

Walton Under Fives Pre-School Group

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspector Timothy Butcher

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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*.

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Description of the setting

The Walton Under Fives Pre-School Group is run by a parents' committee and opened in 1995. It operates from a new village hall in the rural village of Walton, close to Street in Somerset. The pre-school have access to the main hall and adjoining rooms, as well as separate toilet facilities. The pre-school have their own enclosed garden, and regularly use the community hard court and park. Children attending are from the local and surrounding area, and the majority of the children move on to attend the nearby village school. A maximum of 24 children within the early years age range may attend the group at any one time; none may be under two years. Sessions are from 9am until 1pm Tuesday, Thursday and Friday and 9am until 3pm on Mondays. There are currently 31 children in the early years age group on roll. The setting is in receipt of free early education funding for children aged three and four years. The pre-school supports children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. The pre-school employs seven members of staff, of which two staff members are supply staff. Two staff hold level 3 qualifications in the early years and three staff hold level 2 qualifications, with two staff working towards level 3 qualifications.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children are happy, settle very easily and thoroughly enjoy their time at the pre-school. They make good progress in their learning and development overall because they have a good range of play opportunities that are usually planned to match their individual learning needs. Children considerably benefit from the high quality interactions with the skilled and committed staff team. Secure relationships with parents and carers ensure the individual needs of children are very closely met and there is good continuity of care for them. Children enjoy a safe environment in which to play and their welfare is successfully promoted. Systems for self-evaluation are well established and accurately identify areas of strengths and those for future improvements. There is a clear commitment to the continuous improvement of the provision and this leads to improved outcomes for children.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- develop further the system of observational assessment to more clearly provide an overview of children's rate of progress across each area of learning
- develop further the use of the outside environment to enable children in

freely chosen activities to explore, use their senses and be physically active and exuberant across all areas of learning

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Staff have a clear awareness of safeguarding issues to protect children and there is a clear procedure in place for them to follow should they have a concern about a child. Other policies and procedures are comprehensive and ensure the smooth and safe running of the pre-school. The pre-school carries out thorough risk assessments of the premises and potential hazards to children are successfully minimised. Trips to the adjacent park are very well organised to ensure children's safety. All staff working with children have been suitably checked.

The skilled and knowledgeable staff team work very well together as there is a shared ethos and an ongoing commitment to the continued development of good practice. Evaluative processes provide an accurate diagnosis of the strengths and weaknesses of the setting. Actions taken are well chosen to sustain the high quality of care already achieved and to further improve the early years provision. For example, changes to the outside area have been achieved and provide children with a good number of planting, growing and other activities. Work is in progress to make the garden area continuously accessible to children throughout the session.

A particular strength of the setting is the well-established relationships with parents and carers. They are kept well informed about all aspects of their own children's day and well-being, and this provides good continuity of care for all children. Parents report positively about all aspects of the care provided. Day-to-day information about the care arrangements are shared through discussion and through the use of the red book that goes home with children. Children's progress is regularly shared through access to their child's learning journal and through parents' evenings. Wider partnerships are well established such as with local schools and with others who also provide care and support to the children that attend.

Resources are good, fit for purpose and used well to achieve the planned goals in learning and development. The staff team work hard to ensure a consistently welcoming, stimulating and child-friendly environment that provides an exciting environment for children both indoors and outside. Staff are well deployed to support children's learning and are proactive in providing additional resources in response to children's play. Adults have a good knowledge of each child's background and needs. Children have access to a wide range of resources and activities that help them learn about diversity and to help them understand the society that they live in. Effective steps are taken to ensure that all children are well integrated and to close any identified achievement gaps. The pre-school is taking suitable steps to ensure resources and the environment is sustainable.

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

Most children make good progress towards the early learning goals in most areas of learning. The experienced staff team all have a good knowledge of the Early Years Foundation Stage and of child development. The overall system for the observation, assessment and planning for children's progress is very secure and based on children's interests. However, it is somewhat complex and does not easily demonstrate the rate of children's progress towards the early learning goals.

Good levels of information about children's starting points are gathered from parents and this enables the staff to quickly build a clear picture of children's abilities and to ease children's introduction to the setting. Children strongly benefit from the warm interactions and sensitive support of the staff team. As a result, children demonstrate a clear sense of belonging and security within the setting. They build strong relationships with adults and peers and are able to contribute very positively.

Children enjoy and achieve because their learning environment is made very attractive and they thoroughly enjoy the free flow activities between the two rooms. The continuous provision of resources is mapped well to follow children's interests and to provide a wide range of experiences for all children. The staff support children's learning well, for example, by responding quickly to provide additional resources that further promote their learning and extend their exploration. As a result, children play well together and independently; and become active and inquisitive learners. They take responsibility for their own learning through interesting 'hands-on' experiences such as the use of magnifying glasses at the science table. Information and communication technology forms an integral part of children's learning experiences. For example, topic work around 'Father's Day' includes the use of simple computer programmes to make Father's Day cards and this puts the use of these skills into meaningful contexts for children. Small group activities, such as at registration time, support children to develop their listening, communication and language skills well. They are sensitively supported to develop confidence and to speak in the group. Younger children begin to recognise their name labels at registration time and older children routinely practise counting skills as they count those present in their group. They have good opportunities to write and make marks throughout their play. For example, when in the home corner, which is set up to reflect Chinese cuisine, they pretend to stir fry the play dough pieces and choose to make marks to represent shopping lists. Outdoors, for example, they make marks using water and brushes. Children make good progress in their physical development because they go outside each day and have good access to a range of permanent play equipment at the adjacent park and activity area. They engage in a wide range of physical activities inside, such as through action rhymes, music and movement sessions, and when using the sit-on equipment to practise their pedalling skills. Children, currently, do not have free access to the garden area and this limits the choices they are able to make if they wish to take their play outside. Documentation shows that they make good progress in knowledge and understanding of the world. They plant seeds, dig, find insects and minibeasts. They have good quality experiences

to promote their learning about their local community through well-chosen topics. Overall, children are very well equipped with the skills they need to secure future learning.

The pre-school is well organised, free from hazards and the routines help children to feel safe and secure. Children respond very well to adults and show respect for each other because children's behaviour is skilfully managed, so that children feel good about themselves. Children show a good understanding of healthy eating and of the importance of following a healthy lifestyle is actively promoted. Children learn about healthy options at the cafe style snack time where they pour their own drinks and make choices about what they eat. They take responsibility to wash their own plates at the sink and help in the preparation of snack time, such as preparing fruit. As a result, they are well supported to learn the importance of personal hygiene and independence skills.

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	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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