

The Woodlands Primary School Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	130547
Inspection date	12/09/2008
Inspector	Gillian Smith
Setting address	Woodlands Primary School, Alban Crescent, Borehamwood, Hertfordshire, WD6 5JF
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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 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

The Woodlands Primary School Playgroup was established in 1992 and is registered on the Early Years register. It operates from the nursery classroom within Woodlands Primary School in Borehamwood. Children share access to a secure outdoor play area. Children attend from 12:30 until 15:00 every weekday during term time. A maximum of 28 children may attend the playgroup at any one time. Currently there are 22 children on roll of whom 14 receive funding for early education. The playgroup supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language. A total of five staff work with the children, all of whom hold relevant early years qualifications. The playgroup has achieved the Hertfordshire Quality Standards Award.

Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

This exceptionally well-run pre-school group and nursery gives the highest priority to children's personal welfare and development. Well-qualified staff are expert in their knowledge and understanding of the children's early years and their meticulous approach to planning and assessment is reflected in the children's rapid progress. Woodlands Playgroup warmly welcomes children from all backgrounds and they are cared for very well within a warm and nurturing environment. A small proportion of children have English as an additional language (EAL). Adults help these young children to settle in quickly by providing a high level of individual support and reassurance. The development of their language and communication skills is given an appropriately high priority. Adults help them to pick up English quickly by working with children on practical activities, such as reading an illustrated storybook or playing ball games in the playground. Adults know each child very well and close links with Woodlands Primary School ensure the nursery children enjoy a seamless transition into the reception class. Very good relationships with parents, imaginative use of the spacious accommodation and a shared, whole-hearted commitment to the children's care and education ensure this playgroup has a good capacity to improve.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- develop further self-evaluation procedures to ensure the maintenance of outstanding provision

The leadership and management of the early years provision

The manager has a clear vision for the future and she drives the group forward in a dynamic and purposeful manner. The shared commitment and dedication of her team ensure the children benefit from, and thoroughly enjoy, their time at this

very welcoming provision. This setting works closely with other early years providers and rigorous procedures for the safe recruitment of staff help to ensure children are protected from harm. Adults provide good support for children with individual learning needs as well as for those for whom English is an additional language. The visit took place just after the start of term and parents were made to feel exceptionally welcome as they dropped off or collected their children. When needs be, they are also encouraged to stay in order to settle their children and this helps these youngsters to feel safe and secure.

All staff are involved in the setting's self-evaluation and are committed to continuous improvement and development. They have accurately identified the playgroup's many strengths and few areas for development. Adults constantly review the quality of provision to ensure it is well matched to children's needs and is sharply focused on maintaining the current high standards. The leader regularly reflects on how she can improve the overall quality of the care and education provided and these self-evaluative procedures are formalised and documented.

The quality and standards of the early years provision

Managed by a qualified teacher, adults make very good use of their expert knowledge and understanding of the needs of these young children. Right from the start, adults make notes about each child's skills, interests and needs. They use these to provide interesting learning opportunities that help the youngsters to make rapid progress as they move towards the early learning goals. Planning and assessment systems are exceptionally detailed and learning experiences are closely tailored to match the needs of each individual. Staff are very perceptive to children's interests during self-initiated play, and use questions very successfully to challenge children's thinking and develop their language. Adults undertake planned observations of individual children and children's comments also help to inform the next steps in their learning. Children are also tracked as they move between activities and adults keep a close eye to ensure they maintain an appropriate balance between independent and guided learning. Children thoroughly enjoy their time at this setting and move freely between indoor and outdoor provision. They are really interested and keen to learn and achieve very well. They make choices and decisions and are captivated by the extensive range of stimulating, relevant activities. For example, they examine mini beasts using magnifiers, play hide and seek or make dens in the conservation area. They learn how to eat healthily, grow sunflowers, tomatoes, courgettes and onions, pretend to fill up the wheeled toys with petrol and scoop out sea creatures from the water tray. Children themselves make a very good contribution to the pre-school group and the wider community. For example, nursery children lead a primary school assembly just before they transfer to reception and all the children perform a Christmas play to the school and their parents.

A high priority is given to children's safety and welfare. Routine risk assessments are undertaken and children use resources sensibly and safely. Staff know what to do in the case of an emergency and children regularly practice the fire evacuation procedures.

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?	Outstanding
How well does the provision promote inclusive practice?	Outstanding
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?	Outstanding
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?	Outstanding
How well are children safeguarded?	Outstanding

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?	Outstanding
How well are children helped to stay safe?	Outstanding
How well are children helped to be healthy?	Outstanding
How well are children helped to enjoy and achieve?	Outstanding
How well are children helped to make a positive contribution?	Outstanding
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.