

Knebworth Pre-School Group

Trinity Church, Park Lane, Knebworth, Hertfordshire, SG3 6PD

Inspection date	20/10/2014
Previous inspection date	03/12/2009

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	2
	Previous inspection:	2
How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend		1
The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children		2
The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision		2

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This provision is good

- Highly qualified staff use excellent teaching methods to create a learning environment that is rich in experiences for children of all abilities. As a result, all children make exceptional progress.
- Partnerships with parents are extremely well established due to the regular sharing of information about each child's individual progress and care needs. This promotes strong continuity between home and the pre-school and is achieved through a very supportive management team. Therefore, children's well-being is fully supported.
- Children enjoy a healthy diet and grow their own fruit and vegetables. In addition, they access regular fresh air and exercise. This increases their understanding of how to live a healthy lifestyle.
- Safeguarding procedures are robust. This protects the welfare of children.

It is not yet outstanding because

- The manager has not yet embedded her new system for staff supervisions to enable her to support staff to continuously strengthen their practice. Therefore, they do not always enhance children's care and development to the very optimum.

Information about this inspection

Inspections of registered early years provision are:

- scheduled at least once in every inspection cycle – the current cycle ends on 31 July 2016
- scheduled more frequently where Ofsted identifies a need to do so, for example where provision was previously judged inadequate
- brought forward in the inspection cycle where Ofsted has received information that suggests the provision may not be meeting the legal requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage or where assessment of the provision identifies a need for early inspection
- prioritised where we have received information that the provision is not meeting the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage and which suggests children may not be safe
- scheduled at the completion of an investigation into failure to comply with the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage.

The provision is also registered on the voluntary and compulsory parts of the Childcare Register. This report includes a judgment about compliance with the requirements of that register.

Inspection activities

- The inspector observed children's activities in all the rooms used and outside.
- The inspector carried out a joint observation with one of the managers and held discussions with both managers and some other members of staff.
- The inspector sampled the pre-school documentation including a self-evaluation, policies, children's learning journals and assessments.
- The inspector took account of the views of parents through discussions on the day.
- The inspector saw evidence of the qualifications and suitability of all persons working on the premises and other documentation in relation to the safeguarding and welfare requirements.

Inspector

Rachel Pepper

Full report

Information about the setting

Knebworth Pre-School Group was registered in 1995, but has been established since 1966. It is on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. The pre-school is located within the Trinity Church hall in Knebworth and is managed by a voluntary committee. It operates from two rooms and a kitchen, and has the optional use of other rooms. There is an enclosed area available for outdoor play. The pre-school opens Monday to Friday during term time only. Sessions are from 9am until 12 noon, 12noon until 3pm or 9am until 3pm. There is an optional drop-off club from 8.30am each morning. Children attend for a variety of sessions. There are currently 46 children on roll, all of whom are in the early years age group. The pre-school provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-olds and supports children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. The pre-school employs 10 members of childcare staff. Of these, one is an Early Years Professional, one holds a relevant qualification at level 5, and six hold level 3.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

To further improve the quality of the early years provision the provider should:

- consolidate the new system for staff supervisions, including the use of peer observations, so that staff's good, and sometimes excellent, practice is constantly enhanced.

Inspection judgements

How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend

All staff at this pre-school have an exceptional understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage. As a result, children are offered limitless opportunities to learn through well-organised, purposeful play. The quality of teaching is of a consistently high standard and the qualified, enthusiastic staff have high expectations of the children in their care. This means that children are developing at a rapid pace towards the early learning goals. This includes children who have either mild or complex special educational needs as staff tailor individual support relevant to each child's stage of development. For example, staff assist children to participate in all activities as they use visual props to support children who have difficulty understanding routines. Furthermore, staff use a sensory area they set up to help children focus their attention and learn new words, such as 'stop' and 'go'. This fully supports each child's personal, social and emotional development. Staff note the interests and characteristics of learning for each child to plan challenging yet enjoyable activities to represent these in a variety of ways. Staff use the current focus on traditional fairytales to cover all areas of learning. Children access media and materials freely to support their play and have excellent opportunities to express their creativity fully and engage in role play. They recreate a ballet they have watched and decorate shoes in the

