

Portico Kindergarten

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspector Frank Kelly

Setting address Aughton Town Green Primary School, Town Green Lane,
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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

Portico Kindergarten was registered in 2008 and is one of five settings owned by a company. It operates from a self-contained modular unit in the grounds of Aughton Town Green Primary School, which is situated in the Aughton area of Ormskirk, Lancashire. The setting also has access to the school's main hall and playground during holiday periods. It operates Monday to Friday from 7.30am to 6pm for 51 weeks of the year. Children are able to attend for a variety of sessions.

The setting is registered on the Early Years Register and on both the voluntary and compulsory parts of the Childcare Register to care for a maximum of 40 children at any one time, all of whom may be in the early years age range. There are currently 78 children on roll within this age group. The setting offers flexible entitlement for early education for some three- and four-year-olds.

The setting employs 10 members of staff to work with the children, all of whom hold early years qualifications. It receives support from the local authority early years team.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children's unique needs are being met extremely well through the excellent sharing of information with parents and the first-class partnership working with other services and providers. Well-presented resources, effective safety procedures and warm staff interactions mean children are kept safe and their well-being is effectively promoted. The secure planning systems and the overall skilful staff support ensure that children enjoy their learning and make good progress in their development. Documentation is effectively organised and the owners have high aspirations and efficient strategies for self-evaluation and the implementation of purposeful continuous improvement.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- further extend staff's understanding about how they can support children to extend their critical thinking and make connections in their learning, and consider how the use of information and communication technology could be incorporated into this, both indoors and outside.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Safeguarding children is seen as a priority at this setting, with those responsible for the recruitment and selection of staff undertaking relevant training.

Safeguarding procedures are regularly revisited and staff confidently explain procedures for reporting any concerns they may have. They have a sound understanding of the potential signs and indicators of abuse and there is additional information accessible in the staff room to support them. The premises are very well maintained and security is well managed. For example, access into the grounds and building is monitored by staff and visual technology systems. The premises are clean and good hygiene procedures promote the children's health and well-being. The setting has recently achieved a five star rating for its food hygiene procedures. Risk assessment is in place and staff undertake a series of regular checks throughout the day to keep children safe.

The owners are enthusiastic and demonstrate a commitment to improvement and the maintenance of a quality service. Staff are regularly engaged in training and receive individual support through appraisal and supervision by their line managers. This fosters the staff's sense of belonging and is stimulating their confidence and morale. There is regular investment in the resources and environment. For instance, refurbishment of the outdoor play area and new technology, such as a touch screen computer. The arrangements for promoting children's health have been fully addressed as a rigorous system for regular washing and monitoring of their drinking containers has been implemented, demonstrating the management's commitment to improving the setting and well-being of children. Staff are warm and welcoming which creates an environment that is accepting of everyone. Resources that reflect the diversity in society are displayed throughout the setting. They include good quality books, pictures and play figures. A variety of signs are displayed in a range of scripts and languages, helping all to feel valued and included.

Partnerships with parents are excellent. Daily discussions and messages on social media websites about the types of activities the children participate in are some of the ways informal information is shared. Parents evenings and other events provide opportunities to engage with staff about children's progress. Parents can also discuss other issues with management at these times. The setting is highly motivated to work in partnership with other professionals and services and does so to an extremely high standard. A programme of engaging with other providers, such as schools, is being given a high priority to assist the smooth transitions for those children who are due to start full-time education.

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

Children enter eagerly and separate from their parents with ease. They are relaxed with the familiar adults and secure in their relationships, which helps them to feel safe. The learning environment is well established and children's sense of community is fostered through displays of photographs of themselves and their families, and their artwork and early writing. Babies are fed according to their individual routines, and their babbles are enthusiastically responded to, promoting early communication. They confidently explore well-resourced baskets of construction materials, toys that clatter and chunky farm animals. The very young sit transfixed with a ball and novelty beater. Toddlers delight in painting the fence

with primary colours, eagerly seeking more paint from staff. Older children make marks with twigs, cars and fingers in the shaving foam. When asked how it feels, they describe it as 'sticky' or 'soft'. Children enjoy being read to in small groups and join in with acting out firm favourites.

Staff planning is led by observations of the children and is securely linked to the guidance documents. Regular observation by staff means that they confidently know the children's current interests and plan accordingly to promote their next steps. Additional monitoring systems are in place, conducted by the managers, and children's records of progress are shared with parents regularly. A flexible routine, with a mixture of adult-led activities and free play, means that children are practising their skills in activities and using them in their play. For example, they sing a counting song and later in the day count backwards when playing a game with their friends. Staff lead sorting games and encourage children to work as a team when creating a waterfall with guttering. Children instigate their own games, such as a treasure hunt. However, staff are not always using these types of opportunities to help children extend their problem solving. In addition, although there is a range of technology within the setting, such as microphones and digital cameras, some of it is not always readily accessible.

The staff have high expectations for the children and use a wide range of practical methods to enhance and promote the 'Every Child Matters' outcomes. Staff help children to understand the importance of keeping themselves safe as they prompt them to be careful of others as they run around. They remind them about the importance of applying sunscreen. Children are developing an excellent understanding of adopting a healthy lifestyle. They follow the visual prompts as they independently wash and dry their hands. Children serve themselves at lunch times so they learn about portion size. They enjoy a wide range of healthy meals, such as pasta bake. Regular snacks throughout the day fuel their bodies, and opportunities to exercise in the garden and in the school hall provide a variety of challenges. Projects for growing a range of vegetable crops are underway and older children understand that the plants need water to survive.

Children's behaviour is very good, with staff providing pleasant and effective role models. Staff significantly enhance children's early citizenship through a variety of activities, such as fundraising for a school in Mozambique. Trips to a local supermarket allow them to observe how a trifle is made and how to operate the till. These activities provide excellent ways for children to broaden their knowledge of their wider world. During these trips, staff draw children's attention to the need to pay for tickets at the station and the significance of numerals and print in the environment. For example, they look for familiar numbers on the platform or the destination label on the train. These types of activities and the skilful way staff support the children help them to develop positive attitudes towards learning and gain skills for the future.

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	1
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	1
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	1
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