

St Christopher's Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number 101597
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Inspector Hilary Elizabeth Tierney

Setting address St Christopher's Church Hall, Lincoln Avenue, Warden Hill,,
Cheltenham, Gloucestershire, GL51 3DD

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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

St Christopher's Playgroup is a community group that started up 40 years ago. They are managed by a voluntary committee of parents. They meet in St Christopher's Church Hall and have the use of two rooms. There is a grassed area and a hard-surface car park area that can be used for outdoor play. The provider is on the Early Years Register.

A maximum of 42 children may attend the play group at any one time. Sessions, during school terms, are on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday from 09.30 until 11.55 for the rising three-year-olds and from 09.30 until 12.00 for the rising four-year-olds. The rising three-year-old children use one room and the rising four-year-olds use the other room. There are currently a total of 41 children from two-years-nine-months to under five years on roll. The play group also offer a session on Wednesday morning from 09.15 until 11.45 in Warden Hill School, which is separately registered. The playgroup currently offer support to a number of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and who have English as an additional language.

The playgroup employs eight members of staff. Of these, seven hold appropriate early years qualifications and one is working towards a qualification. The staff are supported by parents on rota duty. Partnership arrangements with other early years settings are Warden Hill School, Betteridge School and local childminders.

Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall, the quality of the provision is good. Children are recognised as unique and the staff have a good knowledge of each child's background and needs. The key person system works well to help adults meet these needs. Children are progressing well in all areas of learning and development and enjoy their time at the setting. Effective links with parents help to involve them in their children's care and education, and they are kept well informed of their progress. Staff have completed self-evaluation and have clearly identified areas for improvement.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- develop the links between sensitive observational assessments and planning of activities so that all children's individual needs continue to be met.

The leadership and management of the early years provision

Staff work well as a team, providing support for each other during sessions. They are well qualified and good staffing ratios ensures children are safeguarded well during their time at the setting. Staff plan and provide an interesting, challenging

range of activities for children and they have regular access to the outside play area. The key person system works well and staff know their key children extremely well. However, observational assessments and the planning of activities are not linked to help all adults identify children's interests or those who require extra support or extension in their learning and development. Suitable procedures for recruitment and checking of staff are in place. The committee support staff adequately and regular meetings ensure good communication. Staff are in the process of reviewing all policies and procedures to ensure they are in line with the new framework and ensure the setting is able to meet the welfare of the children.

Children are safeguarded well and learn to keep themselves safe during play. For example, staff carefully explain to children the consequences of their actions, such as, if they run inside they may fall and hurt themselves or someone else. Security of the premises and safety of the children is paramount for the staff. They are careful to ensure that only authorised people collect children, for example, if someone arrives the staff do not know to collect a child, they contact the parents immediately to confirm the situation. The main door to the building remains locked at all times when children are in the building and the inner doors also remain closed as an extra precaution. A visitors book is used effectively and both staff and children's attendance is clearly recorded daily. Risk assessments are completed and reviewed regularly. Clear routines ensure children are encouraged in good personal hygiene procedures and good eating habits. For example, children are encouraged to wash their hands before snacks, to sit at the table and eat and try the healthy snacks that are on offer.

A good partnership with parents has developed. Good communication between the key person and parents ensures they are kept involved in their child's care and learning. Parents spoken to are very happy with the care provided. They commented on how staff work hard to ensure the children are happy and well settled. Daily sheets on the doors inform parents about what their child has been doing that session and notice boards inform parents of forthcoming events and other information.

The quality and standards of the early years provision

Children are welcomed into a friendly environment. Children are happy, confident and settle quickly into their play. Space within the building is used very effectively to meet children's needs, with the younger children using one room and the older ones using the other room. They join together for certain activities, such as when the Road Safety person comes. All children have access to fresh air and exercise regularly. Due to the space in the rooms, children also have regular access to large physical play inside, for example, staff section off an area of the room and children can use bikes, cars, balancing beams and play tents. Children are able to make choices for themselves, for example, they are given the opportunity to select the activity they would like to start on at the beginning of the day. Children enjoy their time at the setting, they interact with each other and the staff well. They learn to share, take turns, develop a sense of independence, make friends and respect each other.

Children progress well in all areas of learning because staff have a good knowledge of the Early Years Foundation Stage framework and are confident to help children learn. Activities are planned well to ensure that all children are suitably challenged and all can succeed, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Staff have started to use sign language with children and they are picking this up quickly. Staff ask clear open questions during activities to help children think and problem solve, which include, 'how many do you have?', 'if you cut that in half how many will you have?' and 'how many does that make?'. Children have the chance to develop their imagination through role play and creative play, for example, two children were observed playing in the sand. They build a tower of sand and tell the staff they have made a volcano and they are hiding the dinosaurs in it. The member of staff responds very positively to this and develops the conversation so children think about how and what a volcano does. Children enjoy looking at books alone and with adults, they take great delight in listening and talking about the story with the adults. Snack time is a social time for all children, they choose where they would like to sit and staff sit with them. Discussions during this time include how many children are at the table, how many cups and plates are needed, and what they children have done during the session and at home. Staff work hard and use the good range of balanced resources and the well-planned activities to provide interesting, stimulating activities for the children.

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?	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 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.