

Wethersfield Preschool

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number 404874
Inspection date 02/03/2012
Inspector Lynn Hughes

Setting address The Pavillion Playing Field, Hedingham Road, Wethersfield,
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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

Wethersfield Pre-school was registered in 1984 and is committee run. It operates from a newly built pavilion in Wethersfield, Essex. An enclosed outdoor area provides space for outdoor activities. The pre-school is open from 9.30am to 12pm with an additional session from 12pm to 1.30pm for a lunch club, five days per week, term time only.

A maximum of 18 children under five years may attend the pre-school at any one time, of whom all may be in the early years age range. There are currently 22 children on roll. This provision is registered by Ofsted on the Early Years Register and on both the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register.

The pre-school employs five members of staff. Of whom all five, including the manager, hold appropriate qualifications to at least level two.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children's welfare, learning and development needs are well met through the setting's clear and consistent policies and working practices. Children's health and safety is prioritised and staff demonstrate an extremely professional attitude towards keeping children safe whilst in their care. Staff know the children in their key worker groups well and work very effectively with parents and other professionals to ensure children's early years experiences are productive. Overall, children actively participate in a range of planned, well resourced and freely chosen learning opportunities. The setting is committed to maintaining continuous improvement and promoting good quality standards through rigorous self-evaluation and reflective practices.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- review the organisation and planning of the indoor and outdoor learning environment to provide children with opportunities to make use of resources and activities which help them to develop across all six areas of learning.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children are very well-protected from potential harm as staff demonstrate a superb knowledge of safeguarding issues and their responsibilities with regards to protecting the children in their care. They regularly update their knowledge

through appropriate training and follow current guidance. All adults are appropriately vetted and clear proof of their clearance is held on file for inspection. Highly effective and consistently applied daily safety checks ensure that children play and learn in an extremely safe and secure environment. Thorough risk assessments of the premises indoors and outdoors are conducted on a regular basis as are risk assessments for each type of outing.

The setting has seen a number of changes over the past couple of years as their previous permanent building was knocked down and re-built. The pre-school operated from temporary premises during the re-build, but are now situated in their newly built premises. The new building provides more scope for children to make choices and decisions over their learning and has safe and easy access to a good sized enclosed outdoor area. Staff are supported by an effective committee who encourage them to further develop their knowledge and expertise through regular and appropriate training. They are actively involved in the self-evaluation process and help to identify the setting's strengths and areas for improvement.

Staff encourage children to make choices and decisions by placing well-labelled, low-level storage units around the setting. Children freely choose equipment stored in the units and replace the drawers and containers when they have finished using them. The setting promotes children's safety and supports them well by ensuring that a good adult to child ratio is maintained at all times. This is achieved with the assistance of vetted voluntary helpers and committee members working alongside core staff. The setting ensures that it provides a fully inclusive and welcoming provision for all families. Staff attend appropriate training and work with other professionals to ensure that the needs of all children are effectively met.

Parents spoken to at the time of the inspection spoke highly about the staff's welcoming attitude, their children's enjoyment of their pre-school experiences and the confidence they feel in the staff to keep their children safe and secure. They are very complementary of the excellent partnerships that they have with staff and the clear written and verbal information they receive about their child on a daily basis. Partnerships in the wider context are effectively used to promote consistency between early years settings. Good systems are in place to promote and support children with the transition between the pre-school and local schools.

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

Children enjoy their pre-school experiences. They are active and inquisitive learners who enjoy exploring new and exciting learning opportunities. For example, they chat about the strange texture of the corn flour 'gloop' as it runs through their fingers and how it hardens when left for the duration of the session. They enthusiastically participate in a floating and sinking activity. They proficiently answer appropriately tailored questions about which items they think will float and which will sink to the bottom of the container. Adults judge when to move away from activities, leaving it to become a child-led exploration which provides scope for exciting and interesting discussions. Children negotiate roles well and take it in turns to become their favourite imaginary characters. For example, from children's

discussions they pretend to be dogs and bark their way around the setting, settling down in a corner which quickly becomes their bed. Staff set out a varied range of toys and resources each day, however, they do not always make full use of the wide and exciting resources available. For example, information and communication technology resources are not always available to challenge children's learning in this area and whilst planning is in place for the outdoor area, opportunities for children to explore resources across all six areas of learning whilst outside are not always fully explored. Staff observe children's achievements and record their progress in daily diaries and in their learning journeys. They use their observations to identify children's next steps in learning and to plan effectively for them.

Children are and feel very safe during their pre-school session. They clearly understand the setting's safety rules and competently follow them. Children show no concern that a stranger is present and approach staff confidently. Staff remind children about good safety rules, such as holding hands when out walking and they talk about road safety every time they go for a walk in the local area. Children are kept very healthy through the setting's clear health and safety policies. They understand the importance of hand washing and automatically carry out this practice before snack time and after using the toilet. Children enjoy a very healthy snack which comprises of nutritious and well-balanced foods. They develop good independence skills at snack time as they are encouraged to self-register, collect their own plates and food and take them to the table. They also sometimes participate in washing and drying the utensils they have used which as a result develops their self help skills.

Children are very settled and comfortable in the pre-school environment. They move confidently around the setting making use of all areas available to them. Children's self-esteem and confidence is effectively promoted by staff. Children are encouraged to bring items of choice in from home and to tell their friends about them during a show and tell session. The range of activities available to children helps them to develop skills for the future, such as, good communication skills. They chat confidently to each other and to the adults caring for them. They use numbers in everyday activities and are beginning to write recognisable shapes using a variety of materials and drawing resources.

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	1
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	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	1
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	1
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