

Lavenham Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspector Fiona Robinson

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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

Lavenham Pre-school registered in 1995 and is managed by a voluntary committee made up of parents of children at the pre-school. It operates from the dinner hall at Lavenham Community Primary School, in Lavenham, Suffolk. All children have access to a secure, outdoor play area. The pre-school supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and those who speak English as an additional language. It is registered with Ofsted on the Early Years Register and the voluntary and compulsory parts of the Childcare Register.

A maximum of 20 children aged from two to under eight years may attend at any one time. There are currently 22 children on roll, all of whom are in the early years age range. The pre-school receives funding for early education places. It is open from 9am to 11.45am each Monday to Friday during term time only. Children attend for a variety of the sessions on offer.

The pre-school currently employs five members of staff, three of whom hold National Vocational Qualifications (NVQ) at level 3, or the equivalent. One member of staff has a NVQ at level 2. 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 achieve well because activities are well organised and they respond well to the care and support they are given. Information is shared very effectively with parents and carers, and there are good partnerships with the host school and outside agencies. Children are fully included in indoor and outdoor activities. The manager and staff have a clear knowledge of the pre-school's strengths and areas for improvement, such as developing the use of the outdoor area. There is a good record of continued improvement and the pre-school is well placed to improve in the future.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- provide additional opportunities for children to use information and communication technology and programmable toys to support their learning
- develop problem solving and sensory experiences in the wider outdoor environment.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Staff have an excellent understanding of safeguarding and child protection issues. They regularly undertake thorough risk assessments to keep the indoor and outdoor areas safe and secure. Comprehensive policies, procedures and documentation are fully implemented and there are robust recruitment and vetting procedures in place to ensure children are kept safe. Staff are deployed very effectively to ensure children are fully supervised, while encouraged to show safe levels of independence. Parents and staff are aware of the rigorous collection procedures and these are followed carefully. The outdoor area is enclosed and well-maintained. Children have access to a good range of resources and equipment that are safe and suitable for their age.

Partnerships with parents and carers are outstanding because staff keep them very well informed of their children's achievements and progress. They meet regularly with staff to share children's assessment records and learning records. These are taken home on a termly basis for parents and carers to enjoy and comment on. Staff involve parents in their children's learning through informal discussions, newsletters and the parents' notice board. Parents comment that their children enjoy learning in a fun-filled environment and that staff are very caring and highly approachable. They are encouraged to participate in special events, such as the Christmas Fayre and Easter Fayre, and are very supportive of fundraising activities. Partnerships with the school are good because the pre-school benefits from the use of well maintained premises. Information is shared effectively and the children regularly visit the school to share experiences, such as 'golden time'. The pre-school has also established effective links with other settings and the local authority, which contribute to the good levels of care all children receive.

The pre-school is well-led and managed. There are good self-evaluation systems in place, which ensure that the views of parents and carers are taken into consideration when identifying priorities for improvement. Good progress has been made in addressing the recommendations of the previous inspection. In particular, there are rigorous assessment and monitoring procedures in place. These ensure children's progress is carefully recorded, and information is used effectively to plan the next steps in learning. Staff provide sensitive support for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and there are good links with outside agencies. They work hard to ensure children are included equally in activities. Staff make effective use of a good range of resources to meet the needs of the children. However, planning indicates that children do not make full use of a wider range of technology, such as the digital camera, to record and share their experiences. Also, opportunities for children to explore and investigate their natural environment are not fully developed. Staff plan together and clearly identify what works well, such as free-flow play in the outdoor area, and outline areas for improvement.

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

All children benefit from well-organised and purposeful play and achieve well. Staff put careful thought into their planning and value the children's ideas by including these in the choice of activities. Exciting themes, such as 'under the sea' and 'spring' enhance their experiences. These result in colourful displays of children's artwork, which make the environment bright and welcoming.

Children are well-behaved and are encouraged to show respect for others. Staff have high expectations and are very good role models. Children learn right from wrong and respect the golden rules, which are consistently reinforced by staff. They have good relationships with each other and cooperate well as they plant flowers in their outdoor area. They share toys and resources sensibly and show respect for others. Staff actively promote children's independence and encourage them to make their own choices. Festivals such as Diwali, Christmas, the Chinese New Year and Easter enrich children's experiences and give them a good appreciation of other cultures, lifestyles and customs. Children enjoy role play in their Chinese restaurant and sampling noodles and prawn crackers. Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and those who speak English as an additional language, are supported well in their learning.

Children develop a good understanding of keeping themselves healthy and know the importance of exercise. They have fun as they dance, balance on equipment and ride bicycles. They learn how to make healthy choices at snack time by helping to prepare fruit salads and independently pouring their own drinks. They enjoy planting and growing their own potatoes, carrots and runner beans in their outdoor area. Due to the staff's excellent safeguarding measures, children feel extremely safe and secure. Fire evacuation procedures are practised regularly and discussed so that the children are familiar with the routine. They use equipment safely as they make shortbread biscuits and select their own toppings for their toast while showing high levels of care and consideration for other's safety. Children also benefit from talks on keeping safe from the staff and the police service.

Children enjoy a wide range of activities to stimulate their learning and development. They use their imaginations well as they take part in a bear hunt game. Their creative skills are developed well as they make a wonderful collage of a scene from a favourite story and create a colourful Chinese dragon. They enjoy searching for insects in their immediate outdoor area. However, opportunities for problem solving and sensory experiences in the wider natural environment are more limited, which impacts on the development of these skills. They listen attentively to traditional stories, such as 'Goldilocks and the Three Bears' and are keen to discuss the characters. Most children can count up to twenty and beyond and they enjoy practising their counting skills through songs. Their communication, language and literacy skills are developed well and they enjoy writing letters and posting them. They cooperate well as they make food for the birds and enjoy mixing colours for their paintings. Children are keen to design obstacle courses for one another and enjoy being active. They also benefit from local walks around their village. Overall, children are prepared well for future learning experiences.

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	1
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	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	1
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