cobblers shop. Children use the giant's tea table to explore comparisons, looking at big and little teapots, pans, spoons and cups. Staff support this further as they help children to calculate simple measurements as they use bricks to see how tall they are. This fully supports their early mathematics. Staff read related stories to children and use group time to ask questions about size as they learn through repetition. They refer to the displayed giant that the children have painted. Children take turns as they practise their speaking and listening skills, promoting their communication and language development.

The children master steps, ramps and climbing equipment outside, as staff allow them to take risks. Staff show excellent skills and only intervene at timely moments to extend children's learning. For example, children explore the natural resources, such as pebbles, and are offered buckets when they appear to have trouble transporting them. Children contentedly continue to fill and the empty the buckets and move pebbles between their chosen areas. Furthermore, staff assist children who struggle to pedal their bike and suggest areas of the ground where they may find it easier. They encourage them to push their feet harder. Children energetically use their leg muscles and smile at their achievement as the bike begins to move. Staff regularly praise children for their efforts, raising their self-esteem. Children are given time to practise what they have learned as staff ring a five minute warning bell before mealtimes or adult-led activities begin. This supports children to know what comes next and minimises the interruption to their play.

Staff promote children's readiness for school extremely effectively as they encourage children to sit, listen and follow instructions for all group activities. Staff use a letter of the week to help children become familiar with how letters of the alphabet look and sound. Staff set children the challenge to bring in items from home beginning with each letter and share these with the group. As a result, children gain confidence to speak in group situations. Older children increase their hours at the pre-school and attend a full day, often having lunch with their friends. This prepares them well for the expectations of the school routine and supports their developing peer relationships. Staff recognise children who excel in their development. For example, they supply children who are beginning to read with more challenging books to support their literacy development. As a result, many children attend school familiar with the books offered and have the ability to read. Staff attend school visits with children and, in turn, teachers visit the pre-school. This enables them to get to know each child and their parents well. Furthermore, the manager actively contributes towards the decisions parents make when choosing a school. She joins some on a variety of prospective visits to offer advice on which would suit the needs of each unique child best. As a result, each child is supported very well towards the next stage in their learning.

Highly effective strategies involve all parents in their child's learning. This includes an adaptive approach, such as supplying two learning journals to children of single parent families in order to reach both parents. In addition, the manager takes on the role of lead professional in particular cases to bring together the relevant services involved with some families and support them fully. Staff at the pre-school inform parents of the activities their children take part in through daily discussion, a display board, emails and one-to-one meetings. This includes future plans and themes, encouraging them to share activities carried out at home and extend this learning with their child. Staff carry out regular observations of children and record these in notebooks that they carry with them. This

ensures nothing is missed and relates to the whole child, not just the current areas of focus. They use these to complete assessments, including the progress check for children between the ages of two and three years, to establish their current working levels. Staff refer to child development sheets to establish each child's knowledge, skills and abilities accurately and identify areas where children are not progressing at expected levels. All staff refer to a display chart to see each child's current level. In addition, they are all aware of the next steps for each child and their starting points so that they can focus on these throughout each day. Staff assess each child's next steps at regular intervals to ensure that they are consistently followed through. This meticulous way of working has now been established after many trial processes. The manager is proactive and is continually improving this area by securing further resources for the children. She has also introduced peer observations as she aims to monitor and evaluate the quality of teaching to consistently maintain the high standard achieved.

