

Grange Tiny Hands Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspector	Alison Reeves

Setting address	The Grange Community Centre, Middlefields, Letchworth Garden City, Hertfordshire, SG6 4NG
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Type of setting	Childcare on non-domestic premises

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Introduction

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Description of the setting

Grange Tiny Hands Pre-School registered in 1996. It operates from the community centre on the Grange Estate in Letchworth, Hertfordshire. Children have access to an outdoor area. They are open from 8.30am to 3pm on Monday, Tuesday and Thursday and on Wednesday and Friday from 8.30am to 12.30pm during term time.

The pre-school is registered on the Early Years Register. A maximum of 28 children may attend the setting at any one time. There are currently 63 children aged from two to four years on roll, attending various sessions. The setting supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and children with English as an additional language.

There are 12 members of staff working with the children, including the manager. Most staff have relevant early years qualifications. The manager has a qualification at level 3.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is outstanding.

Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage flourish in this vibrant setting. They are extremely well supported and benefit from a team of very dedicated and enthusiastic staff who have an excellent understanding of each child's individual needs. Children are highly valued and play a vital role in shaping the provision of activities. This ensures they are making very good progress towards the early learning goals appropriate to their age, ability and starting points. Policies and procedures are implemented highly effectively to promote children's welfare and safety. Relationships with parents and other providers are very well established and promote highly effective partnership working. Self-evaluation is robust and reflective practice ensures increasingly improved outcomes for all children.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To further improve the high quality early years provision the registered person should consider:

- develop systems further to increase parent contribution to children's achievement records.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children are expertly safeguarded and very well protected in the setting because staff have excellent understanding of child protection issues. Detailed policies and

procedures covering all aspects of safeguarding are clearly understood and implemented consistently and very effectively. This means that children's safety and well-being are secured.

Staff make very effective use of up-to-date risk assessments to support them in ensuring all areas used by children are safe. For example, when the new outdoor equipment became icy in the winter, staff purchased rock salt to make surface less slippery and therefore safer for the children to use. By monitoring all aspects of the premises and taking swift action, hazards are minimised and the likelihood of accidents is reduced. This means that children and their families are able to move safely and freely around the building.

Staff are very knowledgeable in relation to the Early Years Foundation Stage and use this brilliantly to support children in their learning. They have attended an extensive range of workshops and courses to ensure their knowledge remains up-to-date and that they have the skills and expertise to support children's learning. The environment is rich and incredibly well organised so that it is accessible to the children. For example, a wide variety of stimulating and interesting activities are made available at each session. This means that all children are able to thrive and make very good progress in their development.

The setting is dedicated to self-evaluation using a number of effective strategies to identify strengths and areas for development. As a result, clear action plans drawn up by the staff team detail the priorities for improvement and the way forward. Consequently, a shared vision of ambitious and highly appropriate targets are set and consistently met, bringing about sustained improvements.

The staff team forms close working relationships with parents and carers. They obtain useful information about each child, such as favourite activities, important people in their lives, special words children use and their developmental starting points on entry. Consequently, staff plan meticulously to support individual children in settling at the setting and their specific needs are effectively met. Staff regularly share important information about children's progress, with some parents contributing examples of things their children have achieved at home. This means that parents are involved in their child's learning and each child is well supported in making very good progress towards the early learning goals. Superb relationships with other settings and professionals involved with the children are well established. This contributes positively in supporting children's welfare and learning and their transition to new settings.

Staff offer very sensitive support to children who have additional needs. They are highly skilled in using observation and assessment to support further development by carefully documenting what they see and hear. This enables them to readily devise and adapt activities to ensure that all children can enjoy challenging and worthwhile play experiences. Inclusion is given high priority and is threaded through all aspects of the setting. This means that the individual needs of all children are consistently met and they are included fully in the life of the setting.

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

Children are very self-assured and have an excellent understanding of how to stay safe. For example, they know why it is important to walk in the hall and can clearly explain that you might fall over if you run. This is because staff are very clear in gently conveying messages about safety to remind children of how and why it is important to behave well for their own safety and that of others.

Children are rapidly developing independence skills as they become increasingly able to use the toilet and wash their hands to prevent the spread of germs with little or no adult intervention. They enjoy a wide variety of healthy snacks that provide energy for play and vitamins and minerals for nutrition. Children and staff engage in lively conversation during snack time. They talk about the food they eat, learning about those that are good for the body, and where it comes from. Children use the time to talk about their experiences, recalling events from their family life. Children use the enclosed outdoor play area throughout the year for plenty of exciting activities. In addition, staff organise equally challenging physical play indoors so that children can always be active, developing body control and awareness. The children enjoy climbing on the wonderful new outdoor equipment. They explore their physical capabilities as they balance on beams and try to pull themselves up the slide. Staff use these opportunities to introduce new vocabulary to children and ask questions to promote further thought and exploration. Many children use small tools for mark making, some emergent writing and create models from malleable materials with considerable skill. As a consequence, children are developing healthy habits and an excellent understanding of how well their bodies work.

Children's language for speaking and thinking is promoted particularly well, with lots of opportunities for them to communicate verbally and with signing in tremendously supportive small and larger groups. The well-used book areas mean children are choosing from an extensive range of books, broadening their experience of stories and factual texts. Children use mathematical language in their play and staff encourage number awareness by providing resources for counting, comparing and matching, and singing songs that develop sequencing and number recognition. This practice of bringing maths into everyday activities complements those where problem solving, reasoning and numeracy are the focus of an activity. Children use suitable electronic equipment to record and play back their voices. They are secure in their knowledge of computers, using the mouse to navigate programmes, and are in no doubt about technology and its importance in their lives. Children delight in the bubble-blowing activity where the clever use of cups means children can hold the cup easily and dip the blowers into the deep mix with fewer spillages. As a result, children blow huge streams of beautiful bubbles. Children are highly imaginative and enjoy sharing their experiences of the world with others as they act out roles. When making fish for the underwater display, children are given guidance when it is requested but are free to explore the many different methods for making their own individual fish. This enables children to confidently make something of their own design of which they are proud. Children demonstrate their understanding of the needs of others as they show concern for

the feelings of their friends. They are eager to be kind and helpful and are rewarded for these actions with the highly motivating and successful stickers. Staff frequently observe children as they play to assess achievements and identify next steps. This means individual children always have worthwhile and challenging play opportunities to stimulate their interest and secure further learning. The exceptionally well-documented cycle of observation, assessment and planning means children are making very good progress towards the early learning goals in all six areas of learning.

Children behave very well in the setting because the staff engage them in setting clear and appropriate boundaries. Children are helped to understand why these are important and the simple explanation, and regular reminders help children retain the information. Children are developing a respect for themselves and others as they play together. They are learning about their local community with celebrations at the local church. The wider world, cultures and beliefs are brought in with lively festivals and events. This is because staff make effective use of people around them who have specialist knowledge to share with the children. Visitors teach children about their work. For example, a visit from the local firefighters has children brimming with excitement as they climb on to the appliance and help to spray water from the enormous hose across the grass. Staff make excellent use of books, activities and children's own family background to introduce new ideas and successfully promote diversity.

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?	1
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	1

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	1
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	1
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	1
The effectiveness of safeguarding	1
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	1
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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