

Tadpoles Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspector Sara Frost

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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

Tadpoles Pre-School registered in 2001 and is managed by a voluntary committee of parents. The pre-school operates from Highampton Primary School near Beaworthy in Devon. It serves the rural village of Highampton and the surrounding area. The pre-school is open for one session each Wednesday from 11.45am to 3.15pm during term-time only.

The pre-school is registered on the Early Years Register and the voluntary and compulsory parts of the Childcare Register. A maximum of nine children, from three years to the end of the early years age group, may attend at any one time. There are currently seven children, aged from three to under five years, on roll. The pre-school is in receipt of funding for the provision of free early education for children aged three and four years. The pre-school employs two members of staff, both of whom hold a relevant childcare qualification.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children enjoy their time at this small rural setting. The friendly well-organised team of staff work closely with parents to ensure that they meet every child's needs. In addition, the strong links developed with the local primary school, further help to encourage and promote children's learning and development. Overall, children's health and welfare is well promoted in most aspects. The staff and committee have systems in place to monitor and identify areas for improvement. This demonstrates a positive commitment and encouraging ability to maintain continuous improvement.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- provide regular evacuation drills, which enable all children to become familiar with the process and learn how to stay safe in an emergency
- heighten children's awareness of the availability of fresh drinking water throughout the session to support their growing independence as they do things for themselves to stay healthy

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Staff demonstrate a strong understanding of their roles and responsibilities to safeguard children's welfare. They are clear about the processes to follow should they have any concerns about a child in their care. Clear well-documented policies and procedures aid and support this practice. Systems are in place to protect children for example, staff complete the relevant checks and hold the appropriate qualifications demonstrating their suitability to work with children. Good support is in place to encourage further training for staff to enhance their skills and the quality of the pre-school. Staff are vigilant at supervising children and they keep clear records of any visitors.

The pre-school operates from the school site one afternoon session a week. Staff within the school and pre-school work very well as a team and together promote the smooth running of the session. The room is well organised allowing children to safely and confidently move around indoors and outside. Children use an interesting range of resources, which are presented well to aid their selection. The resources include many to aid children's understanding of diversity in the wider world. Staff regularly review the pre-school's range of policies and procedures and the documents are readily accessible to parents. Staff conduct thorough risk assessments for indoors and outdoors of the building. They conduct further checks on a daily basis to ensure areas children access remain safe. Fire evacuation procedures are fully known by staff. However, fire drills do not take place to ensure all children are familiar with procedures when attending the school site.

Relationships with parents are good. Information is available on the notice board and regular newsletters sent home. Parents are welcomed into the pre-school and have regular discussions with staff about their children's care and learning. Children's key workers encourage parents to look at and contribute to their child's learning journal. Discussion with parents indicates that they are extremely happy with the pre-school. They comment that they feel welcome, included and can see how well their children are progressing in their learning and development. Strong links with the local primary school encourages familiarity for the children particularly at transition time. The sharing of relevant information about the children helps to support their individual development well. Recommendations raised at the last inspection overall have been addressed. Committee and staff contribute successfully towards the effective self-evaluation process. Together they identify aspects of the pre-school that are working well and improvements they can make. For example, the development of specific outdoor areas the children have regular access to. There is a positive attitude to development to bring benefits to children.

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

Pre-school children enter this very small rural school setting with ease. Staff are supportive to all children while in the school building. As a result, children show they feel safe and secure. For example, they move within the classroom environment, seeking out playthings and become fully engrossed in the activities they choose. There is a strong caring ethos throughout the school environment, as older children show kindness towards the younger ones. This also aids confidence in the younger children as they move from pre-school to mainstream school. Circle time at the beginning of the session with all the children from the primary school encourages children to speak confidently in group situations. For example, children are keen to ask questions to the hand puppet bear following the story. Planning is organised effectively by staff around children's interest and areas identified to promote each child's learning and development. Staff conduct observations and use the information successfully to identify children's next steps in their learning. This helps children make good progress in their learning and development.

Children clearly enjoy the interactive story session as they act out parts of the story such as 'squelching' through the mud with many giggles ensuing. Staff arrange resources effectively to meet children's needs. They use, for example, additional copies of the storybook to enable all children to see and follow the story with ease. Children follow simple instructions and learn about sound levels as they play musical instruments during the story. Their listening skills develop further as they play their instruments when they hear specific words during the story such as 'snow'. They are developing a positive attitude to learning. Children confidently use tools as they use rolling pins and cutters when playing with dough. They share well, giving their friends bits of their dough to play with. These actions help to promote successfully children's skills for the future.

Children are developing a good understanding of early mathematics. They point their fingers to aid their counting and confidently recognise shapes. For example, when staff place cones on the ground children recognise that two long sides and two short sides make a rectangle. Children are eager to explore different shapes with the cones, such as a circle and square. The classroom walls are brightly decorated with displays that value children's creativity. Children's own paintings of daffodils for example, aids their understanding of what is happening around them and changes in the seasons.

Children have a range of healthy foods at snack time, with water or milk as a drink. However, if children need a drink during the session they need to ask a member of staff. This limits their ability to respond independently to their own needs. Children have good access to the outdoor facilities on the school site. Children attempt to climb and balance over various apparatus. They are confident in their relationship with staff to seek additional help or attempt it on their own. Staff remain close by to provide required support. Children learn to understand how to keep themselves and each other safe. For example, as they wait for each other to finish on a piece of equipment before getting on themselves.

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	3
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