

# Hexton Village Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Unique reference number</b>	EY298449
<b>Inspection date</b>	24/10/2008
<b>Inspector</b>	Paula Jane Hayhow

<b>Setting address</b>	St Faiths Centre Church, Hexton, Hitchin, Hertfordshire, SG5 3JN
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<b>Telephone number</b>	01582 881481
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<b>Email</b>	
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<b>Type of setting</b>	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 report includes information on any complaints about the childcare provision which Ofsted has received since the last inspection or registration whichever is the later, which require Ofsted or the provider to take action in Annex C.

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).

## **Description of the setting**

Hexton Village Playgroup opened in 1983 and is run by a voluntary management committee. It operates from the main hall in St. Faiths Community Centre in the village of Hexton in Hertfordshire. A ramp to the main entrance means that the premises are easily accessible. Children have access to the fully enclosed outdoor play area.

The setting is open each weekday during term-time and sessions are from 9:15 to 11:45. A maximum of 12 children may attend the setting at any one time. There are 12 places for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage and there are currently 16 children attending who are within this age group. The group is only registered on the Early Years Register. Most of the children live locally or in the surrounding villages. Five children attend other settings such as a pre-school and childminders.

There are two staff members. Of these, one holds a relevant childcare qualifications and one is completing training to achieve a level 3 grading in childcare.

## **Overall effectiveness of the early years provision**

Hexton Village Playgroup provides effectively for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage. The flexible system of planning, which is revised daily, ensures that the children enjoy their time at the playgroup and make steady progress in their learning. The staff create a generally safe and welcoming environment, building secure relationships with the children ensuring that every child benefits from a stimulating range of activities. The management committee, some of whom are parents and the play leader are aware of the strengths and areas for improvement within the setting. They are working to improve their monitoring procedures striving to improve the experiences of the children who attend the group.

## **What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?**

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

- develop links with all other settings providing for children in the EYFS and ensure that parents are supported in the learning programme which can be extended in the home
- develop risk assessments to include outings and premises and ensure that the daily check list includes protecting children from harmful items in the kitchen drawers, cupboards, uncovered socket covers, free-standing heaters and outdoor paving slabs and plants
- ensure that playgroup policies and procedures are reviewed regularly, updated in line with current information and made readily available to parents
- ensure that children have access to drinking water at all times

- ensure that observational assessment are routinely updated, in line with the Early Years Foundation Stage and include the child's starting point in order to highlight and plan to meet each child's individual need.

## **The leadership and management of the early years provision**

Effective safeguarding policies ensure that children are well protected. For example, the vetting procedures and induction processes are soundly adhered to. The provider has implemented some systems to monitor and evaluate the provision and devised action plans to ensure that improvements are made where necessary. However, some procedures have not been implemented such as the risk assessment of outings and the daily safety check does not identify the hazardous items in the kitchen and garden. The setting runs smoothly on a day to day basis where resources are well used, stimulating and meeting the needs of the children attending. The provider has improved the setting's procedure for safe collection of children and also staff understanding of safeguarding children. This ensures that the recommendations made at the last inspection have been dealt with.

The play leader is committed to improving her knowledge base and that of her staff. Staff have recently undertaken a puppet making and sign language course. Both staff members have completed their Senco training. Policies and procedures are in place but are not routinely reviewed or made readily available which could lead to incorrect information being given to parents. The provision has established partnerships with some other agencies to support ongoing development such as the local school. However, they are sometimes less informed about the interests and abilities of children who attend other settings delivering the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) such as pre-schools and childminders. Relationships with parents are positive, with letters, open days and notices being displayed to inform parents of the playgroup's activities and procedures. Parents are involved in fund raising which aids the group's resources and parents are happy to share their skills with children by encouraging their understanding of subject such as being a baker and how to make bread.

