

Sheering Village Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspector	Ann Cozzi
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Type of setting	Childcare - Non-Domestic

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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

Sheering Village Pre-school is operated by a community interest company (not for profit). It originally opened in 1987, and changed to a community interest company in November 2010. It operates from three rooms within Sheering Village Hall in Essex, where it uses the adjacent parish grounds for outside play. Children come from the local community and surrounding area.

The pre-school is open five days a week from 9am until 12pm. The setting supports a small number of children who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities. A maximum of 40 children may attend the pre-school at any one time. There are currently 36 children on roll, of whom 21 are in receipt of early education funding. The setting is registered on the Early Years Register.

The setting employs 11 members of childcare staff, of whom, seven hold appropriate early years qualifications and three are working towards relevant early years qualifications. The setting receives support from the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership (EYDCP).

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is satisfactory.

Staff show a sound understanding of children's needs which ensures that they provide them with adequate support for their learning. However, there is a weakness in the systems to observe and plan for children's individual development. Children are generally safe and secure and enjoy learning about the world around them. Partnership with parents and other partners with regard to children's care and learning is good. Children make adequate progress given their age, ability and starting points. Self-evaluation to support future improvements is adequate, resulting in a provision that identifies some areas for development in order to respond to user needs and improve outcomes for children.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To meet the specific requirements of the EYFS, the registered person must:

- conduct a risk assessment and review it regularly at least once a year or more frequently where the need arises and include when and by whom they have been checked 15/11/2011
- take all reasonable steps to ensure that hazards to children both indoors and outdoors are kept to a minimum 15/11/2011
- ensure that fresh drinking water is available to children at all times. 15/11/2011

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

- improve records of suitability decisions to include evidence of references
- improve the consistency of observational assessment across all areas of learning to plan to meet children's individual needs and consistently provide experiences appropriate to each child's stage of development as they progress towards the early learning goals.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Staff at this setting have undertaken appropriate training and demonstrate a sound understanding of Local Safeguarding Children Board procedures. There are adequate written policies in place which are in line with requirements. As part of recruitment procedures the managers undertake all appropriate checks when making decisions regarding the suitability of staff. However, whilst references are undertaken there is a minor weakness in ensuring that records clearly evidence this. The setting has not undertaken risk assessments which detail how potential hazards are minimised and what action has been taken. This is a specific legal requirement in the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage. In addition whilst staff undertake daily safety checks of the environment they fail to identify some potential dangers and take appropriate steps to minimise these risks in order to keep children safe. For example, preventing access to storage cupboards and out-of-bounds areas. This could potentially compromise children's safety and is a specific legal requirement in the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage. All other records, contracts and permission forms, required by legislation, are in place. This includes daily registers and a visitor record which means that staff are able to safely account for all children and adults on the premises at any time. Security systems are in place preventing intruders from entering the building and also making sure that no child is able to leave unnoticed. Staff have up-to-date paediatric first aid training which means that if an accident occurs children are provided with appropriate care.

The organisation of furniture, toys and equipment means that during free play parts of the session children have easy access to areas of learning, which contributes towards their developing independence. Staff adequately promote inclusion ensuring that they value children's backgrounds whilst introducing them to diverse cultural experiences. Although steps are taken to closely identify achievement gaps, information used to assess this, is at times insecure. The provider takes steps to ensure resources and the environment is sustainable.

Parents are provided with opportunities to share information at the start of placement and through the use of their child's 'daily book'. There are accessible channels for them to speak with staff at drop off and pick up times. In addition formal parent's evenings are held twice a year. Parents report that they are 'happy with the care provided, confident to talk to staff, feel that their child's speech has really developed since starting at pre-school and would defiantly recommend the setting to others'. The setting communicates well with other providers and partners

supporting children, for example, teachers from feeder schools visit the pre-school in the term prior to them starting school and guidance is sought from other agencies, providing staff with information to support children's individual needs.

The manager, alongside her well established staff team undertake self-evaluation. They achieve this through reflective practice and information gained from parents and others such as, the local authority support officer. This is used by them as a development tool which leads to the adequate progression of the provision.

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

Staff demonstrate a sound understanding of the learning and development requirements and guidance for the Early Years Foundation Stage. They organise a wide range of activities across all six areas of learning. However, observations and planning to meet children's individual next steps are not consistently undertaken across all areas of learning to fully inform individual planning to actively promote progress. With the exception of group times children are able to make choices about what they would like to do next.

Children are happy, settled and for the most part move busily around the setting taking part in activities. However, the daily routine means that at times the varying concentration levels of children attending is not always taken into account. Children demonstrate that they are active, inquisitive and independent learners, for example, they explore and investigate the properties of dough, manipulating it with their hands, pushing and pummelling it. They work out how to use a rolling pin successfully and use single handed tools to cut out shapes or chop their dough into small pieces. However, at times the promotion of independent skills is inconsistent amongst less able children. Children are beginning to develop problem solving skills as they undertake puzzles and inset boards. They work alone and in cooperation with others as they figure out where each piece fits by matching shapes. Children have fun taking part in vigorous physical play, holding on to the safety bars of a small trampoline they excitedly bounce up and down. They recognise that there are changes to their body after exercise as they stop, sit down and rest before going on to play with something else. Children take part in imaginative play using both small world and construction resources together. They build and balance showing the inspector the 'tall tower' they have created on their boat, excitedly telling her that they are going to put a sail on top. Children learn about capacity as they access sand play, digging with spades emptying and filling containers. They chat amiably with each other working out a plan of how to achieve what they would like to do. Children are able to access craft activities such as painting, after carefully dipping the paint brush into their chosen colour they are able to control it, moving it around their piece of paper. They clearly demonstrate a sense of pride in their achievement when a member of staff compliments their creation.

Children demonstrate a sense of security within the setting as they move around taking part in play opportunities. They show a good awareness about what

constitutes a healthy lifestyle adopting good personal hygiene routines. Information from parent's children's individual dietary requirements ensures that they are provided with a balanced range of snacks which are appropriate to their individual needs. Although drinks are provided for children at snack time, water is not available at all times during the session to ensure that no child remains thirsty. This is a specific legal requirement in the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage. Children engage in a wide range of physical activities, both indoors and out, increasing their understanding about the importance of regular exercise as part of maintaining a healthy lifestyle. Children have the chance to either rest or be active according to their individual needs.

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?	3
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	3

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	2
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding	3
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	3
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	3
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Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	3
The extent to which children feel safe	3
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	3
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	2
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	3

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