

Newton Park Pre School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number EY348505
Inspection date 06/07/2011
Inspector Sarah Rhodes

Setting address Newton Park Preschool, c/o Earlyworld Building, Newton
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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

Newton Park Pre School opened approximately 30 years ago and was registered at its present premises in 2007. It is run by a voluntary management committee. The setting operates from a mobile classroom provision in the grounds of Newton CP School in Chester. It caters for children from the local area. Opening times are Monday to Thursday 9am to 3pm and Fridays 9am to 12 noon during term time only.

The pre-school is registered on the Early Years Register and the voluntary and compulsory parts of the Childcare Register. A maximum of 24 children may attend at any one time. There are currently 43 children aged from two to under five years on roll. The group supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and children with English as an additional language.

Six members of staff are employed, all of whom have early years qualification, and three are studying for further qualifications.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

The children enjoy a relaxed atmosphere where they grow in confidence and are encouraged to develop their independence and decision making skills in preparation for the transition to school. They are able to flow from inside to outside play during much of the day and have a wide range of quality equipment easily accessible in both areas. Staff skillfully help children assess risk and plan safe play practices for themselves, helping them develop strategies to keep themselves safe in other environments. The pre-school has a small staff team which is supported by a clear management structure and systems, such as staff meetings and annual appraisals for all staff members apart from the manager, which are generally affective. Most required paperwork is in place to support the smooth running of the playgroup. Staff have clear systems to record children's learning journeys but do not always capture parents' or other Early Years Foundation Stage providers' insights into children's development.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- include the manager in the staff appraisal system and extend all staff appraisals to include the expectation that staff declare all issues that may affect their suitability to work with children
- extend the recording of risk assessments to identify aspects of the environment that need to be checked on a regular basis
- develop ways of sharing information, such as children's learning journeys, with other Early Years Foundation Stage providers who provide care for

children attending the pre-school and parents, and gain input from them to enhance staff's knowledge of the children's interests and development to assist planning.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children are safeguarded through a clear management structure which ensures staff understand their responsibilities. A written safeguarding procedure is in place and staff are helped to understand the importance of them acting if they are concerned about children's safety. Appropriate recruitment procedures and induction processes ensure staff's suitability is established when they are employed. Ongoing appraisals are undertaken and these are affective in challenging staff and helping them drive improvement in their skills and practice. The appraisals support the manager in establishing that staff have good knowledge of the policies and identify any training requirements, however, they are not reminded of the expectation to declare any issues that may affect their suitability at these sessions. The building and grounds are secure, which ensures that children cannot leave unaccompanied and helps staff manage the entry of parents and visitors. Staff have a clear understanding of risks within and outside of the building, for example, they have processes they follow when using the ramp to the outside play area. Daily risk assessments for the building and grounds are completed and any concerns are recorded and addressed. However, the system is not totally robust as the aspects of the environment that need to be checked on a regular basis are not recorded in line with the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage, which leaves the possibility that some issues may be missed.

Required policies and procedures are in place to help with the safe and smooth management of the setting. The management team have successfully encouraged the staff to become involved in the self-evaluation process through reviewing and updating the self-evaluation form at team meetings. The assessment is realistic and is used to help plan and drive improvements. The manager has a clear vision for short and medium-term improvements, which are regularly discussed with staff.

Parents are made very welcome and they feel comfortable and confident about approaching staff with questions or concerns. A range of communication methods are used with parents; verbal exchanges are supplemented with newsletters, notice board displays and social events. Policies are shared with parents and they are aware of how to access their child's development files. Partnerships in the wider context are used to develop the quality of education and care, and links with other professionals are used to gain ideas about best practice and information on how best to help children with additional needs. The pre-school is aware of the need to develop links with the other providers of the Early Years Foundation Stage, but has not always pursued these links. This means information about the children's learning and development in the other setting is not always captured to support the planning of appropriate activities for them. However, they have developed affective strategies to support the smooth transition to primary school for children and encourage visits from reception class teachers.

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

The pre-school promotes children's learning, development and welfare well. The staff are committed to enriching the learning environment and take time to assess how they can improve the provision to promote children's learning. For example, the free flow of children between inside to outside play has been enhanced by the additional storage unit which allows a wide range of activities to be provided outside. Staff demonstrate a good understanding of their planning and assessment processes. Observations are documented, sometimes accompanied by photographs, and categorised under the six areas of learning. These observations are used to inform the summaries of children's progress and the setting of next steps in children's learning on a half-termly basis. Staff are confident that this system supports them in making clear assessments of whether children are making adequate, age-appropriate progress towards all aspects of the early learning goals. Parents are informed about the observation files and are aware they can ask to see them. However, staff and parents report that very few parents do actually access the files and there is no robust system to encourage parents to add their thoughts to them, which means this information may not always be captured to support the planning of appropriate activities.

The pre-school is very committed to helping children grow in confidence and independence in preparation for the transition to school. Children are confident in their ability to manage their own needs, and routine activities, such as the rolling snack time, allow children to make decisions about when to have a drink and how much to pour. They confidently help their friends, for example, opening a packet for them at lunch time. Children have the advantage of being able to access either inside or outside environments during large parts of the day. They can enjoy typical outdoor physical activities, such as riding tricycles and climbing, as well as sand, water and role play. They are also able to use their problem solving skills when building with large crates or creating obstacle courses. Number, shape and size are introduced as part of daily activities as they, for example, count sandcastles and add one more or take one away when they are knocked down. The children are making good progress in their communication, language and literacy skills, with all children developing into confident communicators as their ideas are valued and listened to in individual and group situations. They start to develop an interest in books through having access to high quality books in a comfortable reading area. Mark making is encouraged through a range of equipment, both inside and outside, and children start to recognise letter formations through daily activities, such as finding their named placemat at snack time. They are introduced to other cultures through activities based around cultural festivals and expand their knowledge of the world around them through activities, such as map making and walks in the school ground to listen to sounds and look at nature. Children's imagination is well supported, both inside and outside.

The staff speak to parents and work regularly with other professionals when required obtaining advice on the care required for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities to ensure each child has appropriate care and activities to

enhance their learning. For children with English as an additional language, key words are learned by staff in the child's home language to support communication. Children's dietary needs are met in conjunction with parents, who supply packed lunches, and the group supplies information to guide parents to promote healthy choices. Staff have a good understanding of the needs of children with food allergies and the precautions they need to take to keep all children safe. Good hygiene practices are introduced to children through everyday routines, and they confidently wash their hands in the accessible bathroom areas. Children are shown how to keep themselves safe through discussions which carefully support them to think through how to manage risk. For example, children who have climbed on the milk crate obstacle are supported by staff to think through the ways they can get down safely. Staff manage the children's behaviour in a very positive way often using explanation and the atmosphere is busy and cooperative. Children are able to make good progress in developing skills for the future and the move to school when the time comes.

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	3
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	3

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