

Coleridge Pre-school Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	105957
Inspection date	22/04/2009
Inspector	Julie Neal
Setting address	The Old School, Jesu Street, Ottery-St-Mary, Devon, EX11 1EU
Telephone number	01404 812663
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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 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

Coleridge Pre-school Playgroup was registered in 2001, and is run by a voluntary committee. It is situated in an old school building in the centre of Ottery St Mary, near Honiton, Devon. Children are cared for in two playrooms, with adjoining toilet and kitchen facilities, and an enclosed outdoor area. The group opens each weekday morning in term-time, from 09.30 to 12.00. Each afternoon, except Tuesdays, a lunch club is offered from 12.00 to 13.00 and an afternoon session from 13.00 to 15.00. Children attend for a variety of sessions.

The pre-school is registered on the Early Years Register. A maximum of 30 children aged from two years to the end of the early years age group may attend at any one time. There are currently 30 children on roll. The setting supports children who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities. There are six members of staff employed to work with the children, of whom five have appropriate child care qualifications.

Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall, the quality of the provision is good. Children benefit from an inclusive environment where their individual needs are known and respected. The setting works closely with parents and others involved in children's care to ensure that their needs are met, and information is shared most effectively. Staff use their excellent knowledge and understanding of how children learn and develop through play to provide a dynamic and stimulating environment where children make consistently outstanding progress in their learning and development, in relation to their individual starting points. Processes of self evaluation are effective in enabling staff to identify and prioritise areas for development, and to prompt action plans where necessary, in order to ensure ongoing 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 children learn how to conduct themselves safely in the event of a fire, including those who are not present when emergency evacuation procedures are practiced.
- ensure that records of behavioural incidents that involve more than one child correspond with accident records, where this is appropriate.

The leadership and management of the early years provision

Strong management in the setting has resulted in good systems and procedures that promote children's welfare, learning and development. For example, procedures to safeguard children are excellent. Robust employment processes and systems of checks ensure that all adults working with children are suitable to do

so. Thorough induction procedures for both employed staff and volunteers ensure all adults have a thorough awareness of their roles and responsibilities, including a good knowledge and understanding of the setting's safeguarding policies and how to implement these. In addition, all staff complete external safeguarding training, in order that they are confident in recognising signs that may raise concerns regarding the abuse or neglect of children.

All regulatory documentation is in place, and there are effective systems to ensure these are reviewed regularly. Policies and procedures that support children's wellbeing provide clear guidance to staff, and are shared with parents. Registers and records of attendance clearly show the times when staff and children are present and confirm that ratios are maintained. There are some inconsistencies in the maintenance of some supporting documents, such as records of minor behavioural incidents.

There are good systems in place to evaluate the effectiveness of the provision, and these are particularly strong in respect of monitoring children's individual progress in learning and development. Staff are encouraged to reflect on different areas of practice, and the management team have begun to collate the views of staff, parents, and children in order to identify and prioritise areas for improvement.

Parents and carers are welcomed in the setting and are encouraged to take an active role in their children's learning and development. For example, inviting them to contribute to their child's individual learning plan. Parents are provided with good quality information about the setting, and newsletters and notice boards keep them up to date. Staff work very well with parents and others involved in children's lives to ensure individual needs are met. For example, children with specific learning and development needs are enabled to fully participate because good professional working relationships result in information being shared appropriately, and so children benefit from consistent levels of support and challenge.

The quality and standards of the early years provision

Children's welfare, learning and development is supported very well. Children are cared for in a safe and secure environment where excellent risk assessments and very strong daily routines ensure their safety. For example, prior to children's arrival, two members of staff jointly walk round the building and outdoor areas, and complete a comprehensive checklist of all areas of the provision, to ensure that no aspect is overlooked. Risk assessments are regularly reviewed and updated, and all staff are made aware of any changes, in order that children remain safe. Emergency evacuation procedures are in place and are practiced with children. However, there is no system in place to consistently ensure that children learn to behave in a safe manner in the event of a fire, if they are not present during a fire drill.

