

Alderley Edge Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number 304948
Inspection date 17/11/2008
Inspector Rachel Ruth Britten

Setting address Church Lane, Alderley Edge, Cheshire, SK9 7UZ

Telephone number 01625 599300

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

Alderley Edge pre-school playgroup was registered in 1976. The setting is committee run and operates from a classroom in Alderley Edge County Primary School. There is a secure area available for outdoor play. A maximum of 20 children aged two to five years may attend the setting at any one time. The setting is open five days a week from 08.45 to 15.00 during term time. Children attend from the local community and surrounding areas.

There are currently 30 children on roll aged from two to four years. All of these are within the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). The setting does not offer care to children aged over five years and is not registered by Ofsted on the compulsory and voluntary childcare register. The setting offers support to children with learning difficulties and disabilities and is supporting children who speak English as an additional language.

The setting employs six members of staff including the manager. Of these, four staff are qualified to level three in early years and one is qualified to level two. The setting receives support from the local authority early years advisory team and is a member of the Pre-school Learning Alliance.

Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

The committed staff team provide a welcoming setting and use varied resources to satisfactorily promote children's welfare, learning and development. Staff recognise the uniqueness of each child and work as a team to include each one and follow their choices and interests. They establish satisfactory partnership with parents. They have sole use of their new location, which brings improvements to the learning environment to better meet children's care and welfare needs and facilitate transition into the reception class. However, the leadership and management of the setting hold back the overall effectiveness of the provision. Leaders' capacity to improve is limited by a lack of confidence about implementing the EYFS. They have adequately addressed most issues raised at the last inspection, but little time has been given to formal self-evaluation and prioritising continuous improvement.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- ensure that all staff have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities under the requirements of the EYFS
- consider how the environment, resources and daily routines can be better used to increase children's independence, inclusion, participation and sense of belonging
- ensure that key persons establish strong links with each child in their care along with their respective parents to assure continuity and appropriate care
- improve the organisation of the documentation, so that items like complaint records, evidence of staff suitability and contact details, fire drill records, risk

assessments, observation notes about children and parental consents are easy to locate for use or inspection.

To fully meet the specific requirements of the EYFS, the registered person must:

- assess children's starting points and continuously undertake sensitive observational assessment which is used to document what children can do and the next steps they need to take to make progress towards the early learning goals 17/12/2008
- use the risk assessment to identify aspects of the indoor and outdoor environment that need to be checked regularly and maintain records of when and by whom they were checked. Conduct risk assessments for each specific outing, including an assessment of the required adult to child ratios. 17/12/2008

The leadership and management of the early years provision

The setting employs suitable and mostly qualified part time staff who work hard together to provide for each child's welfare and development each day. They are adequately supported by the committee and receive appraisals and some essential training, for example, in first aid and the EYFS. However, some training is not effectively shared across the whole staff group to raise everyone's skills evenly. Staff who have specialist roles, for example, in child protection, special needs, or ICT, ensure that all the team know enough to adequately safeguard and meet children's individual needs, but staff tend to defer to these specialists most of the time.

Most policies and procedures are in place to safeguard children although these are not clearly organised for all to use them to best effect. For example, risk assessments are completed annually, but not used to check or document the safety of the setting day to day. Nevertheless, door security and collection arrangements assure children's safety and well-being. Half termly emergency evacuation practises ensure that children know what to do, although these have not been documented to highlight any difficulties.

There are flexible daily routines and plans for activity incorporating children's choices, enabling them to learn through play and discovery that interests them. However, resources and space at child height are not best organised to allow children to find and set up their activity choices or display their own work. Similarly, key workers do not involve children significantly in daily routines which can extend their independence and promote their sense of belonging in the setting.

Warm relationships exist between staff and most parents. Parents express confidence in the setting's ability to meet their child's welfare and development needs and prepare them for school. Parents' views are elicited through questionnaires and there are newsletters and parents' evenings to involve them and tell them about the curriculum. Accident, incident and medication procedures

fully include parents and their consent is sought before photographic evidence is used. This assures children's health and safety. However, little useful information is displayed for parents and key workers do not confidently observe and document children's starting points, daily progress or plans for next steps in regular conjunction with their parents and carers. Staff cannot therefore use progress records productively to include parents in their child's learning journey. Overall, weaknesses in leadership and management do not put children at risk of harm and the managers and committee have adequate capacity to address areas of weakness. They have begun work on the Ofsted self-evaluation document and seek external advice to identify improvements in organisation which will improve safeguarding and partnership.

The quality and standards of the early years provision

Adults support children's activities by purposefully engaging with them as they play. They encourage children to initiate their own creative, constructive and imaginative play. Adults know individual children well and encourage their communication skills, literacy and numeracy by listening and weaving relevant questions and challenges as children use the play dough, colouring materials or farm and zoo animals. Many children's confidence and ideas are developing well. They perform action songs which are filmed on video and spontaneously count, shouting out the bounces they make on the space hoppers. Similarly, many can devise creative role plays together and talk about their pictures and what they are going to do with them. They are active learners who are creative and decisive. Planned activities follow themes, such as Harvest Festival or Remembrance Day, so that children are learning about the world, seasons, diverse community and history through art, stories, experiments with real objects, outdoor play and trips, and visiting adults. Children's learning is sometimes consolidated through reference to photos and discussions with staff during subsequent activities and there are plans to use slide shows and video footage at the end of sessions to show parents what their children have been doing.

Children register themselves in by finding their name card and posting it into the box. They also have their own drawer to put their things in to take home. Extended free play sessions provide ample time for confident children to pursue and complete activities. However, opportunities to select, set up and put away activities are somewhat limited because many resources are not in the room at child height. Similarly, children do not clearly understand what is happening now and next. Group times are not well used to plan or review activities with children and they have few opportunities to share their ideas and thoughts or consolidate their learning. As a result, a few children's personal, social and emotional development is held back and they are unable to independently make full use of the long open play sessions.

Children's health and safety is adequately promoted throughout sessions as staff use signs, stories and activities to help children learn why they need to employ good personal hygiene, eat healthy foods and walk and play safely, especially where there is traffic. Children are taught about the importance of washing their hands but individual plates are not used at snack times. Special themed activities, games, trips and visitors are also used to teach children about social responsibility and respect for all others. For example, children take part in charitable events for

children in need. However, staff do not take all opportunities to include more withdrawn children. Good manners and participation in the running of the sessions are not sufficiently prioritised. For example, children do not take much part in preparation of their snacks or serving, clearing or cleaning up. As a result, children do not have a strong sense of responsibility for the cleanliness and safety of the setting or one another and some are not developing as much independence and competence as possible.

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?	3
How well does the provision promote inclusive practice?	3
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement.	3

Leadership and management

How effectively is provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	3
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?	3
How well are children safeguarded?	3

Quality and standards

How effectively are children in the Early Years Foundation Stage helped to learn and develop?	3
How effectively is the welfare of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage promoted?	3
How well are children helped to stay safe?	3
How well are children helped to be healthy?	3
How well are children helped to enjoy and achieve?	3
How well are children helped to make a positive contribution?	3
How well are children helped develop skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being?	3

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.