The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children

Children enjoy their time at pre-school and new children settle well. Children attending for a while have developed secure attachments to staff and explore the environment with confidence. They are aware that they can gain reassurance at any time from staff, who are close by. This fully supports their personal, social and emotional development in readiness for the move to school. Children access their belongings from individual named pegs and sign themselves in upon arrival. This supports them gaining a sense of belonging in the pre-school. Staff gather information on each child before they start. This includes children's likes, dislikes and daily routines. For example, staff record details on how to respond to the different behaviours of non-verbal children when they are bored or upset. Staff refer to this information during the day to ensure that the individual needs of each child are met. As a result, there is a good continuity between home and the pre-school in the care that each child receives. Staff use a gradual process to help children settle, and parents are encouraged to stay and play with their child. This is dependent on each child's response and helps to create a smooth move between home and the pre-school. Each child is assigned a key person who becomes the first point of contact for parents. However, many parents express that they feel happy to talk to any member of staff as they all know the children so well. Younger children attend on set days and each child is placed in the group most suited to their stage of development. Children also have opportunities to take part in mixed age group activities. As a result, they are encouraged to socialise with others and negotiate friendships, to support their developing relationships.

Staff use the smart board to extend children's understanding of other cultures. They play a DVD for the children to show the transportation and receipt of Christmas boxes to children in other countries. Children then fully participate in the appeal as they think about what to put in each box and consider the age and gender of the child it is for. This increases their awareness of the similarities and difference of other people. Staff teach children to behave well. They use positive reinforcement to promote good behaviour and offer clear explanations on what comes next. As a result, children know what is expected of them and are familiar with the daily routines, such as when the snack will be available. Staff promote children's independence as they remind them to wash their own hands

before eating and sensitively support them to try again when they place their shoes on the wrong feet. Staff promote children's awareness of personal safety through regular discussion of the emergency evacuation procedures. They also help them to use tools safely during cooking activities as they cut the vegetables they have grown to make a soup.

Staff promote children's health as they encourage them to try a range of nutritious foods which are balanced and healthy. They complement their packed lunch from home with snacks, such as toast with a choice of spreads and home-grown beetroot. Staff involve children in growing seasonal fruit and vegetables in the garden and encourage them to name and taste the food. This supports children to make healthy choices. Children monitor and water the plants, many of which are grown from seeds, and observe the different stages of growth and decay, developing their understanding of the world. Children choose when to have their snack as staff offer this for set periods of time throughout each session. As a result, children begin to assess their own personal needs, such as the times that they feel hungry or thirsty. This again supports their developing independence. Staff use aprons during lunchtime and children use paper towels to dry their hands after washing. This promotes a safe hygiene practice and reduces the risk of cross-contamination. Staff are all aware of each child's dietary requirements as they refer to the information displayed in the kitchen. They have all received recent training in administering specific medication to children who have severe allergies. This supports children's welfare effectively. Staff encourage children to take part in regular exercise as they have the freedom to move between the indoor and outdoor areas of the pre-school. In addition, staff lead activity sessions in the hall each day, where children move their body in a variety of different ways to the action songs. They delight as they imitate caterpillars and butterflies together in time to the music. This supports their developing physical skills.

The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision

The management team and staff meet all the safeguarding and welfare requirements well. They ensure that the pre-school is kept safe for children. For example, staff ask all visitors to sign in and out and they accurately record the hours of children's attendance. Therefore, no unauthorised person can gain access and no children can leave unsupervised. All staff left unsupervised with children have undergone full suitability checks. This helps to safeguard children. The staff have all completed safeguarding training. Therefore, they know the procedures to follow if they have a concern for any child in their care. They are aware of the lead person for safeguarding and what to do if an allegation is made against them or any other member of staff. All staff have completed their first-aid training to help them deal with any accidents that children have. This supports children's welfare and ensures that they are always within close proximity to a qualified first aider. All accidents and incidents are recorded to further safeguard practice. The fire detection and fire control equipment is regularly checked by outside agencies and the staff carry out regular evacuation practises as they use the clearly marked exits. This ensures that they know what to do in the event of an emergency.

