

Hexham Community Centre Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	301798
Inspection date	03/11/2008
Inspector	Carys Millican
Setting address	Gilesgate, Hexham, Northumberland, NE46 3NP
Telephone number	01434 602707
Email	
Type of setting	Childcare on non-domestic premises

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

Hexham Community Centre Playgroup opened in 1999 and is run by a management committee. It operates from a designated play room from within Hexham Community Centre. The playgroup operates each morning between 09.15 and 12.00, Mondays to Fridays, during term time only. Children use one main childcare room which is divided into learning areas. There is an enclosed outdoor play area available.

The playgroup is registered to care for a maximum of 24 children from two years to five years of age. There are currently 19 children on roll. The playgroup provides care for children who access funded nursery education. There are ground floor toilet facilities opposite the group room including an 'accessible' toilet. The playgroup currently supports children who speak English as an additional language.

The playgroup employs five staff who hold appropriate early years qualifications and a volunteer helper who is working towards a qualification. The playgroup is registered on the early years Register and is a member of the Pre-school Learning Alliance.

Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

The manager and staff provide a fascinating range of activities that help children make exceptionally good progress in all areas of their learning and development. The playgroup offers children and parents a welcoming and caring environment where children are happy and well motivated to learn. Children's individual needs are clearly recognised and valued. This enables children to develop their confidence and independence through the excellent support and care provided by the staff. The staff know the children well and follow their interests throughout the session to effectively promote children's play, learning and progress. The recently appointed manager and dedicated staff team have made significant improvements to the provision, and as a result promoted the outcomes for children.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- review the policies and procedures in line with the Early Years Foundation Stage guidance
- make sure the complaints procedure is clearly displayed for parents.

The leadership and management of the early years provision

Staff work exceptionally well as a team and carry out their duties with dedicated enthusiasm. The manager and staff are well qualified and experienced in the care

of children within the early year's age group. There is a strong commitment to their ongoing continuous professional development. Regular appraisals ensure staff's ongoing development needs are well met. Training is regularly attended by staff, who are enthused to develop their own skills and knowledge in early years. The manager ensures parents are involved with the playgroup by inviting them participate in special events and help on local outings. These positive links established with parents, other carers, local school and other professionals promote a shared approach to children's ongoing needs and development. Children benefit from a very effective key worker system. This supports children in their transition from home and enables them to quickly become settled and content.

Robust recruitment procedures ensure all adults working in the playgroup are safe and suitable. A detailed set of policies and procedures are available for parents and implemented by staff on a daily basis. However, these policies and procedures require updating in line with legislative changes and the complaints procedure is not clearly displayed. Staff have a good understanding and knowledge of the safeguarding procedures and attend regular training to ensure this remains current. All staff hold current Paediatric first aid certificates, therefore children are kept safe and well. Daily safety checks and written risk assessments mean children play in a safe and healthy environment. Information is shared with parents and carers through regular newsletters, a parents' notice board and daily contact.

The manager and staff are committed to ensuring all children are included and provide excellent opportunities for them to learn and develop. Significant steps have been taken to vastly improve the care and learning provided for the children. All the recommendations made from the previous inspection have been fully acted upon. There is a shared commitment by the staff to be involved in the written process of the self-evaluation system. Regular staff meetings already enables them to be effective in identifying areas which are working well and the areas they need to improve upon. The manager and staff have a clear vision for future improvements, such as the provision of a sensory area and development of the outside play area.

The quality and standards of the early years provision

Staff effectively support children's learning and development and provide them with an excellent range of opportunities and experiences that help them make exceptional progress in all areas of their learning. Information gained from observation and assessments is used to ensure that planned activities build on children's existing skills, interests and knowledge, which effectively helps them progress towards the next steps in their learning. Children benefit from sensitive support and encouragement from staff as they move around the well resourced learning areas and confidently choose what they want to play with. Staff support children in activities and encourage learning through play and through everyday experiences. Children are confident and have good self esteem established through the warmth and affection they receive from all staff.

Children laugh and giggle as they have fun and enjoyment within the many play opportunities created by staff in the playgroup. Children are made welcome on

arrival by staff who greet them by name and a friendly smile or cuddle. The environment is interesting and stimulating, warm and comfortable with examples of children's work, photographs and posters displayed that reflect the community and children's cultural and ethnic origins. Routine periods of free-flow play throughout the session enable children to explore freely and express their ideas and preferences. They enjoy circle time where they engage in conversation with each other and discuss feelings using puppets. They enjoy physical play in the hall using balls, hoops and ribbons or balancing on stepping stones. Staff use innovative ideas with the children, for example, children sing a song as they stretch and pull material and then one at a time hide underneath it as the other children decide which part of the person's body is protruding through.

Children enjoy active outdoor play each day and go for walks in the local area to visit the local parks and play areas. They explore the world around them and take part in community activities, such as the continental market where they went food tasting. Children use their imagination to create firework pictures using glitter and glue and make hand prints on large sheets of paper for the bonfire display. Children are well motivated and enthusiastic in their play and learning. Every day activities become learning opportunities for children because they are involved and encouraged by staff. Children gain healthy independence. They prepare their own snack each morning as they chop up the apple and bananas, and peel the orange. They explore number as they count the segments of apple and orange and how many plates they need or chairs. Children show concern for one another and pass each other their bottles of water and cartons of milk. Children explore information and communication technology competently using computer programmes and finding stored information.

Children learn about healthy living and effective hygiene practice through the good role models set by staff and through instruction. Children understand quite clearly why they must wash their hands before preparing food at snack time and after going to the toilet. They listen to staff as they explain about keeping safe on bonfire night and keeping animals safe from harm too. Parents express a high regard for the play group staff and service their children receive. They receive a wealth of useful information about their children's welfare and benefit from daily discussions with key workers. Parent's evenings are established and systems are in place that encourages parents to share in and contribute to their children's learning.

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

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

Leadership and management

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

Quality and standards

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

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

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.