

Heathlands Community Pre-school

Chatsworth Drive, Rushmere St. Andrew, IPSWICH, IP4 5XD

Inspection date	21/11/2014
Previous inspection date	09/12/2008

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	1
	Previous inspection:	3
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		1
The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision		1

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This provision is outstanding

- Children make outstanding progress in all areas of learning because the quality of teaching is consistently of a very high standard, providing imaginative and innovative activities in a highly stimulating and fully child-centred environment. Staff skilfully use assessments to ensure every child's needs are met and their constant progress is assured.
- Children's emotional well-being is excellently promoted because they form close attachments and affectionate bonds with the adults caring for them. This builds their confidence and self-esteem, enabling them to engage and learn exceptionally well. Children are active learners, making choices and developing skills that will aid their future development.
- Children are effectively safeguarded because staff place an extremely strong emphasis on keeping them safe and secure. All staff have an excellent understanding of their responsibilities in regard to protecting children from harm and abuse. Children learn how to keep themselves safe through well-embedded routines and carefully planned activities.
- Children benefit from the highly successful partnerships with parents, which are developed from their first days and maintained throughout children's time at pre-school. Parents are fully involved and contribute to their child's learning and the pre-school as a whole by sharing their time and skills.

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.

Inspection activities

- The inspector spoke to, and interacted with, children in the playroom and in the outside area.
- The inspector held discussions with staff members, the provider and the manager, and carried out a joint observation with the manager.
- The inspector viewed a sample of documentation, including evidence of staff suitability checks and qualifications, some policies, a self-evaluation and development plan, and children's development profiles and electronic records.
- The inspector took account of the views of parents spoken to during the inspection, and from questionnaires and surveys gathered in advance of the inspection.

Inspector

Sarah Williams

Full report

Information about the setting

Heathlands Community Pre-school opened in 1980 and is on the Early Years Register. It is managed by a voluntary management committee and operates from purpose-built premises in the grounds of Broke Hall Primary School in Ipswich. Children have access to an enclosed outdoor play area. The pre-school is open each weekday during term time from 8.45am to 11.45am and from 12.15pm to 3.15pm, with an optional lunch club between sessions. There are currently 76 children on roll. The pre-school receives funding for early education for two-, three- and four-year-olds. There are nine members of staff, all of whom hold appropriate early years qualifications. The manager holds Qualified Teacher Status. The pre-school supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and children who speak English as an additional language. It receives support from the local authority and is a member of the Pre-school Learning Alliance.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- enhance the already high quality programme for information and communication technology by introducing further opportunities and resources to aid children's understanding of how they can digitally record images.

Inspection judgements

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

Children make rapid progress in all areas of development. They readily gain the skills they need for their future learning, along with a positive attitude towards trying new things. The quality of teaching is consistently excellent. All staff show a deep understanding for the different ways children learn, and skilfully respond to these with sensitivity. As a result, activities are exceptionally well thought out and staff make superb use of the resources and facilities available. Children have use of an exceptionally imaginative and stimulating garden area. This encourages them to move about freely, experiencing the different levels and negotiating the slopes and stepping stones. Children use the dens under the willow walk and the commando net for imaginative games. The slope and platform can become a pirate ship or a castle, developing imaginative scenarios and cooperative role play. Children explore the properties of natural materials and develop their creative thinking and problem-solving skills while using the mud kitchen. They transport water and earth using a variety of containers and trolleys. Staff remain on hand to support children as they play. Staff communicate very effectively with a combination of words, gestures and sign language, ensuring that all children are included and able to respond. In the main playroom, children benefit from a superbly resourced environment. A corner of the playroom houses the two guinea pigs. Children feed and care for these daily, and are helped to handle them carefully and with regard for the fact that they are living

creatures. Children observe the growth and progress of the African land snails with fascination and watch the fish, comparing the habits of the different species. This engages children and encourages them to ask questions about the world around them. A wealth of sensory and artistic activities are available for children to freely experiment with. They explore colour mixing and textures as they paint and create collages. Adult-led activities teach specific skills, such as marbling, and children use the results to create effective displays.

