

Whittingham Playschool

Inspection report for early years provision

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10/01/2012

Inspector

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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*.

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

Whittingham Playschool is privately owned and was registered in 1976. It operates from Whittingham Methodist Church in Southend-on-Sea, Essex. The pre-school serves the local area and is accessible to all children.

The pre-school opens five days a week during school term times. Sessions are from 9.15am until 11.45am. Children are able to attend for a variety of sessions. The pre-school is registered on the Early Years Register and maximum of 26 children may attend at any one time, all of whom may be in the early years age range. There are currently 31 children attending who are within the Early Years Foundation Stage. The nursery provides funded early education for three- and four-year-olds and supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and children who speak English as an additional language.

The pre-school employs eight members of childcare staff, all of whom hold appropriate early years qualifications. It receives support from the local authority.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Staff demonstrate a good knowledge and understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage. They follow effective procedures to ensure that children's unique needs are identified, respected and met. Staff work effectively with the local schools to support children's transitions, and the friendly partnership with parents and carers is effective in sharing information to ensure most of the children's needs are met. Most of the documentation to safeguard children's welfare is in place. The setting has made significant improvements since their last inspection, demonstrating a good capacity for improvement. Systems are in place to evaluate the provision and there is a clear commitment to the continuous improvement of the provision, leading to improved 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:

- maintain daily records of children's hours of attendance (Documentation). 10/02/2012

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

- improve the exchange of information with parents to involve them more in children's ongoing assessments of their learning and development
- review the organisation of routines to maximise learning time for children.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

An experienced staff team provide a positive atmosphere and welcoming environment for children. Good systems are in place to help ensure children's welfare. The pre-school understands its role in child protection and the required documents are in place. Staff have a good knowledge of child protection issues and know how to implement the safeguarding children policy and procedure appropriately, in line with the Local Safeguarding Children Board procedures. Children practise regular emergency evacuation procedures in order to develop their confidence and familiarity. All staff and regular volunteers are checked and visitors to the setting are recorded, along with their hours of attendance. However, the arrival and departure times of children are not being recorded in the registers. This is a breach of the legal requirements and may compromise children's welfare. A comprehensive range of written policies and procedures, contracts and consents are used to agree and maintain good practice.

The range of resources and equipment provided for all children are wide ranging and of good quality. In addition, the equipment promotes all areas of children's learning and development and is distributed effectively so children can self-select. Good opportunities are provided for children to explore their own cultures and beliefs and those of others. For example, children have recently celebrated Diwali and are currently planning to celebrate Chinese New Year. In addition, posters of shapes and numbers are displayed in differing languages, such as French, and this supports the needs of some of the children and families attending. Staff know children and their families well and provide good opportunities to ensure they are fully included. They have recently introduced use of Makaton to provide children with an additional method of communication. As a result, all children can express themselves freely. An effective key person system ensures that children and their parents are well supported and are kept well informed.

Parents report that children are happy and thoroughly enjoy coming to the pre-school. They particularly like the homely environment and comment that staff are friendly and support children well so that they feel good about themselves. Many children have siblings who have attended the pre-school previously. In addition, newsletters, a notice board and daily verbal information sharing also enhance partnerships further. As a result of this effective information sharing, the setting is successful in their ability to be inclusive in their practice. Good systems have been developed to forge partnerships with other practitioners to support transition, both between other settings and between the pre-school and local school. Reflective practice takes place, and the self-evaluation process is well targeted and successfully brings about improvements for children. The actions and recommendations from the last inspection have all been addressed.

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

Children make good progress in their learning and enjoy the benefit of warm interactions with the supportive staff team. As a result, they are relaxed and secure in their environment. A secure planning system based on some topics drawn from children's interests provides a rich and varied range of imaginative and creative activities for all children. Observations are made and lead to some clear assessments of children's abilities through the learning profiles. However, occasionally children's play can get cut short to allow for the different routines of the session. Their next steps in development are identified and these link back into the planning system to provide further learning opportunities for each child. Children make good progress in their learning and development given their starting points and are well equipped with the skills for future learning. Parents are kept informed about their child's progress, for example, through the learning profiles. However, parents are not actively encouraged to share their child's progress from home. The setting wishes to develop these home links further.

Children show good levels of curiosity, independence, imagination and concentration. The staff are responsive to children's needs and often prompt children to seek resource items for themselves or provide resource items to take their play and learning further. For example, children independently take out the cars from the low-level storage. This activity is then extended as a member of staff provides them with the garage for the cars, which the children become excited about. Children have good opportunities to enjoy and achieve as they engage in enjoyable and worthwhile activities during their time at the setting. They enjoy experimenting with paints as they make bubble prints and they enjoy playing with the play dough, using a range of materials, small tools and their hands to squash, squeeze, roll out and cut the dough. Both children and staff make good use of the book corner to sit quietly, look at books and listen to stories. Children are provided with a good range of resources with which to promote their ability to problem solve and develop numeracy skills. For example, they use beads to count and sort and they complete increasingly complex puzzles with and without adult support. Children successfully cooperate and negotiate to maintain harmonious play with their friends as they initiate role play. They have access to everyday technology in the role play area, such as, cash registers, telephones and play cookers. Children enjoy and achieve as they competently build and construct to make a railway track, which they share with friends. Children are making a positive contribution to society as they have been actively involved in fundraising for good causes. Children delightfully join in singing familiar songs and listen well to stories, joining in discussions about the characters in the book.

Children show a strong sense of belonging and security. They show they feel safe through their interactions with adults. They demonstrate that they know how to keep themselves and each other safe. For example, they safely use the climbing frame and slide, ensuring other children are not in the way, and through encouragement from staff to help tidy away their toys to avoid others tripping. Children engage in a good range of physical activities increasing their understanding of the importance of regular exercise as part of maintaining a

healthy lifestyle. For example, they have daily access to a dedicated outside play area where they are able to use a range of equipment, such as hoops, balls, scooters and ride-in cars, which promotes their physical development. Children are developing a secure understanding of making healthy choices in the food they eat. They all take part in discussing the different fruits at snack time and share their likes and dislikes.

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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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