

Manthorpe Pre-School Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	253484
Inspection date	04/07/2011
Inspector	Carly Mooney
Setting address	The Village Hall, Low Road, Manthorpe, Grantham, Lincolnshire, NG31 8NQ
Telephone number	01476 573893
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

Manthorpe Pre-school was registered in 1967. It operates from Manthorpe Hall in the village of Manthorpe, nr Grantham, Lincolnshire. The pre-school serves the local area. The pre-school is accessible to all children and there is a fully-enclosed area available for outdoor play.

The pre-school opens Monday to Friday during school term times. Sessions are from 9am until 3pm on Monday and Tuesday and from 9am until 1pm from Wednesday to Friday. A toddler group operates on a Thursday from 1pm until 3pm. Children are able to attend for a variety of sessions. The pre-school is registered on the Early Years Register and compulsory part of the Childcare Register. A maximum of 32 children may attend the pre-school at any one time all of whom may be on the Early Years Register. There are currently 48 children attending who are within the Early Years Foundation Stage. The pre-school provides funded early education for three and four-year-olds. It supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and children who speak English as an additional language.

The pre-school employs six members of childcare staff. Of these, four hold appropriate early years qualifications. The pre-school playgroup receives support from the local authority.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children are happy and settle well in the stimulating and welcoming pre-school. They enjoy a broad variety of interesting play and learning experiences and are making good progress through the Early Years Foundation Stage. Procedures for observing and assessing children's progress are in place and plans of activities are based on children's interests. Positive relationships with parents have been established which are effective in meeting children's individual needs. Effective procedures are in place for self-evaluation and all staff demonstrates a firm commitment to improving and continuously developing the provision.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- develop further the use of resources in some activities to provide sufficient challenge to extend learning, especially for more able children
- review the deployment of staff, especially at key times, to ensure they are vigilant regarding each other's whereabouts to meet children's needs.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children are well safeguarded. Robust procedures are in place to ensure staff's suitability to work with children and staff undergo criminal record bureau checks. There is a designated safeguarding officer and staff are clear of their responsibilities to protect children. All staff have attended safeguarding children training, to ensure any concerns are dealt with effectively and procedures are followed correctly. Staff are watchful of the children and attentive to their safety. For example, regular head counts occur when visiting a nature garden separate to the pre-school premises. Children wear high visibility jackets so they can be easily seen at all times on outings. The premises are secure and there are effective procedures for emergency evacuation, which is regularly practised. A thorough record of risk assessments are maintained to ensure children can play in a safe and secure environment. 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 kept secure and confidential. Comprehensive information and written policies are in place. These are readily available to parents.

Children have access to a wealth of good-quality resources and staff are mostly well deployed. However, on occasions, due to the different areas children can freely access at one time, grouping of children and staff is not always the most effective. Staff have recognised this themselves and is an area for ongoing consideration. Children access a large indoor play space and three very different outdoor areas, which provide them with good stimulation and interest. For example, one garden has been transformed into a beach scene and seaside cafe. Staff have a positive attitude and approach towards diversity and this is reflected in the variety of resources and vibrant wall displays. Children from a variety of cultures attend the group and several speak English as an additional language. Labels in other languages, visual routines and support from bi-lingual staff help children to settle well into the setting.

Staff have established trusting partnerships with parents and two-way communication is encouraged, which promotes children's welfare and continuity of care. For example, Parents regularly complete 'I can' sheets regarding their child's learning at home, often including photographs, and share them with their child's key person. Parents comment very positively about the pre-school and find staff friendly and approachable. Parents are kept well informed of general information through discussions with the staff, noticeboards and newsletters. Children's progress is shared with parents at open mornings and parents' input is evident in children's learning journeys. The pre-school exchanges information about children when they attend other settings to ensure effective continuity and progression, and good links have formed with local schools to promote a smooth transition.

Staff have ensured that the recommendations from the last inspection have been implemented and, as a result, outcomes for children have improved. The manager and both deputies work closely together to monitor and evaluate the provision and effective systems for self-evaluation are in place. Staff development, through

regular training, is actively encouraged and supported by annual appraisals. Staff value the support given by the local authority and demonstrate a good capacity for maintaining continuous improvement because there is clear vision for the future.

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

Children are happy at the pre-school and most settle easily at the activity of their choice. They form positive relationships with staff and their peers, and confidently approach staff and visitors to share their news and views. Children's individuality is valued and they are treated with kindness and respect. Children are developing good self-esteem as staff are attentive and interested in what they have to say. Children's behaviour is generally good and staff use a consistent approach, offering children clear explanations and reasonable boundaries. A celebration table allows children's achievements in the setting and from home to be shared with everyone and gives them a good sense of belonging. They feel proud as they collect their certificate, congratulating them on taking part in a transition visit to their new schools.

Staff have a good understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage and recognise the importance of children learning through play and first-hand experiences. They plan and offer a broad variety of play and learning experiences based on children's interests and development needs and select a range of activities covering all the areas of learning at each session. Next steps are identified and incorporated effectively into focussed activity sheets. Learning journeys of children's progress are kept and staff are currently adapting these to ensure next steps that have been identified are added to the records. Staff provide consistent support for children and, through effective questioning, most allow children opportunities to think for themselves and to make their own decisions in their play. As a result, children make good progress in the learning and development. However, on some occasions opportunities to fully engage older children and enhance learning are missed. For example, taking limited resources to the nature garden to support children's curiosity with bugs.

Children play in a word rich environment and show a good appreciation of books which they can access in the cosy book area. They independently access a variety of writing materials and have good opportunities to recognise their name, for example, during self-registration. Counting and mathematical language are introduced naturally through all activities. For example, such as counting the number of children present at circle time. Children learn to problem-solve as they work out how many more plates are needed for everyone at their snack table and children are introduced to the concept of more or less as they fill the watering can with cups of water. The pre-school has developed strong links with the community as they take part in a nativity production held in the local church and decorate the village pump house to celebrate the changing seasons. Members of the community visit the setting to help with activities, such as planting vegetables and dressing up in sari's. Children have regular opportunities to explore a broad variety of media and textures, such as play dough, sand and cooked pasta, and thoroughly enjoy mixing water into dry sand and noting the changes. The lazy daisy garden gives

children good opportunities to develop an interest in wildlife as they handle big juicy worms and watch woodlice crawl up their arm. Children explore and use technology throughout their play as they experiment with real cameras and use the mobile phone to 'call' the fire brigade when they decide the seaside cafe is on fire. A computer is well used and children participate in a good variety of programmes which support different areas of learning.

Children's welfare is effectively promoted. All staff hold current first aid qualifications and documentation regarding children's health is appropriately maintained. 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. Children have regular opportunities for fresh air and exercise and are offered periods to freely go outside or stay indoors. They are encouraged at all times to maintain their own personal hygiene, such as washing their hands before snack. Children feel safe and secure in the setting and this is demonstrated through their happy and confident disposition.

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	3
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

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