

Belwood Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	205689
Inspection date	08/07/2009
Inspector	Tracey Jane Outram
Setting address	22 High Street, Belton, Doncaster, South Yorkshire, DN9 1LR
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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 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

Belwood Playgroup opened in 1977. The children have sole use of a designated playroom to the rear of the village hall in Belton, North Lincolnshire. A maximum of 20 children may attend the playgroup at any one time. The playgroup is open five days a week, term time only. Sessions are from 9.00 to 11.30 Monday to Friday and 12.30 to 15.00 on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday. Children access a small enclosed outdoor area.

There are currently 51 children aged from two to under five years on roll. Of these 16 children receive funding for nursery education. The playgroup serves the local area and supports children who have learning difficulties or disabilities.

There are six members of staff who work with the children, of whom five hold appropriate early years qualifications. The playgroup receives regular support from the local authority and is run by a voluntary management committee.

Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

The quality of the provision is good. The children's welfare is given a high priority by staff who effectively promote children's care and learning in a fully inclusive manner. Successful partnership with parents and good communication with the local schools and other providers of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) ensures that the care and education children receive is tailored to meet their individual needs. The setting has a strong commitment toward the development of the service in order to promote better outcomes for children. They have begun to use self-evaluation as a means of recognising strengths and areas for future development.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- take all reasonable steps to ensure that hazards to children outdoors are minimised and any unauthorised people cannot gain access to children
- develop children to distinguish sounds and aid their phonological awareness particularly through rhyme
- increase opportunities for children to enjoy problem solving, reasoning and numeracy in a broad range of contexts.

The leadership and management of the early years provision

The children are cared for by a cohesive staff team who share a commitment toward the good care, welfare and education of the children left in their charge. Members of staff frequently attend training provided by the local authority, which they successfully apply to their practice in order to enhance the service for children

and their families.

Appropriate systems are in place to ensure that staff are suitable to care for children. They have regular appraisals by the manager and criminal records checks are up to date, however, the system for requesting references lacks rigour. Safeguarding procedures are good and members of staff are aware of the steps to take if they are worried about a child in their care. In addition, daily safety checks are completed on the premises and annual risk assessments take place. Overall the premises are secure but additional consideration is required consistently to maintain the safety of the children when they are enjoying outdoor play.

The setting places a great deal of emphasis on working in partnership with parents, carers and other practitioners who work with the children. Daily verbal feedback is provided to parents about children's progress and their time spent in the setting. This is supplemented by extremely informative written and photographic observations of the children, which are compiled to create extremely comprehensive and informative 'learning journeys' that are openly accessible to parents. Good links have been developed with other practitioners and members of staff understand the importance of ensuring that the service they provide compliments the education and the care that children receive in other settings. This is successfully achieved through assessments and the use of a communication book, which details the children's progress and highlights the plans made to support the next steps in their individual learning and development. Similarly, they take positive steps to prepare children for the transition to school by arranging visits and welcoming staff from local schools into the playgroup. The setting has embraced the concept of self-evaluation and their skills in relation to applying critical self-reflection are increasing. Similarly, through the implementation of well targeted action plans they have successfully increased their knowledge and understanding of the EYFS and taken positive steps to address the actions raised at the last inspection. This demonstrates a good commitment to the future development of the service.

The quality and standards of the early years provision

The friendly and inclusive setting supports children to make very good progress across the breadth of the early years curriculum. The systems for planning, observations and assessment clearly show children's progression across the six areas of learning and identify planning for the unique needs of individual children. The key worker system is effective and as a result the children form firm attachments, they are extremely settled, self-assured and demonstrate a strong sense of trust. Equality is an important part of the pre-school values and no equipment or activities are gender biased. Play equipment provides positive images of people from different cultural backgrounds and disabilities. A key strength of the setting is the children's personal and social development along with their behaviour and ability to make friendships with other children. They understand rules, such as sharing and taking turns and they confidently seek out adults and other children to share their experiences and build interesting and imaginative narratives into their play, which are based on their first hand experiences.

The children attending the setting are extremely articulate and keen to communicate because staff listen and respond appropriately to their questions and comments in order to develop opportunities for sustained shared thinking. The children talk with excitement about their favourite activities within the setting this includes painting, singing, modelling and using the umbrella's and waterproof jackets to experience playing outdoors in the rain. Many of the children recognise their own name in print along with the names of their friends however, there are fewer opportunities for the older children to practise alliteration and develop their phonological awareness. The children are creative thinkers and they benefit from using a range of media and materials to represent their personal ideas. They are supported in their understanding of problem solving reasoning and numeracy as they skilfully use IT equipment, count and explore space and measure however, this is not consistently available in a broad range of contexts, such as during outdoor play.

The children enjoy listening to stories; they have very good concentration and memory skills. Through stories the children are helped to learn about environmental dangers, such as fire and staff help them to think creatively about how they would stay safe in a variety of different situations. The children's engagement in such lively and animated discussion helps children to recognise danger and provides positive examples of how print carries meaning. The children have very good self-help skills because staff encourage them to develop independence through putting on their own aprons and pouring their own drinks. Equally, they learn about being healthy through the provision of nutritious snacks along with continuous access to physical play, which helps to enhance their strength, stamina and coordination skills.

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

Overall effectiveness

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?	2
How well does the provision promote inclusive practice?	2
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement.	2

Leadership and management

How effectively is provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	2
How effective is the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement?	3
How well does the setting work in partnership with parents and others?	2
How well are children safeguarded?	3

Quality and standards

How effectively are children in the Early Years Foundation Stage helped to learn and develop?	2
How effectively is the welfare of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage promoted?	2
How well are children helped to stay safe?	2
How well are children helped to be healthy?	2
How well are children helped to enjoy and achieve?	2
How well are children helped to make a positive contribution?	2
How well are children helped develop skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being?	2

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