carers appreciate the regular opportunities they have to look at their children's 'Learning Journey' and share in their achievements. They are actively encouraged to contribute to their children's 'Unique Stories' as part of their ongoing involvement in children's learning and the key persons and parents work highly effectively in partnership to support children's development. Parents and carers are very positive about their choice of childcare. They say they feel extremely well informed and part of their child's experiences at pre-school. They are proud of their children's progress, saying that their children thoroughly enjoy attending pre-school and that great care is taken of them.

The pre-school is highly committed to working in partnership with others in order to work together for the benefit of children. They work closely with other professionals to meet children's special educational needs and consequently these children are making excellent progress. When children attend other settings delivering the Early Years Foundation Stage the pre-school continuously communicates with them and childminders report that this has provided extremely positive outcomes for children as they work together to promote learning. The pre-school has a very close relationship with the local schools that they visit regularly and welcome warmly to the setting. They work closely with teachers to develop the records of transfers enabling teachers to meet individual needs and schools provide home made books with photographs of the school which children may look at whenever they wish. Consequently the transition for children into formal education is successful and minimises anxiety for the children.

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

Children feel safe and secure at the pre-school and have formed strong relationships with their peers and the adults who they feel able to confide in and express any concerns that they may have. Children show an understanding of safety issues, for example, when playing on tricycles they show a good awareness of obstacles and adults help them to use tools such as scissors safely, explaining clearly the risks associated with their use. Books about road safety awareness are used with the children to reinforce safety messages.

The majority of children show good awareness of what constitutes a healthy lifestyle. They are independent users of the bathroom and know that they should wash their hands before eating. Children have an excellent understanding of the importance of wearing hats and lotion when playing in the sun and are clearly able to discuss the different attire needed according to weather. Snacks are healthy and nutritious and children help themselves to water, knowing why and when they may be thirsty. Lunch and snack times are social occasions with children engaged in conversations. Children talk about what they are eating and make suggestions for snacks at other times knowing that their ideas will be valued. Children enjoy playing outside where there are many opportunities for them to develop their physical development. They understand the importance of exercise as part of a healthy lifestyle and know when their bodies are feeling tired they should take a rest.

Children appear to be settled and arrive happily, keen to play with their friends. They have high levels of self-esteem, bringing toys and resources from home that relate to the current theme and standing in a large group to share these with their friends. They have formed strong friendships and settled children are keen to help younger ones settle, showing them where things are and they invite them to join their play. Children play cooperatively and share resources, taking turns in games. They willingly tidy up, taking care of their toys and resources. Children's behaviour is good and the setting has good strategies in place to help children celebrate their achievements; children are keen to be rewarded for good behaviour but also happily celebrate other children's achievements too.

Children are making good progress in their learning. Key persons use a variety of observations to monitor children's interests, abilities and where they require further support. The information gathered is used to inform future planning so as to ensure that all children experience a range of learning opportunities that supports their individual development. Their progress records, in the form of a 'Learning Journey', contain plenty of evidence to show children's progress across each area of learning. Through the programme of activities children gain good skills for the future. They have access to a computer and other programmable toys and have exceptionally strong skills in communication, literacy and numeracy. Children's communication skills are exceptional as staff are very good at nurturing this aspect of child development. Children's understanding of mathematical concepts are introduced at different activities including snack time where children calculate how many cups they require for each table and write that number on an order form which they take to the kitchen. Children also develop some self-help skills, however there are missed opportunities for children to further develop these skills for example by serving their own drinks at snack time. When cutting with scissors children discuss the shapes that they are making and sort objects into groups. There are many opportunities for children to recognise their names and letters of importance. They practise their writing and pre-writing skills during their play, with encouragement from the adults.

The role play area is adapted to complement the current theme and when playing there and with small world toys children take on a range of roles reflecting what they see and experience and showing imagination. Artwork is individual to the children creating it and there are many opportunities for children to experience a range of textures and to describe what they are feeling. Children explore their surroundings and take great interest in a spider that they find. They study the spider's features with magnifying glasses. Children grow produce and take care of

the plants in the garden, watering them without being asked to as they have easy access to water and resources they require. A range of construction toys are used to make recognisable objects and children problem solve as they play. For example, they adapt bridges that they have made to enable toy animals to pass under them. Overall children enjoy their time at pre-school. They particularly enjoy free play where they make choices about what they play with and therefore are fully engaged in their learning at these times.

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	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	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