

Silkstone Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	302858
Inspection date	18/11/2008
Inspector	Anthony Anderson
Setting address	Old Town School, High Street, Silkstone, Barnsley, South Yorkshire, S75 4LR
Telephone number	01226 792294
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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

Silkstone Pre-school Playgroup opened in 1977. The pre-school operates from a single storey building adjacent to Silkstone Primary School and serves the local and rural communities. They have access to a large hall with office, toilets, kitchen and storage space. There is a secure outdoor play area available to the children, and use of the school playground.

The pre-school is on the Early Years Register and cares for a maximum of 26 children aged from two to five years. There are currently 60 children on roll, of whom 47 receive funded nursery education. The group supports children with learning difficulties or disabilities. The playgroup offers full day care, term time only with children attending for a variety of sessions per week from 08.50 to 15.15.

Six staff work with the children and all hold early years qualifications. The setting receives support from the local authority early years consultants and the Pre-school Learning Alliance. The pre-school is managed by a voluntary management committee.

Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

The overall effectiveness of the pre-school provision is good with some outstanding features. The well established and dedicated staff have created a very positive and friendly atmosphere for learning and play, and parents are very happy with the provision. All children make clear progress in their learning and personal development and this is monitored effectively through well designed observation, evaluation and assessment systems. Children's welfare provision is of a very high quality and their safety is supported by regular and detailed risk assessments, which are recorded on a daily basis. Parental support is very strong and a recent questionnaire demonstrates wide satisfaction with the work of the setting and with children's safety and well-being. Partnerships with the local school to which the pre-school unit is linked are strong and information is exchanged on a regular basis as children transfer to the reception class or to other local schools. The setting's procedures for self evaluation and planning for continuous improvement are gradually developing, and improvement since the last inspection is good.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- make more effective use of the outdoor facilities to extend children's opportunities for physical development and to widen their scope of learning and enjoyment
- develop the setting's self evaluation and monitoring systems to ensure that they lead towards continuous improvement.

The leadership and management of the early years provision

Leadership and management of the pre-school setting are good. Staff are appropriately trained and qualified for their respective roles, and the ratio between adults and children meets statutory requirements. The manager of the setting effectively utilises the strengths of her staff and encourages shared responsibility for the efficient operation of the setting. Annual appraisal systems are good and staff are encouraged to attend courses linked to their own professional development. Staff know their children well and they help to create a strong feeling of warmth and harmony in the pre-school.

Appropriate written policies and procedures are fully in place and understood by staff. They are reviewed and updated as necessary to take account of new legislation. The provision of care and welfare is strong and staff provide a very effective and efficient level of support to any children in need of assistance. The setting's procedures for self evaluation are improving and the pre-school unit receives valuable support from its own committee and from the local authority. Following a recent visit by the authority's development officer, all recent suggestions for improvement have been successfully implemented. Child tracking and assessment systems linked to progress and personal development are good and opportunities are frequently taken through observations and discussions to identify the next steps required for individual children to move forward.

Links with parents are very good and the pre-school has created many opportunities for parents to meet with staff and to share ideas about their child's early years development. Good use is made of an individual day-to-day diary system which not only keeps parents informed about their child's activities, but also allows and encourages them to add their own comments and observations, for example, to record what their child has been enjoying over the weekend or through a holiday period.

The quality and standards of the early years provision

The effectiveness of children's learning and development is good with some outstanding elements. The pre-school's staff work very closely as an effective team and present a dedicated and professional unit as they provide a warm and friendly welcome to parents and children. Day-to-day planning is of a significantly high quality and often linked to different themes, such as 'around the world'. Good opportunities are taken to involve children in making choices and staff ensure that activities are well matched to all areas of early years development. Children respond well to the positive systems of encouragement and praise.

Good use is made of the setting's walls to show children's work and one topical feature showed an excellent display dedicated to the recent festival of remembrance. A wonderful photograph of a young child from the setting holding her grandfather's colourful medals was in the centre of a number of child-made poppies, and all children successfully took part in the setting's own two minutes silence.

The pre-school's environment for working and play is good and there are a wide range of learning and play resources available inside the unit, although the present use of the outdoor facilities to support children's progress is a little limited. Good use is made by staff of open-ended questions to encourage the development of children's speaking, listening and thinking skills.

Written records of children's development and learning are maintained and are used well to prepare them for their next steps. A well designed system of monitoring and recording children's work is in place and this is linked to good procedures of assessment and tracking of individual children's progress and development. Longer term assessments and evaluations of children's progress are used well to provide the main school with an overview of each child's attainment by the time they transfer from the pre-school to the reception class or to other local schools.

Each child has a key person assigned to them and this helps to support the welfare, health and well-being of every child in the setting. Children respond very well to advice towards their own safety and they are aware of regular fire drills and evacuation routines, which are recorded by the setting's management. Children demonstrate excellent attitudes and behaviour and this is linked to their progress and enjoyment. Children make a very strong contribution to the pre-school's activities, and its positive promotion towards their future development and learning is of a very high quality.

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?	1
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?	2
How well does the setting work in partnership with parents and others?	2
How well are children safeguarded?	2

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?	1
How well are children helped to be healthy?	2
How well are children helped to enjoy and achieve?	1
How well are children helped to make a positive contribution?	1
How well are children helped develop skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being?	2

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.