Staff understand how to challenge children by taking them to the next level in their learning. They are all very in tune with their key children and know exactly what stages they are at, and what next steps in learning they are working towards. Innovative and exciting equipment, such as the light box, introduces children to new technologies and how they can use these in their own lives for learning and discovery. Every child's progress is meticulously assessed and recorded, enabling staff to always know, with accuracy, what children need to do next. Staff have recently started to use an electronic system to record their observations and identify the exact stages of development for their key children. An advantage of the system is that parents are kept very up to date with precisely what their child has been doing. They can contribute with comments and ideas, and tell staff what their children have been doing at home. This allows for very strong links and continuity of care and learning for the children and promotes a fully effective partnership with parents. Parents have many opportunities to speak directly with their child's key person. They can either do this informally, at the start and end of session, or during termly interviews, where staff prepare a progress report and discuss their children's progress with them. Staff carry out the progress check for children between the ages of two and three years, the results of which are given to parents to be shared with a health visitor if they so wish. Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities are extremely well supported. The key person finds out about every child's needs before they start to attend, by talking to parents at a home visit and in the pre-school during settling-in visits. This enables the key person to identify and address any areas where a child may need additional support. This ranges from adapting activities and equipment in the pre-school, to working with a range of outside professionals to support children and make sure they are fully included.

Staff sensitively support children who speak English as an additional language by ensuring that their home language is incorporated during play, and by inviting parents to celebrate festivals and cultural events with food, music and costume. Resources, such as dual-language books, posters and labels on equipment, and songs and rhymes in a variety of languages are effectively used to embrace and celebrate the diversity of children's heritage. By embracing children's diverse cultures and home backgrounds, all children benefit and learn about the world. Children are very well prepared for the next stages in their learning. They become independent, are able to direct their own play and learning, and have an excellent understanding of the pre-school routines. Children are encouraged to ask questions and find solutions to problems by investigating and experimenting. Themed weeks and seasonal topics are chosen after asking the children what they are interested in. This ensures that they remain fully engaged and stimulated.

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

Children build exceptionally strong and effective relationships with the adults caring for them. The key-person system is extremely well thought out and supports children through the initial transition from home to pre-school, then on to school. The introduction of a home visit has been well received by parents. They appreciate the opportunity to establish a relationship with their child's key person and have a point of contact for discussion and advice. Since the introduction of the home visits, staff report that the key-person relationship is strengthened, so children are fully supported in making progress from the first day of attendance. This contributes to ensuring that children are emotionally well prepared for their learning experiences and future transitions. Children take part in charity events when they enjoy activities and discussions guided towards enhancing their knowledge and understanding of less fortunate children and families. They talk knowledgeably, supported by a superbly executed display, about a recent fun day spent raising funds for a national campaign for disadvantaged children. Participation in these events helps to raise awareness of the wider world and the diversity of children from varied cultural and home circumstances.

Children behave extremely well and demonstrate increasing levels of self-control and the ability to manage and resolve conflicts, such as when using a popular piece of equipment. They have many opportunities to work cooperatively and solve problems. Staff skilfully observe and support children at these times, enabling them to think for themselves and not rely solely on adults. This develops their resilience and independence and brings a growing understanding of the needs and feelings of others. The pace of the sessions is expertly managed so that children have the majority of their time to freely choose and explore their own interests and build friendship groups. A good balance of quieter times for discussion and shared experiences, in both small and larger groups, is also maintained. This is achieved through meticulous planning by staff, who work exceptionally well together as a team to ensure the flow of the session. Children respond positively because staff are consistent in what they ask of them. Children develop positive and suitable self-care habits and independence. They change into outdoor clothing when it is cold outside, and find an apron for messy activities. Children are highly independent in organising their own learning. They choose where they wish to play and have access to both indoor and outdoor play environments. Writing and reading areas are appealing and encourage children to make good use of them. All resources, including mathematical equipment, construction, puzzles, small world toys and role play items, are arranged and stored in low-level accessible units. Children access these readily to support their choice of activity.

Children have excellent opportunities to benefit from daily fresh air and exercise. This is achieved through the organisation of a freely flowing session, where access to the outdoor area is not limited by weather or other constraints. Children spontaneously clamber over the sturdy mounds, use the uneven stepping stones to challenge themselves as they balance, negotiate the willow tunnel and ride bikes and scooters on the hard surfaces. The school field is used to good advantage for walks and free movement, such as running and ball games. Staff help children understand the benefits of exercise by thinking about the effects of exertion on their bodies. Dance and movement to music is enjoyed indoors or outside, with ribbon sticks for added dramatic effect. Children beam with delight as their rainbow ribbons stream around them, curling and twisting as they move their bodies. Children enjoy a very healthy and hearty mid-session snack to re-energise themselves.

