

First Class Preschool

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number EY335188
Inspection date 27/01/2011
Inspector Janet Keeling

Setting address Houldsworth Valley County Primary School, Rowley Drive,
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Type of setting Childcare on non-domestic premises

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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

First Class Pre-school re-registered at their current location in 2006. The pre-school is privately owned and operates from a classroom within Houldsworth Valley Primary School in Newmarket, Suffolk. Children have access to an enclosed outdoor play area. It serves children and families from the local and surrounding areas. A maximum of 26 children from two to eight years may attend the pre-school at any one time. The pre-school currently takes children from two to five years of age and is open Monday to Friday from 8.30am to 3.30pm, during school term times.

There are currently 69 children on roll, all of whom are within the early years age group. The pre-school receives funding for early years education. It is able to support children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and children who speak English as an additional language. The pre-school is registered by Ofsted on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register.

There are eight members of staff who work directly with the children. Of these, four hold a qualification at level 3 in early years and two hold a level 2. The deputy manager holds a level 4 qualification in early years and is currently working towards a level 5. The pre-school receives support from the local authority.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children are happy and eager to learn at this very welcoming and lively pre-school. Staff are caring, work well as a team and strive to offer an inclusive service where all children are valued as individuals. Children make good progress towards the early learning goals through a varied and interesting range of activities. Safeguarding measures are largely effective and thorough. Effective partnerships with parents and other agencies have been established, ensuring continuity of care for all children. The pre-school is led and managed by a dedicated and enthusiastic manager. The pre-school's developing self-evaluation process ensures it is well placed to secure sustained and continuous improvement.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- extend risk assessments further so that they cover everything with which a child may come into contact, this specifically refers to the kitchen door and to the safe storage of refuse bins
- develop further the process of self-evaluation in order to identify the pre-school's strengths and priorities for development that will improve the quality of provision for all children.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children are safeguarded effectively. Staff are competent, demonstrate a good understanding of their roles and responsibilities and child protection procedures. They know who to contact should they be concerned about a child in their care. There are effective recruitment and vetting procedures in place to ensure that children are cared for by suitable people. Written fire procedures are clear and staff make sure that children engage in emergency evacuation procedures. Staff routinely verify the identity of all visitors to the pre-school and are vigilant about the safe arrival and collection of children. All required documentation is in place and well maintained. Risk assessments are completed and cover most aspects of the indoor and outdoor learning environment and outings, but the daily risk assessments do not clearly demonstrate what action has been taken to minimise the hazards in relation to the storage of large refuse bins in the outdoor play area and the safety of the kitchen door. However, children are well supervised, as the deployment of resources and staff is good. For example, staff are successfully deployed to support the children's care and well-being and make good use of space and resources.

Staff work well as a team, are positive role models and strive to improve their practice. The pre-school has successfully completed the Suffolk Quality Assurance Award. Recommendations made at the previous inspection have been addressed and have improved outcomes for children. Systems to monitor and evaluate the pre-school's strengths and areas for development are in place, although these are not regularly updated to provide staff with a complete picture of the pre-school's provision. There is a pro-active and shared vision for inclusive practice, ensuring that every child is fully included and integrated into pre-school life. Staff ensure that the provision is adapted to meet the changing needs of the children who attend. They are committed towards continuing their own professional development and regularly attend relevant training courses to improve their knowledge and skills. Consequently, children's care and well-being are further enhanced.

Partnerships with parents are good. Children benefit from the warm and relaxed relationships that have been established between their parents and the staff. The daily exchange of information ensures that children's changing needs are consistently met, particularly for those children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language. A parent's notice board ensures that parents and carers have access to information about the running of the group. In addition, staff use a white board each day to record the activities that children have been engaged in during the session. Parents speak very highly of the pre-school and comment that they find the staff approachable, caring and very supportive. They also said that their children are happy, settled and safe. The manager and staff work successfully in partnership with other early years settings and the host school, and have developed positive links with the reception class teacher. Consequently, this has a positive impact on

the children's future needs as many of the children move on to attend the school where they will see familiar adults and recognise their new learning environment.

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

Children are comfortable within their learning environment. They settle quickly on arrival and appear eager to learn. They have many opportunities to make choices about their own play and learning as they freely access a range of activities and resources, both indoors and outdoors. There is a good balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities that result in children being active learners. Children interact very positively with their peers and are keen to share their ideas with their friends and staff. All children are valued and treated with equal concern, with any specific requirements being met sensitively through discussion with parents and other professionals. On admission to the pre-school an 'all about me' form is completed, ensuring that children's individual needs are supported. Staff observe children, listen carefully to what they say and record information on a daily basis. All children have 'learning folders', which contain both photographic and written information of children's learning, achievements and records of children's own work. These folders are available for parents to see at any time.

Children access a wide range of first-hand learning experiences. For example, they chuckle with delight as they identify various recorded sounds. Children listen carefully and call out their ideas, such as, 'it's a pig', 'it's thunder', and, 'that's someone cleaning their teeth'. They are developing a love for books as they independently access a good range of titles in the cosy book corner. They carefully turn the pages and share their picture story with a friend, before placing it gently back on the stand. They enjoy music and movement and join in happily with a range of songs and action rhymes. There is great excitement as the children sing 'Wind the Bobbin Up', 'Twinkle Twinkle Little Star' and 'You Are My Sunshine'. Their creativity is fully supported through access to a range of good role play equipment, construction toys, chinks, paints, sand, water and dough. Outdoors, in the creative area, a small group of children thoroughly enjoy helping to mix the 'gloop'. Afterwards they use it to make patterns with their fingers, while talking about how it feels. Their understanding of numbers, size and shapes is developing well through everyday activities. They count how many children are present, competently recognise shapes and count how many pretend chocolate cakes they make in the sand. They enjoy being in the fresh air and relish the outdoor play opportunities. Children explore their natural environment and plant tomatoes, beans and sunflowers. Their physical development is supported very well as they confidently pedal bikes, skilfully throw and catch balls and balance on scooters. They also benefit from planned visits into the local community to places, such as the library. The group also welcomes regular visitors who help and support children's understanding of the wider world, for example police officers and a dental nurse.

Children are secure and develop a sense of belonging at the pre-school. They behave well and respond positively to the boundaries set, such as helping to tidy up after games. Gentle reminders from staff help children develop a sense of right

and wrong, as they are encouraged to share, take turns and be kind to each other. They are beginning to develop an understanding of the wider world through access to resources that are representative of diversity and by celebrating cultural festivals throughout the year. Effective hygiene procedures minimise the risk of cross infection. Children enjoy healthy snacks each day. For example, they choose from a wide range of fresh fruit, bread sticks, crackers and cheese spread. They also freely access drinking water throughout the session. Staff encourage children to keep themselves safe as they discuss the appropriate use of equipment and engage in regular emergency evacuation procedures. Children demonstrate that they are acquiring skills that will help them in the future and prepare them for their transition from the pre-school into school.

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