

The Lodge Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	EY369948
Inspection date	19/01/2009
Inspector	Susan Tuffnell
Setting address	Daubeney Middle School, Orchard Street, Kempston, BEDFORD, MK42 7PS
Telephone number	07534 200633
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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 Lodge Playgroup originally opened in 1976 and changed its premises in 2008. It operates from a purpose-built building on the Daubeney Middle School site in the town of Kempston, Bedfordshire. The playgroup has sole use of the unit. A ramp to the main entrance, widened doorways and toilet facilities for the disabled ensure that the premises is easily accessible. Children have access to a secure and fully enclosed outdoor play area.

The playgroup is open during school term times from 09:15 to 15:00 Monday to Friday. There are 20 places for children on the Early Years Register and currently 44 children attend. There are four staff members who work with the children. Half of the staff hold appropriate early years qualifications. The playgroup supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The setting works in partnership with parents, carers and other professionals.

Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall, The Lodge Playgroup makes good provision for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Planning provides challenge and differentiation and is sufficiently broad to offer a full range of activities and opportunities for the children. Staff create a very welcoming environment building secure relationships with children and making sure that all can participate meaningfully in the activities and daily routines of the setting. The manager has clear aims to continuously improve the practice of the setting and improve outcomes for children. The provision promotes diversity and differences through activities, discussions and resources. Children are encouraged to value and respect each other. Staff model positive behaviour and show sensitive consideration to children's individual needs.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- ensure that children's identified learning needs are carried forward, implemented into future planning and evaluated to give a clear picture of progress
- ensure that details of fire evacuation drills are recorded and evaluated.

The leadership and management of the early years provision

The good maintenance and implementation of policies, records and procedures support the safe and efficient management of the setting and ensure that the needs of all children are met. The manager offers clear guidance to staff ensuring that the setting offers children a secure environment in which to explore, play and learn. Staff promote good care and opportunities for children, they review and update training and knowledge to ensure their professional development. Senior

staff have completed training in safeguarding children and the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) framework and a high level of staff are qualified in first aid. The staff commitment to training has a positive impact on the quality of the EYFS.

Robust safeguarding policies safeguard and promote the welfare of children. There are comprehensive systems for recruiting staff and checking they are suitable to work with children. The daily implementation of the setting's practical policies further supports the efficient running of a safe setting. Children are safe because of effective security. Staff are alerted to visitors by a bell at the entrance, a visitors book is signed and visitors are closely supervised. Well-documented risk assessments are in place and daily health and safety checks cover all areas of the setting.

Effective links with parents and carers and other providers promote integration of care, education and extended services well. The setting meets with the staff and children of other playgroups at the local Children's Centre to share practice and provide opportunities for the children's social development. Parents are kept informed by regular verbal feedback, newsletters and activity sheets as well as more formal meetings to discuss their child's progress. Close links are forged with childminders who collect children from the setting. They are given regular information about activities and topics so they can extend and support children's learning. The manager and staff work together to make improvements within the setting. They recognise their strengths and have highlighted priorities for improvement. For example, to extend opportunities for the children to use the garden to grow vegetables and plants.

The quality and standards of the early years provision

Children are consistently offered good opportunities and a range of activities that enables them to make good progress across all areas of learning and development. Staff respond positively to children's interests and enrich their learning experiences by enabling children to initiate play and lead activities. Children explore and identify colours and shapes as they follow a computer programme. Their interest in information technology is extended as they explain the sport programmes they have on their computer at home, and demonstrate how to move your arms when playing virtual games such as golf or bowling. Comprehensive observations and assessments carried out by staff track children's progress through the six areas of learning. However, children's identified learning needs are not carried forward, implemented into future planning and evaluated to give a clear picture of progress.

Staff support the children well and encourage them to play imaginatively and be creative. For example, children are fully engrossed in making felt pictures. They use the pictures to make an imaginative story scene with a 'scary scarecrow' whose face they cover with a large felt strawberry. Children make little gardens with 'plants' and correctly name and match colours as they play. Children show interest and enthusiasm in a wide range of activities which provides good levels of challenge. For example, children play with large toy cranes and lorries. They take the role of the builders using small figures that they sit in the vehicles. Small

wooden blocks are loaded and unloaded as they build wooden columns for their 'house'. Younger children build towers with bricks of different shape and colour. They experiment with balance as they stack double bricks and single bricks and add larger bricks to the top. Staff help children to predict the outcome as more bricks are added and the stack remains standing or topples. When bricks fall away from the table and onto the floor staff point out how far they travel when they topple.

Children are happy and sociable. They seek out friends and play cooperatively together. For example, children play imaginary games with dolls, organise roles and share resources. Children are generally self-motivated and have a good level of independence as they serve themselves at snack time and show confidence in toileting. Warm, trusting relationships with staff ensure that children are valued as individuals and supported well. The language rich environment with attractive labelling, well-resourced book corner and well-planned activities, such as group news time and action songs help children to become confident communicators. Children enjoy sharing their news. They talk about the past, present and future and are able to relate family events, special times at the setting and events planned for the future. For example, children speak excitedly about playing in the snow and swimming with family. Children clearly explain that the box by the door is the home box and this is where they put toys that belong to them. Several items are taken out and the owner named by the others. Children practise their physical skills as they jump on the trampoline, climb apparatus and throw, kick and catch balls. They test balance as they use their body weight to move the see-saw. Staff plan interesting topics to help children learn about their local environment and the wider world. For example, children make and deliver harvest hampers for local elderly people and invite grandparents into the group. Staff organise exciting activities such as the Zoo Lab visit so children can learn about different creatures as they watch and handle them. All the children learn how to greet others in a variety of languages and have opportunities to experience a variety of different cultures through books, activities and topics.

Children are cared for in a very safe, secure environment. They gain an understanding of personal safety as staff guide them through the fire evacuation procedure and organise activities such as a visit from the local police officers. However, not all fire drills are recorded and are therefore not evaluated to ensure that procedures are effective and children are fully protected.

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?	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?	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?	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?	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

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 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.