

St Augustines Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number EY263188
Inspection date 09/02/2009
Inspector Shirley Ann Jackson

Setting address Matson House, Matson Lane, Matson, Gloucester,
Gloucestershire, GL4 6ED

Telephone number 01452 384442

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

St Augustine's Playgroup, a committee run group, offers care for up to 24 children aged from two years, six months to the end of the early years age group. The group is registered on the Early Years Register. The playgroup has 62 children on roll aged from two to four years. The group is in receipt of free early years education. The group can support children with learning difficulties or disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language.

The playgroup is open Monday to Friday, term-time only, from 09:00 to 12:00 and 12:30 to 15:30. Monday, Thursday and Friday morning sessions and Tuesday and Wednesday afternoon sessions are for pre-school children only.

Fundraising has enabled the playgroup to purchase their own premises where they moved to in 2003. This consists of a purpose-built cabin, offering an open-plan play room, kitchenette and toilet facilities. It is situated on the Selwyn site, home also to Jesters Soft Play Centre, within the Matson area of Gloucester. Also in close proximity are Moat Primary School and Gloucester Ski Centre and Country Club. The group has the use of a spacious, secure, outdoor grassed area and secure, hard-surfaced tennis courts.

A team of six staff are employed to care for the children, three of whom hold level three qualifications and one holds a level two qualification. Two members of staff are currently on training to achieve recognised qualifications. All staff are trained in first aid and child protection and five of them hold food hygiene certificates. Staff are supported at each session by parents, on a duty rota. The group receives support from the local authority.

Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall, the quality of the provision is inadequate. Learning opportunities at the setting have significant weaknesses that limit the progress and personal development of children. Observations and assessments are in place but are not used effectively to identify the next steps in children's learning. Staff provide a friendly environment where both children and parents feel welcome, however, parents have limited involvement in their children's learning. Links with other settings delivering the Early Years Foundation Stage have not been forged. Children's welfare is adequately promoted by staff. The setting has limited procedures in place to reflect on the setting's strengths and areas for development.

Overall, the early years provision requires significant improvement. The registered person is given a Notice to Improve that sets out actions to be carried out.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To comply with the requirements of the EYFS the registered person must take the

following action by the specified date:

- plan and organise systems to ensure that every child receives an enjoyable and challenging learning and development experience that is tailored to meet their individual needs (Organisation) 09/04/2009
- ensure Ofsted is informed of any change to the person who is managing the early years provision (Suitable people) 10/02/2009

To improve the early years provision the registered person should:

- build links with other providers offering the Early Years Foundation Stage to ensure all adults take part in assessment and so that there is continuous and consistent care
- involve parents in their child's learning by gathering information on their starting points, encourage parents to review their child's progress and contribute meaningfully to this process
- consider linking the indoor and outdoor environments so that children can move freely between them and ensure all areas of learning are offered outdoors
- develop the key person relationship with children and parents to enable children to build a genuine bond; consider providing a second key person for children so that when the main key person is away there is a familiar and trusted person who knows the child well
- encourage a culture of reflective practice, self-evaluation and informed discussion to identify the setting's strengths and priorities for development and consider involving children and parents in this process

The leadership and management of the early years provision

Children's welfare is adequately safeguarded at the setting. Risk assessments are in place and are regularly reviewed. A daily check of the areas used by the children is conducted by staff before children arrive, to ensure their safety. All staff hold current child protection certificates and are aware of the indicators of abuse and neglect. Most policies and procedures are in place and are shared appropriately with staff and parents. There is a strong staff team who are enthusiastic and clear about their roles and responsibilities. Staff are appropriately qualified for their roles within the group. However, the regulator has not been informed of changes to the play leaders.

Partnerships with parents and carers are sound. Parents are given a helpful prospectus when they first approach the group, but some of the detail is out of date. Ongoing information is then shared through newsletters, an informative notice board and informal feedback at the end of the day. Parents are not encouraged to share what they know their child can do when they first start at the setting. They are not actively encouraged to become involved in their child's learning or to comment on their progress records in a meaningful way. The setting

has not built any links with other settings which children attend to ensure consistency and continuity of care and education.

Recommendations raised at the last inspection have not been fully addressed. Staff at the group are not aware of any action plan which has been put in place to address these issues. Consequently, some of the weaknesses, such as, making the outdoor area available simultaneously with the indoor environment, are still areas for improvement. The group reflects on their practice following visits from the local authority mentor and following training. However, they have not identified areas for improvement nor is there an action plan in place highlighting how the group will improve the service offered to children and parents.

The quality and standards of the early years provision

Adults' knowledge of the learning and development requirements is inadequate. The pace of learning is not appropriate for children to make satisfactory gains in their knowledge, skills and understanding. Activities are often not matched to children's stage of development, what they know and what they can do. Although staff are observing children during their play, this information is not used to plan for each child's next steps in their learning and development. Adult-led activities are used by staff to mark a checklist if children take part with a brief comment about how well they completed the task. However, this is often not relevant to an area of learning and does not give staff a realistic view of children's achievements. Other adults, including parents, carers and other providers are not sufficiently involved in promoting children's learning and development. Staff at the group have been unable to attend training for the Early Years Foundation Stage, but they do have access to the statutory framework and guidance.

Children attending the group settle well and are soon involved in the activities offered. The group has a key person system in place, but this needs to be developed further to ensure that each child's needs are fully met. Older children have a positive approach to activities and events, for example, they move confidently from one activity to another. Children play cooperatively with one another, for example, one child asked another child to "go in there so we can play together". Older children are aware of the boundaries in the setting, for example, they know that at story time they need to "listen". Most children talk confidently to people who are familiar to them. Children have opportunities to paint but are not routinely encouraged to name their own work or learn about mark making for different purposes, such as, in the role play area. Children's maths skills are promoted through songs and rhymes, but other methods used are not always age appropriate. For example, making a caterpillar with numbered circles with younger children and dot to dot worksheets with older children. Staff do not routinely use everyday experiences to develop children's maths skills in a meaningful way. Children have daily opportunities to play outdoors, but this tends to be for them to enjoy fresh air and exercise rather than taking part in planned outdoor activities. The outdoor play area is not freely available, covering all areas of learning, particularly for those children who learn best outdoors. Children play imaginatively using their own first-hand experiences, but the role play area is not stimulating or exciting for the children. Craft resources are not freely accessible for children to be

able to create spontaneously.

Children are offered healthy and nutritious snacks during each session. However, snack time is not a social occasion as staff do not sit with the children. Some children spend some time waiting as they wait to be called up table by table to wash their hands and then stand in line for their food. Drinks are freely available to children during the session as some bring a water bottle from home and cups and a jug of water are provided by the group. This ensures children stay hydrated and builds their independence skills. Children learn about positive hygiene practices as they readily wash their hands before eating and after messy play. Children learn about how to keep themselves safe as they take part in regular fire drills. This ensures they know what to do in an emergency situation. Staff are positive role models for the children. They are calm and friendly and treat the children with kindness and respect. Children follow this lead and their behaviour is good.

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?	4
How well does the provision promote inclusive practice?	3
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement.	4

Leadership and management

How effectively is provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	4
How effective is the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement?	4
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?	4
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?	4
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.