

Ugborough and Bittaford Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspector Leorna Mathias

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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*.

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Description of the setting

Ugborough and Bittaford Pre-School (formerly Ugborough Under Fives) opened in 1994. It is held in the main room of the Village Hall. The group use the playground of the neighbouring primary school for outside play. Children attend from the local community and surrounding areas.

The group is registered on the Early Years Register and may care for no more than twenty children at any one time. The group is open Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday from 9.00am to 12:45pm, and on Wednesdays from 9.00am until 2.00pm. On Mondays children preparing to begin school receive extra support, which includes visits to the reception class in Ugborough Primary School. At present there are 22 children enrolled, all of whom are in the early years age group. Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and English as an additional language can be supported. The group is run by a voluntary committee, and currently employs four staff; one holds Early Years Professional Status, a further two hold a level three qualification and the remaining member is working towards a level three qualification.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is outstanding.

The particularly able staff team and enthusiastic voluntary committee have worked very hard to create a delightful learning environment for the children in their community. Children are fully engaged throughout the session, as planning for activities carefully tracks their individual interests and capabilities, and adults are highly skilled at entering into children's worlds and extending their play in meaningful ways. A strong vision for the future of the group is held by all, and the ongoing professional development of the whole team is very much promoted through training and other measures. There are close working relationships with the families of cared-for children, and genuine partnerships with other providers and outside professionals so that children enjoy high levels of continuity of care, and any particular needs are quickly met.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To further improve the high quality early years provision the registered person should consider:

- exploring further ways to record and use reflections on adult practice to the benefit of children

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Strong policies and procedures underpin the practice of the group in regard to their safeguarding responsibilities. Risk assessments are thorough and are regularly reviewed, as the team work closely with the village hall committee to ensure all aspects of safety are maintained. Staff supervise children closely at all times, and employ good strategies for managing safety as children walk to the local school or post office, for example. Staff also carry out their child protection responsibilities very well, ensuring that they attend regular, detailed update training and follow through any concerns with all relevant outside agencies.

The group benefits from both a settled, well-qualified and motivated staff team and an enthusiastic and dynamic committee. All hold a clear vision for the pre-school, and are ambitious for the future, for example, with plans to extend opening hours and construct a new building. All adults involved in the group possess strong skills of self-evaluation, which are used to compile an ongoing action plan which is implemented promptly, bringing further benefits to children. For example, recent plans to improve the display of children's work have been actioned, thus allowing children further opportunities to take pride in, and reflect upon the learning within, recent pieces of work. At the same time, adults acknowledge that their systems for recording and using their reflections upon their own practice sometimes lack formality, recognising how changes to this process may bring further dividends to their charges. Appraisals are meaningful and regular, allowing staff to highlight training needs, which are then met in full. Staff are then able to share their learning amongst the team, so that children benefit continuously from the developing skills of their carers. For example, a recent opportunity to develop knowledge of schemas at the Pen Green Nursery allowed one staff member to illicit changes upon her return, across the staff team, that have enriched the children's play and learning experiences.

Parents enjoy excellent relationships with the staff caring for their children. They access detailed written and verbal feedback about how their child is progressing, as well as regular open days that provide extended opportunities to discuss their child's development, and to gain insight into how the group is run. They also respond to regular questionnaires about their satisfaction levels, the content of which is used to inform the ongoing action plans of the group. Beyond this, parents are encouraged to share children's achievements in the home on the group's 'Wow' board, further boosting children's self esteem and enabling parents to recognise their role in child's education. The staff team are similarly skilled at forging strong working partnerships with a range of outside professionals and with the neighbouring school in order to ensure that the full range of children's needs are met.

