

Rowans School Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspector

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Setting address

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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

Rowans Pre-School is a committee run provision which registered in October 2002. It operates from Rowans Primary School, in the Haldens area of Welwyn Garden City. The group have access to a designated classroom in the main school. This is also the main nursery classroom which is adapted for use by the pre-school, both operate independently. The pre-school is open every afternoon Monday to Friday between the hours of 12 noon until 3.15pm, which also includes a lunch club from 12noon until 12.45pm, term time only. There is secure fenced play area adjacent to the main building for outdoor activities.

The pre-school is registered to provide care for a total of 25 children aged from two to under five years. There are currently 25 children on roll. Of these, 10 receive funding for nursery education. The pre-school is registered by Ofsted on the Early Years Register and the voluntary and compulsory parts of the Childcare Register. A vast majority of children in attendance live locally. The setting supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and for whom English is an additional language.

The pre-school employs three staff who work with the children, plus an administrator. All three hold National Vocational Qualifications (NVQ) at level three, including one who has just completed a foundation degree in Early Years studies. The pre-school receive support from school teaching staff for support with their nursery education programme, and from the local authority.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Rowans Pre-school is providing well for the needs of the children in its charge. The good level of care provided by the experienced staff ensures children are secure, and the wide range of enjoyable and well planned experiences is enabling them to make good progress in their learning and development. Safeguarding procedures are good and a safe environment ensures all children's welfare needs are met. Children with special educational needs and /or disabilities are well supported in the pre-school, and through their strong links with outside agencies. A number of improvements have been made since the last inspection, self evaluation is developing and the leaders demonstrate that they have a good capacity to continue to make improvements.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- develop the use of self evaluation further and ensure parents are fully involved in the process

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Leaders place high priority on children's safety and well being and have in place a number of policies and procedures to ensure children's needs are met in a secure and welcoming environment. A robust child protection policy sets out clear procedures to be followed in the event of any safety concerns being raised, and all staff have received safeguarding training and fully understand their responsibilities. All staff have also received training in paediatric first aid and food hygiene. Regular risk assessments are carried out before the start of each session to ensure the safety of the environment and resources. Secure arrangements are in place for the registration and safe collection of children, Secure vetting arrangements for appointing new staff are in place including criminal record checks and the taking up of references. Comprehensive induction procedures are in place for all new staff and students.

Recommendations raised at the last inspection have all been addressed successfully. Daily planning sheets ensure all staff are aware of what activities are available and make links across the areas of learning. The overall view is now much broader and is based upon half termly topics. Parents now receive planning sheets so that they are more able to support and reinforce their children's learning at home. Leaders have amply demonstrated their desire to make improvements through these actions and through ensuring all staff are trained to a minimum of National Vocational Qualification level three. One member of staff has successfully completed her foundation degree. The staff work very well together as a team, they monitor progress through their assessment procedures, and jointly contribute to planning children's next steps in each key person's group. Staff know their children well and demonstrate a clear understanding of their individual needs. The process of self evaluation is developing, although parents are not yet fully involved in the process.

The pre-school is a welcoming environment and resources are well used to support children's learning and development. Resources are of a good quality stored well and accessible to all for the children. Staff plan their use imaginatively both indoors and outside, encompassing all areas of learning. Staff are deployed effectively and provide good quality experiences through both adult led activities and through child initiated play. There is good support for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities by the staff who are adept at recognising their individual needs. Good links with outside agencies based at the neighbouring children's centre means that they can access help and support for children and their families. One member of staff is trained as a special needs coordinator, and liaises regularly with her counterparts in the school and the local authority.

Relationships with the school are strong ,being based on the same site gives clear access to staff and greatly facilitates the sharing of information about children who attend both the school nursery and the pre-school. Consequently, there are effective transitional arrangements enabling children to become familiar with staff when moving to the next stage of their education. There are good links with another neighbouring school whose children are collected by the pre-school staff. Parents speak positively of the provision and are confident that their children are

being well cared for and their needs are being met. One parent said, 'I am really happy because the staff are attentive to children's individual needs'. Another parent said that her daughter 'Absolutely loves it!' Parents were also extremely positive about the benefits their children were gaining such as the development of their social skills, learning to share, and the improvement in their communication skills. Regular newsletters keep parents informed about events as well as details of topic planning for the half term. Learning Journals are shared with parents, and staff are always available to talk about their children's progress and any special achievements.

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

Good quality of provision supports the good progress children make at the pre-school especially in their personal and social development. Children show confidence on arrival and go immediately to engage in activities of their own choice. They choose to play with a friend or a group of friends, or at times choose an activity where they can work alone. Good levels of concentration are shown, for example, as they work out how to accurately fit pieces of a jigsaw together. Good quality resources are provided which children can access for themselves. The learning environment is set up at the start of the session with activities covering all areas of learning. Children can join an adult led activity or make their own choice. The environment is welcoming and attractively furnished and decorated with displays of children's work, and topics selected as part of planned activities. There are good opportunities for children to be creative and produce models, for example 'The Very Hungry Caterpillar' as part of their topic on 'Growth'. This topic is appropriately chosen to link into spring and supports a variety of other activities including planting and growing in the outdoor area. Children show good control and confidently work unaided. Children dress up and pretend to be the caterpillar, and enjoy this imaginative activity. Play dough is popular and encourages children to develop manipulative skills through rolling, shaping and cutting as they produce interesting items such as a gingerbread man. Adults use these opportunities skilfully to guide children's thinking through the use of questions. After handling messy materials children know they need to wash their hands and do so independently.

A wide range of floor toys are popular, and children enjoy building a train track by fixing the sections together. A group of boys are fascinated by the toy dinosaurs and are able to talk knowledgeably about what they eat, how many horns they have, and the different colours of their skins. Counting skills are developing well, as staff encourage children to use real coins to make their purchases in the vegetable shop. Good extension of learning occurs when staff ask, 'How many is one more?'. Name cards are used for self registration and these help children to begin to recognise letters and sounds. Water play allows children to experiment and discover how water can turn a wheel through pouring. Imaginative play is further promoted through the home corner and the dressing up area. In an adult led activity children enjoy a matching game using picture cards. They learn the conventions of the game by saying after they have had a go 'It's your turn next'. Children develop an awareness of their own and other cultures through the

celebration of various festivals such as Christmas, Easter, Mothers day, Chinese New Year, Diwali, when they experience related activities such as lantern making for example, and tasting different foods.

Children enjoy the outdoor area where they have regular opportunities to be active. Plenty of wheeled toys are available for them to use, and they do so with great enthusiasm and enjoyment. They use their imagination as they create 'a traffic jam' on the marked out roads. Children play happily together and enjoy their time in the pre-school. Their behaviour is good and they play safely showing a good awareness of each other. A strong emphasis on healthy eating is helping children to understand which foods are good for them, and parents are supportive in ensuring they send a healthy lunch box for their children. Good hygiene procedures are in place to prevent the spread of infection and children follow hand washing practice and understand the reasons for doing so. Snack time and lunch time promote the development of social skills and eating together, and further cement the good relationships that exist between adults and children. Visits from the police helps reinforce aspects of personal safety as well as developing an understanding of people who help us. The pre-school focuses strongly on the development of children's personal and social development, and this is helping children prepare well for the next stage of their schooling.

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