

# Lowson Street Pre-School Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Unique reference number</b>	508117
<b>Inspection date</b>	15/10/2008
<b>Inspector</b>	Lindsey Pollock
<b>Setting address</b>	Lowson Street, Darlington, County Durham, DL3 0EY
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<b>Email</b>	
<b>Type of setting</b>	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**

Lowson Street Pre-School Playgroup opened in 1999. It operates from two rooms adjacent to Harrowgate Hill Methodist Church and has a secure outdoor play area. The pre-school serves the local and surrounding areas.

There are currently 27 children aged from two to three years on roll. Children attend for a variety of sessions. There are no children with learning difficulties and disabilities or with English as an additional language.

The pre-school opens five days a week during term time. Sessions are from 09.30 am to 12.00 pm.

Two full time staff and two part time staff work with the children. Three members of staff have an early years qualification. The pre-school receives support from the Early Years Development Childcare Partnership (EYDCP).

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

Children are cared for in a warm and welcoming environment where all are included and valued as individuals. They are provided with a range of interesting learning opportunities that enable them to make sound progress towards the early learning goals. Positive partnerships are being developed with parents; however, some aspects need to be extended more fully. Most safeguarding issues are satisfactorily met to keep children safe. The new manager is beginning to successfully use self-evaluation processes to help her maintain continuous improvement and promote outcomes for children.

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

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

- improve children's independent access to all resources including fresh drinking water, and organise staff deployment more effectively to fully support children's learning
- ensure all emergency exits are clearly marked
- improve the systems for observations, assessments and planning to ensure all areas of learning are sufficiently covered and children are appropriately challenged
- develop the involvement of parents and others in children's learning and development.

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

The pre-school has detailed policies and procedures that are read and followed by staff. These are reviewed and most have up-to-date and correct information.

Satisfactory safeguarding procedures are in place to protect children and regular risk assessments identify potential risks to children's safety. These have not, however, identified the potential danger of not having the fire exit door clearly identified. Appropriate procedures are in place for the recruitment and selection of staff to ensure they are suitable to care for children.

The new manager is enthusiastic and committed to developing the provision so children benefit from attending the setting. Satisfactory steps are taken to evaluate and monitor the provision and outcomes for children. Most areas for improvement are identified and action plans put into place to address these. Consequently, the capacity to maintain improvement is sound.

Staff recognise the importance of working with parents to promote children's learning. There is a regular two-way flow of information between the staff and parents to ensure children's needs are met. Some procedures are in place to involve parents in the planning and assessing processes, but these are not yet sufficiently robust, or used effectively, to fully impact on children's learning. These procedures have not yet been extended to include other carers of the children.

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

Children come into the setting enthusiastically, separating from their parents and carers with confidence. They settle quickly to play and enjoy their time at the setting. Staff work hard to create a warm and welcoming environment. Children's work is attractively displayed and all areas are clean and well maintained. Although resources are plentiful, current arrangements for storage mean children cannot choose and return resources themselves to allow them to make choices and further develop their independence. Staff are getting to know the children well and obtain some information from their parents to establish children's starting points. They have some awareness of what is required for their next steps in learning, but are not making full use of their observations and assessments to enable them to do this successfully. A satisfactory range of activities which children generally enjoy participating in, are provided to support children's progress towards the early learning goals. These cover most areas of learning sufficiently, so that children make sound progress. However, the current planning system does not enable staff to identify where there are possible gaps in children's learning or where adaptations are needed to ensure all children are appropriately challenged. In addition, staff are not always deployed effectively to fully support children and ensure they get the most out of activities. As a result, some children occasionally become disengaged and restless.

Children's social skills are developing well as they sit down together for their snack and play happily alongside each other in the outdoor play area. Despite being very young, they have an increasing understanding of acceptable behaviour. Access to media such as paint, sand and water helps their creative development and their physical skills are developing well as demonstrated when they skilfully manoeuvre scooters and trikes and competently handle tools such as paintbrushes and cutlery. Opportunities are limited for children to learn how to use appropriate information technology, such as, computers and programmable toys to support their learning

and develop skills that will contribute to future economic well-being.

Children are beginning to learn about healthy eating as they enjoy nutritious snacks and they occasionally sample foods such as poppadoms and spring rolls, which helps them to appreciate different cultures. Although provided with regular drinks, they are unable to access fresh water independently to ensure they are not thirsty. They have a growing awareness of how to stay safe. They participate in evacuation procedures so they know what to do in an emergency and most use scissors and playdough cutting tools sensibly.

## 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 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.