Children are very well behaved and have a good understanding of expected codes of conduct. Simple ground rules are displayed, these are phrased very positively, focusing on 'we do' rather than 'we don't'. These are colour coded and this enables children to quickly learn that, for example, the green rule says 'we are kind to each

other'. Staff recognise that children occasionally fall out with each other, and ensure that any issues between them are quickly resolved. Where there are behavioural concerns, these are monitored and shared with parents. However, recording of minor incidents involving children is inconsistent. For example, if a child is struck by another, there will be an accident report in respect of the stricken child; there may not be an incident report in respect of the behaviour of the other child, that correlates with the accident record.

Health promotion with children is excellent. Young children are supported very well as they learn the importance of personal hygiene and develop independence in managing their own needs. For example, smaller and younger children in the setting quickly become confident in using the toilet independently because they have access to one that is very low, they do not need to use a step or require adult help in order to sit safely and feel secure. Staff display named handprints of each child above the sinks in the cloakroom, this encourages children to stop and look for their own prints, and is an effective prompt to remind them to wash their hands. There are clear policies and procedures in place that protect children from the risk of illness and cross infection, and these are implemented very well by staff. Any individual health needs are known and recorded, and activities and resources are planned to take account of these. For example, reviewing snacks and cooking activities regularly to ensure these are inclusive, such as checking that ingredients are suitable for all children present so that no child is singled out for having specific dietary requirements. Children bring packed lunches, and these show that, overall, parents support the setting's healthy eating policy by providing well balanced lunchboxes. These are supplemented by the plentiful and nutritious snacks and drinks provided by the setting. Children demonstrate a good understanding of why they should eat and drink healthily. For example, they know that milk is good for their teeth and bones, and that they should drink water when they are hot to help them cool down; while playing independently in the home corner, children 'make dinner' for their dolls and tell them they must eat their vegetables 'to give you energy'.

Children make excellent progress in learning, in relation to their individual starting points. They are enthusiastic learners, who avidly explore the extremely well organised and welcoming play environment. For instance, children thoroughly enjoy investigating the excellent variety of creative media that are easily accessible to them in the art room, and immediately begin to make suggestions about how they wish to use these. Staff use their excellent knowledge and awareness of children's preferred learning styles as they plan the arrangement of space and resources. For example, children are developing good writing skills because they have access throughout the day to a wide variety of resources that encourage them to make purposeful marks in different contexts. They make notes, and write their names in cards and on their artwork, learning to form some of the letters of their names; they use pens and pads in the home corner; they sprawl on the floor with large sheets of paper and chinks and crayons; and they record what they see when outside, through writing and drawing.

Staff have an excellent understanding of how children learn and develop through play. They plan extremely well to ensure that children consistently enjoy a variety of opportunities that promote all areas of learning, and that provide a range of

experiences that are appropriate to the developmental stages of each child. Their child-centred approach is demonstrated in the skilful use of informal opportunities that arise, to encourage children to think and communicate their ideas, using these to extend and develop activities. For example, a tray of dry porridge oats is used in different ways by groups of children; some like to bury objects in it, some choose to fill containers, some are interested in the texture. Animated conversations develop. For instance, when children comment that the oats are like snow, they are encouraged to think about the snowfalls they experienced last term and they happily share their memories; children talk about making flapjacks with oats and staff take note and plan this activity for another day, at children's request. Staff make ongoing observations of children, these are clearly linked to the early learning goals and are used extremely well to monitor children's individual progress. Monitoring records are used most effectively to enable staff to identify the next steps in learning and development for each child. Parents are provided with regular opportunities to discuss their children's progress, and to have input into their individual plans. The extremely strong assessment arrangements in place contribute to the excellent support provided for children who have specific learning and development needs.

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?	2
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?	1

Quality and standards

How effectively are children in the Early Years Foundation Stage helped to learn and develop?	1
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?	1
How well are children helped to enjoy and achieve?	1
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

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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