## **The quality and standards of the early years provision**

Children are offered varied opportunities to help them progress and develop across all areas of learning and development. Staff plan activities based around themes such as the 'alphabet', 'pets' and the 'Hungry Caterpillar'. Children's learning is encouraged through discussion and spontaneous explanations as well as focused activities to extend their learning. Staff record children's attainments and this is generally fed into assessment profiles. Staff plan daily, being clear about the next step the children are working towards. However, some profiles are not set up in line with the EYFS and are not kept up to date with current information. Staff use practical methods to gain information from parents but this is not detailed enough to inform either the starting levels for children or used in the ongoing dialogue to inform the planning. This means that children are not fully supported to reach their full potential.

During activities the staff support children well having a good understanding of child development. They encourage children to be observant and extend their knowledge through discussion on subjects raised during the session or at story time. For example, children routinely count items such as pumpkin seeds and the spots on balls or dice. They recognise telephone numbers and enjoy pretending to hide from the moon when following story lines. They developing their vocabulary with words such as 'hollow', 'inside' and 'chirped' and can routinely recognise their name and what letter it begins with. Children are given opportunities to be independent and caring of each other such as making solid relationships and friends. For example, children are encouraged to pass toys when asked, save places for their friends, read stories together and be helpful by picking up dropped toys. Children engage in role play independently, dressing up, developing tea parties, organising offices or pretend hospital. They enjoy bandaging patients and gain an understanding of how stethoscopes work through discussion and practice. Children sing enthusiastically and show a clear enjoyment of music and rhythm through spontaneous singing during the session and there is a song for every activity from 'this is the way we pack the toys away', 'wipe our feet' or hold our books'.

The staff have a sound understanding of creating a safe and welcoming environment in which risk is minimised and children learn to take care of themselves. For example they practice road safety on their walks in the village to the café for a snack or the post office to buy stamps. The staff have an effective understanding of child protection and are able to implement their policies appropriately. Staff have a clear understanding of healthy eating and children are offered a sensible selection of foods which include smoothies, fruit, cheese and cucumber. However, whilst the children have drinks at snack time, water is not readily available at any other time which could impact on children if thirsty. Children make good use of the identified outdoor play area to develop their love of the natural world and to promote their confidence on balancing and climbing equipment. For example, children love to watch the moorhens on the pond, use their binoculars to spot herons or recognise the robins and finches particular bird song whilst they feed.

## Annex A: record of inspection judgements

### The key inspection judgements and what they mean

*Outstanding: this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality*

*Good: this aspect of the provision is strong*

*Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound*

*Inadequate: this aspect of the provision is not good enough*

### Overall effectiveness

<b>How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?</b>	Satisfactory
How well does the provision promote inclusive practice?	Satisfactory
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement.	Satisfactory

### Leadership and management

<b>How effectively is provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?</b>	Satisfactory
How effective is the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement?	Satisfactory
How well does the setting work in partnership with parents and others?	Satisfactory
How well are children safeguarded?	Satisfactory

### Quality and standards

<b>How effectively are children in the Early Years Foundation Stage helped to learn and develop?</b>	Satisfactory
<b>How effectively is the welfare of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage promoted?</b>	Satisfactory
How well are children helped to stay safe?	Satisfactory
How well are children helped to be healthy?	Satisfactory
How well are children helped to enjoy and achieve?	Satisfactory
How well are children helped to make a positive contribution?	Satisfactory
How well are children helped develop skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being?	Satisfactory

Any complaints about the inspection or report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance available from Ofsted's website:  
[www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

## **Annex C: complaint/s made to Ofsted**

This section of the report includes details of any complaint/s made to Ofsted when:

- we took action for the provider to meet the requirements of the Early Years Register; or
- we asked the provider to take action in order to meet the requirements of the Early Years Register; or
- the provider had already taken any necessary action to meet the requirements of the Early Years Register.

We will not report on any complaint where the provider met the requirements of the Early Years Register or did not require any action by Ofsted or the registered provider.

### **Detail of the complaint/s**

There have been no complaints made to Ofsted since the last inspection.

The provider is required to keep a record of complaints made by parents, which they can see on request. The complaints record may contain complaints other than those made to Ofsted.