

Dagnall Under Fives

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number EY260853
Inspection date 28/01/2009
Inspector Paula Jane Hayhow

Setting address Dagnall Village Hall, Dunstable Road, Dagnall,
Berkhamsted, Hertfordshire, HP4 1RG

Telephone number 07816 358342

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).

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

Dagnall Under Five's Playgroup opened in 1975 and is run by a voluntary management committee. It operates from two rooms within the Village Hall in Dagnall, Hertfordshire. A ramp to the main entrance means that the premises are accessible. Children have access to the fully enclosed outdoor play area.

The setting is open each weekday during term-time and sessions are from 9.30 to 12.00 school term times only. For the last half term of the academic year additional afternoon sessions are included from 12.00 to 14.00 on days when the hall is available. A maximum of 32 children may attend the setting at any one time. There are 32 places for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) and there are currently 28 children attending who are within this age group. Children live locally. Five children attend other settings such as a playgroup or a childminder.

The setting can also offer care to children aged over five years to eight years. This provision is registered by Ofsted on the Early Years Register and the compulsory part of the Childcare Register. Children occupying these places share the same facilities as the children in the Early Years age group. There are currently no children attending within this age group at present. There are six staff members. Of these, four hold relevant childcare certificates and one is completing training to achieve a recognised qualification.

Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall, Dagnall Under Fives Playgroup makes good provision for children in the EYFS. The flexible and organised approach to planning takes account of children's individual uniqueness and their developmental abilities, which enables them to participate meaningfully in all the stimulating activities provided. Their learning is monitored through ongoing observations from key workers, who plan for and individually identify each child's next area of learning. Staff build good relationships with parents and carers who are routinely involved in the children's learning. The play leader works alongside staff reviewing practice, realistically identifying the setting's strengths and uses her clear vision for improvement to ensure that children are offered positive play and learning experiences.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- ensure that hazards to children, both indoors and outside, are kept to a minimum; this refers to the access to the kitchen and carrying out fire drills more frequently
- develop the outings policy to include a risk assessment for each outing undertaken assessing the required adult: child ratios and reviewing it before embarking on each outing

- develop the initial assessment of children so that these are used to influence the planning when children first start and ensure that focus activity planning, records how the learning will be extended for the more and less-abled child.

The leadership and management of the early years provision

Robust policies and procedures relating to the operationally running of the group ensure that children are safe and their welfare is being well promoted. There is a clear recruitment system to check that all staff and helpers are suitable to work with children. This is complimented by a thorough induction process, daily discussions, planning meetings and an appraisals system. The play leader has implemented processes to monitor and evaluate the provision which ensures that improvements are made where necessary such as accessing funding for a more stimulating outdoor play area. Other systems include staff observations, risk assessment, action plans and self-evaluation forms. Any action identified is promptly completed such as the completion of the recommendations raised previously and children and parent questionnaires being devised to ascertain future improvements. The play leader and staff work very well with parents and carers. This ensures that there is a clear exchange of information in order to consistently promote children's learning and development such as daily dialogue, newsletters, information cards and children's working profiles being readily available to parents. The parent's committee are fully supportive of the staff, reviewing committee member's roles and responsibilities, supporting playgroup visits to the train, sports day and fund raising. The setting maintains good links with other provisions and childminders caring for the children through exchange of visits, letters and newsletters which document the current learning goals and activities being explored.

The manager and staff have procedures in place ensuring that hazards are minimised and that children can move around independently, freely accessing their chosen activities. However, children's safety could be affected as they have access to the kitchen which contains some hazardous items and fire drills are not carried out frequently enough for them to become conversant with what action to take in an emergency. Risk assessment plans include all areas of the premises and action plans are completed promptly. However, children's safety could be affected as the outing procedure does not include a risk assessment for all outings undertaken. Staff know the children well and settling-in assessment include many of their likes, dislikes and care needs. Staff organise many activities for children to enjoy and include a focus activity relating to themes and particular areas of learning such as making lucky bags for Chinese New Year. However, the initial assessment of children does not include their capabilities and the focus activity planning does not consistently record how children's learning could be extended for the more and less-abled child. This could prevent the children's learning plans being promoted fully when they first start or on an ongoing basis.

The quality and standards of the early years provision

Children are consistently offered a stimulating range of activities and opportunities which enable them to make good progress towards the Early Learning Goals. Planning is based on clear observations and assessments of the children including ongoing information gained from parents and staff from other settings which ensures that the individual needs of all children are met. For example, a picture time table, suggested by another setting, helps children who have difficulties understanding what is happening next in the playgroup. Staff are well trained with a good commitment to improving their childcare knowledge and they ensure that methods used to develop children's understanding of the world around them reflect each child's unique way of learning. Key worker staff knowing the children well, documenting their next steps of learning, their achievements and recording their progress in individual profiles which are used when planning future activities.

Staff support children well and encouraging them to be active in their learning and to think critically. For example, they learn about melting ice, how it feels and the texture of it when it slips through their fingers. Children gain an appreciation of a community as they receive visits from the police, fire and veterinary nurse or walk to their allotment to see how big the pumpkin has grown. Children enjoy themes and projects such as one linked to Chinese New Year. They make pretend restaurants, eat Chinese snacks with chop sticks and printed Chinese words such as 'good luck' on their lucky bags. Children develop their physical skills through daily keep fit sessions and manipulative skills when using craft implements. The comprehensive planning of the environment and the presentation of resources encourage children to self-select and initiate their own learning. For example, children improve their confidence and independent through activities such as using programmable machines with proficiency, pouring their own drinks and co-operatively packing away the play activities with friends. Children enjoy session with 'Salley', the squirrel, who encourages them to listen, take turns and identify sounds and letters thus gaining good skills for learning and communication.

Staff have a good understanding of creating a safe and welcoming environment in which risk is minimised and children learn to take care of themselves such as discussing stranger danger and practicing road safety on their walks in the village. Staff ensure that children are nourished through well balanced snacks which they help to prepare and are actively encouraged to understand the importance of washing hand and a wholesome diet. The staff have a sound understanding of child protection and are able to implement their policies appropriately.

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?	3

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?	3
How well are children helped to stay safe?	3
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 B: the Childcare Register

The provider confirms that the requirements of the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are:

Met

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.

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.