

The Cherry Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	221863
Inspection date	09/10/2008
Inspector	Declan McCarthy
Setting address	Cherry Hinton Junior School, Fulbourn Old Drift, Cambridge, Cambridgeshire, CB1 9ND
Telephone number	01223 508152 Mob 07778 300323
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).

The setting also makes provision for children older than the early years age group which is registered on the voluntary and/or compulsory part(s) of the Childcare Register. This report does not include an evaluation of that provision, but a comment about compliance with the requirements of the Childcare Register is included in Annex B.

Description of the setting

The Cherry Playgroup is managed by a voluntary management committee, made up of parents of children at the playgroup. It opened in 1972 and operates from the community wing of Cherry Hinton Community Junior School in Cherry Hinton, Cambridge. All children are placed on the EYFS register only and a maximum of 26 children may attend the playgroup at any one time. The playgroup is open five days a week from 09:15 to 12:15 with a lunch club from 12:15 until 12:45, during school term times. All children have access to an enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 34 children aged from two to under five years on roll. Of these, three children receive funding for nursery education. Children come from the Cherry Hinton area. The playgroup currently supports four children who have English as an additional language. There is suitable access to the playgroup for adults and children with disabilities

The playgroup employs eight staff. Of these, six hold appropriate early years qualifications and one is currently working towards an appropriate qualification. Although there are no formal partnerships with other schools, the playgroup has links with Cambridge Care and Education for advice training and support.

Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

The Cherry Playgroup provides good provision for its children. The warm and very caring ethos from the highly committed and professional staff enables children to thrive, reflecting the overwhelming positive views of parents. All children are very safe and secure because there are high levels of supervision by highly skilled and trained staff. A good range of well thought out learning activities is provided for children which enables them to make good progress and grow in confidence. Excellent management has ensured that all the welfare requirements are met. However self evaluation has not yet been completed within the context of the new requirements for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). Consequently planning and assessment systems are not yet fully developed. Nevertheless effective leadership by the manager and deputy, who have already developed plans to improve the outdoor learning area, ensures that there is a good capacity to improve

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- further develop and implement assessment systems which systematically record the progress each child makes towards the early learning goals
- develop a clear overarching learning policy to show how the playgroup implements the learning requirements of the EYFS in relation to assessment and planning.

The leadership and management of the early years provision

Good leadership ensures that staff are trained and supported in their work and that all the welfare requirements of the EYFS are exceptionally well met. It has also ensured a good learning environment with a good range of resources outside and inside to promote achievement in each area of learning. New planning and assessment systems which fully embrace the EYFS are developing well but these have yet to be fully implemented.

Team work between all staff is strong and they follow rigorous procedures to ensure the welfare of children. There are high levels of adult supervision at all times, particularly in the outdoor area. The manager and deputy manager ensure that safeguarding requirements are fully met. The playgroup evaluates its work effectively on an annual basis and is shortly due to evaluate the impact the new EYFS requirements on its work. Managers have ensured excellent partnerships with parents who are kept well informed about their child's welfare and progress through regular meetings. Typical of the good leadership is the response to the last inspection. Since then, although no areas for improvement were identified, the playgroup has continued to improve. For example, it encourages parents to work alongside children in playgroup sessions. Staff have improved learning, such as speaking and listening and early reading skills, through the introduction of Talking Books, which children enjoy tremendously. There are very good arrangements to support any additional needs children have. For example the very few children with learning difficulties, and those at an early stage of learning English, receive individual support.

The quality and standards of the early years provision

All children are treated as individuals and there is a good balance of staff-led and child-initiated activities. There is no overarching policy for learning to show how the new EYFS requirements for learning and assessment have been adapted for the playgroup. However, it is clear from the wide range of activities available to the children that activities are well thought out and comply effectively with the requirements for the EYFS. Activities are always pitched at the right levels to challenge children's learning and carefully selected to promote the development of all areas for learning. The use of exploration boxes full of everyday objects such as shoes, stimulates children's imagination and the desire to explore so that they develop their creativity effectively. Children enjoy the wide range of indoor and outdoor activities provided, immensely. They particularly like to choose talking books and to join in singing and action games with staff, which effectively develop language, communication and social interaction, as well as creativity. Children are totally absorbed and focused on such activities and they were seen to thoroughly enjoy making pastry, painting pictures, playing in the sand pit and riding tricycles in the outdoor area. There is a strong emphasis on the development of language and communication. All staff interact with children and question them about what they are doing during their activities to move their learning forward. Children are encouraged to be inquisitive and to make their own choices through well-organised activities. Staff ensure that fresh fruit and water is provided for children at snack

time to encourage them to make healthy choices. The lunch time club, which is not yet operating as it is too early in the term, also promotes good progress in each area of learning through well thought out activities

The excellent partnerships with parents are evident in the relaxed and informal ongoing communication and exchange of views between staff and parents at the beginning and end of each session. Parents speak very highly of the work of the playgroup and describe the staff as excellent. Some parents freely give up their time to help out staff by working with other children. As a result, children are very happy and new children settle into their routines very quickly. Staff provide children with excellent role models, to promote good behaviour, taking turns and collaboration. Children are always encouraged to be friendly towards one another and to join in activities. As a result, they develop positive attitudes which prepare them well for the next stage of their learning.

Assessment is good and new systems are being introduced to track children's progress systematically against each area of learning. Staff working with children keep detailed notes on the areas for development and review each child's progress regularly throughout the year. Progress is then shared with parents. Staff make good use of assessment information, and their knowledge of the children, to match activities precisely to children's needs. This ensures that learning tasks are tailored to the individual. Parents say they are kept well informed about their children's progress, through discussion with staff as well as regular written reports.

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?	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?	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?	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?	Good
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?	Good
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?	Good

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 B: the Childcare Register

The provider confirms that the requirements of the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are: Met

The provider confirms that the requirements of the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are: Met

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.