

Westgate Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspector	Katherine May
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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

Westgate Pre-School is situated in Morecambe. The registered provider is the individual owner. It opened in 2001 and operates from within St Martin's church hall and an adjacent meeting room. There is an outdoor area to the rear of the building.

The setting is registered for a maximum total of 30 children age two to five years. It is open each weekday apart from Thursday from 9.30am to 3.30pm for 38 weeks of the year.

There are currently 47 children on roll attending for a variety of sessions throughout the week, of these 41 children in receipt of nursery education funding. The setting supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and works closely with a number of travelling children.

There is a staff team of seven, all of whom hold appropriate early years qualifications and training certificates. Advice, support and training is gained from the local authority and the setting has been awarded Designated Lead Practitioner status by Lancashire Early Years Teacher Team.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

A well-developed knowledge of each child ensures that staff promote every individual's welfare and learning. Children are very safe and secure and are keen to participate in learning. They cooperate willingly with the staff and one another. Partnerships in the wider context are key strengths that ensure that all children's needs are well met. Appropriate additional support is put in place when needed and children make good progress in relation to their starting points. A continuous and effective self-evaluation process generates development priorities that are focused and conscientiously implemented.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- enhance opportunities for children to positively contribute to pre-school life by regularly involving them in choosing what equipment is put out in the different areas of the main hall
- develop planning to identify the focus of the intended learning outcome within the enhancement activities so that children are questioned and challenged more

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children are very well safeguarded and feel secure because the pre-school has in place all the required policies and procedures to ensure their well-being and security. The pre-school team is knowledgeable about signs of abuse and safeguarding issues including the implementation of a meticulous recruitment process. The environment is kept free from hazards and regular risk assessments to ensure that safety is a priority while children are being cared for. For example, staff sweep-up spilt sand regularly so that no one can slip over. Resources are excellently well-deployed and thus provide a superb choice of equipment, toys and games to support learning and development. However, the value of and opportunities for children to contribute to the setting up of the environment have not been fully considered. The staff reflect critically and are highly motivated to continue improvements to meet children's current learning needs. For example, a project looking at boys' learning styles and concentration levels has resulted in their sustained involvement in creating complex structures using large wooden blocks.

The pre-school reflects continuously on professional practice and fully supports all members of staff to access appropriate training and development opportunities. For example, training on observation, assessment and planning has benefited the whole staff team. The manager is equally supportive of any volunteers in the pre-school, strongly encouraging individuals to engage in core training and to undertake vocational qualifications through the local college. Consequently the pre-school maintains a strong relationship with assessors of adult learning who regularly visit their students. The pre-school is particularly enthusiastic about its involvement in the local authority quality scheme and finds the reflective process extremely useful in identifying areas for further development.

Strong, warm relationships with parents enable effective sharing of information about children and their welfare and learning. Children's learning and development is thoroughly recorded and celebrated in their learning journey files and shared regularly with parents who often comment favourably upon them. Parents are enthusiastic about their children's learning and share anecdotes about what their children particularly enjoy at pre-school and their recognition of numbers, words and letters when elsewhere. Transition to the local primary school is well supported by the pre-school through timely visits from future reception class teachers and assisting parents in the completion of application forms when needed.

The staff provide good opportunities for children to celebrate their own culture and those of other countries. For example, children enjoy celebrating Chinese New Year, the Year of the Dragon, with lanterns, a dragon hunt and finding lucky money!

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

Children flourish at the pre-school and make good progress towards the early learning goals. They are safe and secure because staff are welcoming, friendly, approachable and warm. Children are protected from harm because risks are minimised by each staff member and children know what to do in an emergency because evacuation practices take place at appropriate intervals.

Children move freely around the large hall to choose their equipment and activities following their own interests. For example, children place a ball of string and soft toys at the top of the slide and watch what happens next. Staff support children well and generally strive to question and challenge so that children develop curiosity and understanding. For example, at circle time, children share their news, talk about how old they are and whose birthday is soon. They attentively listen to a story about sheep in snowy weather and talk about the world and its seasons. All children are effectively supported to contribute to the activity. In the main hall staff join in children's play to extend their learning, for example, by adding vocabulary to an imaginary telephone conversation. As a result, children's progress in communication, numeracy and development in information and communication technology is good and they are effectively developing the skills they need in order to secure future learning.

Children develop understanding of how to be healthy through active play inside and regular playtimes outside. For example, when outside they enjoy balancing on a low level beam and leaping from tyre to tyre or riding wheeled vehicles. Children fill containers with water from the covered water butt and mark make on wall-mounted blackboards using brushes of various thicknesses. Children learn which foods are good for them and enjoy healthy snacks of such things as apple, cucumber, soft cheese and crackers. They develop their skills of independence by pouring their own water at meal times and helping to tidy up. Children know that washing their hands is important to remove germs especially after messy activities, visiting the lavatory and before eating their snack. Staff remind them to do so and use the pre-school routine to instil good hygiene habits.

Children generally behave well at the pre-school and respond positively to the expectations of staff for appropriate behaviour. When children's behaviour is challenging, staff and parents agree on a management approach that includes giving children clear consistent guidance and highly praising individuals for cooperation and consideration of others. Children develop their understanding of the local community through trips out to the local shops. They learn about the different countries and cultures of the world because they see images of people of different ethnicity in books and on posters. Children learn about festivals celebrated by different world faiths such as Diwali and the Christian story of Christmas.

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	1
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	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	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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