They choose when to come to the snack table and are fully involved in preparing and serving the selection of different fruits, crackers, crumpets or toast, and milk or water to drink. Once they finish, children wash their own plate and cup before going off to play. Staff support them, modelling good table behaviour and encouraging lively conversation, using sign language as they communicate. Lunchtime is also a relaxed and social occasion, unhurried and supported by staff, who eat with the children. Healthy lunchboxes are encouraged and staff provide parents with ideas and suggestions for suitable foods. Where children have specific dietary needs or allergies, these are well known and catered for, so children are never offered unsuitable foods. Children learn to stay safe because staff remind them about how to move about with care and how to use the equipment safely. Fire drills teach children how to stay safe during an emergency evacuation and develop their confidence in dealing with events they may encounter. Visits from police and other emergency services help to familiarise children with the people who help them in real-life situations, so that when they encounter these in their own lives they are well prepared. When the time approaches for children to move on, they have phased visits to their new classroom, as the pre-school works very closely with the school.

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

Children's safeguarding is given the highest priority by staff, ensuring that every child's welfare and safety are considered at all times. The manager has a wealth of experience in dealing with safeguarding matters and ensures that every staff member is empowered to act on their own initiative to protect children. This is achieved through regularly updated training and discussions during staff meetings and supervisions. All staff are carefully vetted and checked for their suitability to work with children before employment commences. Staff undertake a stringent induction programme, closely mentored by a senior staff member, to ensure they understand, and can complete, their roles and responsibilities appropriately. The pre-school environment is kept safe and secure and any repairs are attended to promptly, so children only access suitable and safe equipment. This allows children to take risks and challenge themselves in a controlled, supportive environment. Any outings undertaken beyond the school grounds are carefully assessed in advance and planned to ensure children remain safe.

The senior staff take a key role in overseeing and monitoring the educational programme. This includes meticulously checking that the planning is covering all areas of learning and that staff are clear on what they want children to gain from activities. Continual new innovations, resources and ideas ensure that the pre-school environment remains dynamic and an exciting place for children. As part of the ongoing improvement programme, staff have identified a potential learning improvement and have decided to use a recent award to purchase further information and communication technology. This will enhance and expand children's experiences in using different media, such as a digital cameras and a video recorder.

The manager uses an electronic monitoring system to track the progress of every child and various groups of children. All staff have been specifically trained to use this to effectively track their key children's progress. This identifies areas where children are

doing well, or where they are not making the best progress, and enables plans to be immediately put into place to bridge any gaps. The senior staff also organise and carry out regular supervision and appraisals for staff. These provide staff with the opportunity to reflect on their practice and discuss any training needs or wishes. The manager is particularly skilled in teasing out staff's strengths and talents, and ensuring that these are used to the best possible effect. For example, staff with art and design skills ensure that displays are high quality and an exciting learning resource for children. The manager is highly dedicated and inspires staff with her enthusiasm and drive to improve this outstanding pre-school. All staff are highly motivated and clearly enjoy interacting with and teaching the children. Self-evaluation is a continuous process of an active development plan with tasks and challenging but achievable goals designed to build on the excellent practice.

A strength of the pre-school is the exemplary partnerships with parents. The manager is passionate in her pursuit of excellence and sees parents as her main resource in helping children to achieve the best possible progress. To this end, she values the relationship from the very first contact and seeks parents' views on every aspect of the pre-school operation. Grandparents are not forgotten and are invited on special days to share the children's fun and learning. Parents are very satisfied with the care and education their children receive. Some choose to travel so that their child can attend. A very strong committee includes parent representatives who support the staff with administrative duties and managing recruitment and fundraising. Partnerships with outside organisations and professionals are well established where these are required to support children. The area special educational needs coordinator is a regular visitor and assists in working out support programmes for individual children, or securing external agency help where this is identified as a need. As a result, every child's needs are expertly 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	251516
Local authority	Suffolk
Inspection number	818398
Type of provision	
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 5
Total number of places	32
Number of children on roll	76
Name of provider	Heathlands Community Pre-School Committee
Date of previous inspection	09/12/2008
Telephone number	01473 417517

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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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Piccadilly Gate
Store St
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M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234
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