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

Children are making very good progress towards the early learning goals in all six areas of learning. Aply supported by a skilled and focused team of adults, children make the most of every learning opportunity and are frequently to be found concentrating for significant periods of time on their chosen activities, co-operating fully with their peers, and demonstrating genuine enjoyment of their learning. They are developing strong vocabularies, and delight in using books independently and as a group at story time, showing familiarity with a range of age appropriate stories, such as *The Gruffalo*. They are quickly learning to recognise their own names and other simple words in print, through the well-planned self-register as they arrive, the daily snack menu, and at other times throughout the session. They communicate well throughout their play, using language to share their thinking and their imaginative input, for example, as they talk about the cars they have made for superheroes to drive or the animals found in the rainforest. Number recognition and counting are routinely built into many parts of the session, and as such children are confident in their use. They count themselves at circle time, identify printed numbers correctly and can solve problems, for example, observing that they don't have enough fingers and thumbs to count up to fifteen. Children have frequent opportunities to learn about the world around them, using interesting equipment such as binoculars, cameras and weighing scales, as well as making purposeful use of information technology equipment that uses programs that promote their understanding across a number of areas of learning. Children also develop a sensitive awareness of other cultures, learning simple words from other languages, and celebrating the festivals of other societies as well as their own. An excellent range of resources enables children to give full flight to their imaginations as they play, and as adults are very familiar with each child's interests, they can organise resources so as to engage every child fully. Large blocks are used for many purposes, role play areas encourage extended periods of imaginative play and there are frequent opportunities to paint, draw and make across the week. Children relish opportunities to sing songs and recite nursery rhymes, showing familiarity with a broad range of traditional and contemporary songs and verses. Exploring sounds and noise with heuristic play items, such as pots and pans, is also encouraged. Similarly, children have regular opportunities to explore colour texture and taste through innovative activities, such as making 'scrambled snake' (scrambled eggs) on a camp fire stove, trying a range of Chinese foods and recording their preferences, and talking about the colours one might see in the rainforest.

Adults are very skilled at entering into children's worlds and effectively promoting their development, across the areas of learning, throughout the session. They bring their considerable training and knowledge to bear at all times, for example, by building on their detailed observations of what children do and targeting their support for them during free play. For example, one child brings in a toy rabbit, and this prompts adults to provide the farmyard with different types of animal 'homes', and delightful discussions ensue. Assessment and observation of each child at the setting is thorough and regular, and this vital information is used to excellent effect as adults plan future activities that are tailored to enable each child to make

further progress. Beyond this, the team share information about their key children with each other during weekly email discussions and very regular meetings, thus ensuring that all adults in the setting are aware of every child's current areas of interest or particular challenges. During these exchanges adults also reflect on their own input, seeking feedback from their colleagues so as to contribute the clear cycle of continuous improvement that defines the group's ethos.

Creating an inclusive setting a clear priority for the staff team. They have overcome the limitations of a shared use building to create a learning environment that enables all to fully participate. Staff are skilled at supporting children with any emerging Special Educational Needs and / or physical disabilities, completing regular training in this area. Staff also employ strategies that enable children to give of their best, and thus incidents of challenging behaviour are rare and sensitively managed. As a result, children are free to concentrate on their skills development and learning through meaningful play, and are further supported in this as they attend regular sessions with the Foundation Stage class of the neighbouring school, which in turns smoothes their transition to school in a most effective way.

Documentation which underpins the maintenance of children's good health is kept in very good order, and high levels of hygiene are promoted throughout the setting. Children know how to wash their hands after toileting, and why this matters. Well planned and managed snack times allow children to be involved in the preparation of their own food, talking about what is healthy as they do so. They are also learning to manage their own safety and welfare, encouraged as they are to think about what clothes they need to put on for outside play, how to walk safely from the group to the school, and learning about keeping safe from relevant visitors to the group, such as community police officers or fire service men and women. They also participate in daily risk assessments for the group within the building, and can identify emergency exits and hazards that need remedying, as a result.

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?	1
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	1

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	1
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	1
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	1
The effectiveness of safeguarding	1
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	1
The effectiveness of partnerships	1
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	1

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

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Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	1
The extent to which children feel safe	1
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	1

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