

Our Lady's Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number 220265
Inspection date 23/09/2010
Inspector Parm Sansoyer

Setting address Henshaw Road, Wellingborough, Northants, NN8 2BE

Telephone number 01933 276362

Email

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*.

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Description of the setting

Our Lady's Pre-school opened in January 1999. It operates from an annexe within Our Lady's Catholic Infant School in Wellingborough. The pre-school serves the local area. All children have access to a fully enclosed area.

A maximum of 18 children may attend the setting at any one time. The setting opens five days a week during school term time. Currently there are 35 children on roll. Sessions are from 8.45am to 11.45am and 12.30pm to 3.30pm, with a lunch club from 11.45am to 12.25pm. The provision is registered by Ofsted on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. The setting is in receipt of funding for the provision of free early years education to children aged three and four-years-old. Children attend for a variety of sessions.

The pre-school employs seven members of staff. All hold an appropriate early years qualification. The pre-school receives support from the local authority and is a member of the Pre-School Learning Alliance (PSLA).

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Staff's good knowledge of the Early Years Foundation Stage guidance promotes children's learning and well-being very effectively. An interesting, well equipped and welcoming environment fully reflects the children's backgrounds and the wider community. High quality planning and a staff team who are skilled at promoting positive attitudes to learning help children to make good progress in their learning and development. All children are supervised well, kept safe and safeguarded because most of the staff team have a good understanding of child protection issues. Relationships with parents and carers are very strong. Effective partnerships with other settings that the children may attend and agencies involved with them contribute significantly towards ensuring that the needs of all children are met well. Consequently, the setting 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:

- develop further staff's understanding of safeguarding children issues
- develop further the use of the Ofsted self-evaluation form and quality improvement process to help more successfully benchmark practice and to continue to strive for excellence.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

There are clear, written policies and procedures in place to ensure the safeguarding and welfare of children. A designated member of staff has clear management responsibility in relation to child protection and all staff are aware of this. All staff, with the exception of one new member of the team, know and understand clearly their roles and responsibilities in relation to safeguarding children. There are effective procedures in place to ensure adults caring for children or having unsupervised access to them are suitably qualified and experienced. All records, policies and procedures required for the safe and efficient management of the service and to meet the needs of all children are in place and regularly reviewed. A well-motivated staff team supervise children well and give good priority to keeping children safe. There are robust written risk assessments of the environment which are reviewed regularly.

A well organised educational programme which offers planned, purposeful play and exploration of both the indoor and outdoor environment, results in children being active and creative learners. The outdoor area is particularly well-resourced and imaginatively laid out, with children's learning creatively planned for. All adults are deployed well to support children's learning and welfare. For example, at the beginning of the Autumn term when many children first start, extra staff are deployed. Each nominated key person spends time getting to know their children, helping them settle whilst making systematic observations of their interests and achievements. Rigorous assessment continues throughout the year and the information gained is used effectively to guide planning. Planning accommodates a balance of child-initiated play and adult-led activities, which help the children to make good progress towards the early learning goals.

The setting has a highly positive relationship with parents and carers. They are actively involved in decision making and both parents and children are involved in the self-evaluation process by contributing their views and suggestions. For example, the quality assurance scheme and the Every Child a Talker scheme has helped the staff focus on collating the views of both parents and their children. Staff use this information well to extend the provision and meet children's individual needs. Parents are kept extremely well informed about the provision and regularly receive detailed information about their children's activities. Notice boards are useful and act as good reminders for parents, which encourages them to contribute to the many topics, themes and events occurring at the setting. Parents are kept very well informed about all aspects of their children's achievements and progress. Links with the school and other settings that the children may attend are strong. Partnerships with other agencies are effectively established to help support all children.

The strong management and committed and dedicated staff team are enthusiastic about the setting. Since the last inspection, there has been a change of premises and the staff team work continuously, testing new ideas and questioning practice, to make the most of the new learning environment. They recognise the value of continuous quality improvement through self-evaluation and informed discussion to

identify the setting's strengths and priorities for development. For example, by using the Effective Early Learning Programme Quality Assurance Scheme and having positive links with the local authority development worker, they regularly monitor activities in relation to the provision and outcomes. They are keen to use the Ofsted self-evaluation form and are becoming familiar with it to help them more successfully benchmark their practice and continue to strive for excellence.

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

Children's personal, social and emotional development is supported very well at the setting. All children develop close relationships which are warm and caring with both adults and each other. All children are involved, busy and occupied with the wide range of opportunities on offer to them within this exciting and stimulating environment. They are developing their confidence very well as they busily move around their environment and staff offer good support to get them all actively involved. Children achieve well because staff focus on supporting all of the children and respond well to their individual needs. This means all children develop a keen interest to explore and become active and creative learners. Children are extremely well behaved and learn about sharing and taking turns.

Children's communication, language and literacy skills are supported well. The environment, both indoors and outdoors, incorporates resources to effectively promote early writing skills for both boys and girls. For example, many boys who prefer being outdoors develop an interest in early writing skills using wall mounted chalk boards and the easel. Children develop a keen interest in books because some staff are extremely skilled in encouraging children to engage with stories. For example, outdoors, a group of children enjoyed a story with interesting visual aids to keep their focus and another group acted out 'Little Red Riding Hood' whilst wearing a red cape and carrying a basket. Children benefit from the time spent with staff which focuses on developing their spoken language and developing their listening skills through sharing conversations and their stories both on a one-to-one basis and in groups.

The children's knowledge and understanding of the world is supported well to help them make sense of the world. Children engage in a wide range of experiences in which they encounter creatures, people, plants and objects in their natural environment and real-life situations. Good first-hand experiences enrich the children's learning. For example, children have observed chicks hatch in the incubator and have been planting and growing flowers, vegetables and herbs. They begin to explore, experiment, observe and predict through early scientific experiments, baking activities and through learning about changes in their natural environment. Children from a variety of ethnic backgrounds are warmly welcomed and learn to respect each other's differences and customs. Children gain an understanding of diversity through themed activities and access a varied range of resources, such as books, dolls, and small world people, dressing up clothes, pictures and posters.

Children's problem-solving, reasoning and numeracy skills are building well. They

seek patterns, make connections and recognise relationships through finding out about and working with numbers, counting, sorting and matching. Children have opportunities to experience weighing and measuring activities and to consider concepts such as floating and sinking through meaningful, practical experiences, for instance when playing with the water and sand. They enjoy a wide range of experiences to express their creativity and imagination through experiencing a variety of arts and crafts materials and engaging in role play.

There are high expectations of behaviour and children develop excellent habits and manners due to the constant praise and encouragement they receive. Children behave in ways that are safe for themselves and others and are developing an understanding of dangers and how to stay safe. Staff follow robust hygiene practices, which allow children to enjoy a clean and hygienic environment. Children benefit greatly from the access to fresh air and the outdoor environment, which they can access throughout the session. Children have an outstanding understanding of the importance of healthy eating and enjoy a substantial snack during the morning session, which is healthy and nutritious. They develop an understanding of making healthy choices when they eat and drink through discussion and themed activities. They successfully develop skills that contribute to their future economic well-being through making very good progress in their communication, language, literacy and learning how to work independently and with their peers, which contributes significantly to helping children develop 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	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	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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