

Treehouse Pre-school

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	106052
Inspection date	23/01/2012
Inspector	Ruth Thrasher

Setting address	41 Exeter Road, Exmouth, Devon, EX8 1PU
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Telephone number	01395 272935
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Email	
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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

Treehouse Pre-school opened in 1999 and is run by a voluntary committee. It operates from a double mobile unit within the grounds of Exeter Road Primary School, in the coastal town of Exmouth in Devon. Children have access to two classrooms, outdoor play areas and the school hall when available. It is open each weekday from 9am to 3.15pm during term-time. Children may arrive at 8.45am and stay until 3.30pm by arrangement.

The pre-school is registered on the Early Years Register and the voluntary and compulsory parts of the Childcare Register. A maximum of 30 children may attend the pre-school at any one time. There are currently 59 children in the early years age range on roll, aged from two-and-a-half to under five years. The pre-school supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language

There are eight members of childcare staff, plus an administrator. The manager is a qualified teacher and has achieved Early Years Professional Status. In addition, four staff are qualified to at least level 3, one is qualified to level 2, two staff are working towards level 3 and one is unqualified. The pre-school provides funded early education for three- and four-year-olds. There is ramp access to the single story building.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children make good progress in their learning and development as the pre-school has a strong commitment to inclusion, which ensures that, overall, their individual needs are met well. Generally children behave well and individual play plans provide suitable challenge. The indoor and outdoor environments are well designed to support children's learning in all areas and encourage exploration. Self-evaluation is used effectively to identify areas for development and recommendations from the last inspection have been implemented, such as increasing role-play opportunities. This demonstrates a good capacity for continuous improvement.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- fine tune the systems for identifying the next steps in children's learning to ensure that planning is fully effective in providing all children with appropriate challenge
- extend children's ability to regulate their own behaviour as they move

between areas and activities

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Staff have a good awareness of safeguarding issues and regularly update their training, which ensures they are aware of procedures to follow should they have concerns about any of the children. There are sound procedures in place to ensure that adults caring for children are suitable to do so, including references and Criminal Record Bureau checks. Thorough and comprehensive risk assessments ensure that the premises and equipment are safe for children to use. Premises are secure with entry via a code operated lock once security gates around the site are locked each morning. Staff are vigilant about checking children in from any period of outdoor play and a record of numbers present is displayed to ensure all children are safely supervised.

The manager has a strong vision for the pre-school and communicates this to staff. As a result staff work well together to ensure good outcomes for children. Staff use self-evaluation effectively to review the quality of the provision and make improvements. They include the views of parents and carers through questionnaires, as well as the views of the children. For example, an area has been provided where children can play quietly and talk to friends. Resources are regularly reviewed and new equipment added based on children's needs and interests. These include a good range of resources and images reflecting diversity in society.

The pre-school has a strong commitment to inclusion and staff have a good knowledge of each child's background and needs. Several children who are learning English as an additional language attend the pre-school and staff request from parents a list of basic vocabulary in the child's home language to support them. Staff are pro-active in seeking help from external agencies to support children with specific needs and provide additional resources as needed. This ensures that all children make good progress in relation to their starting points.

Parents and carers speak very highly of the pre-school staff. They report that their children love attending and would like to come at the weekends too. They feel well informed about their children's achievements and meet with their children's key persons at regular intervals to review their child's progress. Each child takes home a book every day in their book bag. A communication book enables children's comments about the book to be recorded and for information to be shared between home and pre-school. Regular 'newspapers' keep parents and carers informed about their children's activities. Staff provide helpful information on topics such as the 'Letters and Sounds' phonics programme, which enables parents and carers to support their children's learning at home.

The pre-school has established a good system for sharing information where a child attends more than one setting, which supports continuity in their learning and development. Parental consent is obtained to share details of the child's key person and plans for the term. The pre-school works well in partnership with

external agencies to provide specialist support to promote children's achievements and well-being.

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

Children have great fun exploring and learning in the pre-school. They are free to play indoors or out for most of the session and choose their own activities or join in focused activities. The outdoor classroom provides exciting opportunities for children to extend their learning in different ways. For example, they develop their physical and numerical skills when they jump on numbered mats and count them as they go. Children practised their balancing skills as they walked along wooden planks and then used the blocks and wooden steering wheels to design and build a car. Children have lots of opportunities to be creative, paint, make models and play with dough. They joined in activities to celebrate Chinese New Year, listened to stories and made dragon models. Children develop their fine motor skills and use a range of different tools. They learn to use knives safely, for example to chop up vegetables to make a stir-fry and eat with chopsticks.

Children receive good support from adults to extend their learning. Staff ask open-ended questions to develop children's thinking skills and introduce basic mathematical language into everyday routines, for example children count how many are at the table for snack and calculate 'one more' and 'one less'. Children take part in a broad range of activities to support their listening and speaking skills, for example they walk across a tray of cereal flakes and describe the noise it makes. They learn about technology through using programmable toys and a computer. They develop good skills for the future and become familiar with the school environment by using some of the school facilities, such as the hall and playground.

Overall children are engaged well in activities and staff use positive techniques to promote good behaviour. They encourage them to share and take turns, but occasionally children's behaviour becomes boisterous when moving between areas. Staff regularly praise children and give them lots of encouragement to try new things, which develops their confidence and self-esteem. Staff use the 'feelings box' to help children to talk about feelings and think about the impact of their actions. Children take part in a good range of activities to support their understanding of diversity, such as celebrating different festivals.

Children learn about healthy lifestyles and show a good awareness of which foods are good for them. Staff use a crocodile puppet to play a game in which children decide which healthy foods they should feed him. Children learn to keep themselves safe in everyday activities, such as using the climbing frame, and through topics such as road and firework safety.

Staff complete regular observations of the children and note any significant comments or achievements, which contribute to children's individual play plans. However, the systems for identifying children's next steps in their learning are

inconsistent, which means that sometimes children are not fully challenged. However, staff meet weekly to discuss children's progress and plan activities based on children's needs and interests, so that overall children make good progress according to their ability.

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
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The provider confirms that the requirements of the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are:	Met
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