The managers are aware of safe recruitment practice and follow up all references for new staff. This follows an interview process by the board. A detailed induction includes all the policies and procedures of the pre-school. Staff refer to the pack they are given to regularly refresh their knowledge. They each take on a specific role within the pre-school, which highlights how they are all valued team members. The pre-school policies are implemented consistently and include the procedure for mobile phone and camera use. This includes the safe storage of all personal phones during the times that children are present. An e-safety policy highlights again how safety is of paramount importance to the management and includes information on safe smart board use. No internet access is available to children to ensure that their safety is not compromised. The manager has recently introduced a new system of supervisions for staff, to be carried out every six weeks. She uses these to identify areas of strengths and areas that could be improved. At present their effectiveness has not been evaluated to ensure that the good and sometimes excellent practice of staff is continually maintained and improved upon. This is also the case for the peer observations she is in the process of implementing to focus on the quality of teaching practices, in order to enhance children's care and development to the very optimum. The management complete a self-evaluation to focus on the broader areas of practice and have successfully addressed the recommendation raised at the last inspection. They have fortnightly staff meetings to share practice ideas and use inset days to complete further training. This shows the high commitment of both staff and management to priorities for improvement.

Partnerships with parents are very good and staff actively gain the views from parents through consultations and regular emails. Staff consider making changes in response to these. For example, they now send all the devised plans to parents to keep them fully informed of the activities their children take part in. Furthermore, with local authority permission, the management assist parents who have difficulty applying online for school places. This demonstrates the commitment to ensure that all children receive the best possible opportunities in life and the inclusive ethos of this pre-school. Staff gain the views of children by asking them about their likes and dislikes and observing their interaction and responses to activities. The manager has also established effective links with other relevant agencies, and has received visits from support workers and an early years adviser. These assist them in keeping up to date on the learning and development requirements and reflecting on and improving their current provision. The manager is also now an advisory on the children's centre board and attends regular briefings to ensure that she remains fully involved. These links provide the pre-school with access to request the support that they currently need for individual children in their care.

The Childcare Register

The requirements for the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are **Met**

The requirements for the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are **Met**

What inspection judgements mean

Registered early years provision

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	Outstanding provision is highly effective in meeting the needs of all children exceptionally well. This ensures that children are very well prepared for the next stage of their learning.
Grade 2	Good	Good provision is effective in delivering provision that meets the needs of all children well. This ensures children are ready for the next stage of their learning.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	The provision is not giving children a good standard of early years education and/or there are minor breaches of the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. We re-inspect nurseries and pre-schools judged as requires improvement within 12 months of the date of inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	Provision that is inadequate requires significant improvement and/or enforcement action. The provision is failing to give children an acceptable standard of early years education and/or is not meeting the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. It will be monitored and inspected again within six months of the date of this inspection.
Met		There were no children present at the time of the inspection. The inspection judgement is that the provider continues to meet the requirements for registration.
Not met		There were no children present at the time of the inspection. The inspection judgement is that the provider does not meet the requirements for registration.

Inspection

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006 on the quality and standards of provision that is registered on the Early Years Register. The registered person must ensure that this provision complies with the statutory framework for children's learning, development and care, known as the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Setting details

Unique reference number	146762
Local authority	Hertfordshire
Inspection number	874918
Type of provision	
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 17
Total number of places	30
Number of children on roll	46
Name of provider	Knebworth Pre-School Committee
Date of previous inspection	03/12/2009
Telephone number	01438 234804

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Type of provision

For the purposes of this inspection the following definitions apply:

Full-time provision is that which operates for more than three hours. These are usually known as nurseries, nursery schools and pre-schools and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. They are registered on the Early Years Register and pay the higher fee for registration.

Sessional provision operates for more than two hours but does not exceed three hours in any one day. These are usually known as pre-schools, kindergartens or nursery schools

and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. They are registered on the Early Years Register and pay the lower fee for registration.

Childminders care for one or more children where individual children attend for a period of more than two hours in any one day. They operate from domestic premises, which are usually the childminder's own home. They are registered on the Early Years Register and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Out of school provision may be sessional or full-time provision and is delivered before or after school and/or in the summer holidays. They are registered on the Early Years Register and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. Where children receive their Early Years Foundation Stage in school these providers do not have to deliver the learning and development requirements in full but should complement the experiences children receive in school.

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