

Crossways Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	139331
Inspection date	20/01/2009
Inspector	Samantha Powis

Setting address	Village Hall, Moigne Combe Road, Crossways, Dorchester, Dorset, DT2 8JA
Telephone number	01305 853466
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

Crossways Playgroup opened approximately 27 years ago and operates from the village hall in the rural village of Crossways, 6 miles from the county town of Dorchester in Dorset. The hall is divided into two areas. One area including toilet facilities is used solely by the playgroup. The other area is used for physical activities. Staff have access to the kitchen, storage room and adult toilets. There is an enclosed outdoor play area included in the registration. The playgroup is run by a committee.

The playgroup is open Monday to Friday, term time only from 09.00 to 12.00. A lunch club operates from 12.00 to 12.55 on Tuesdays and Thursdays. The setting is registered on the Early Years Register to provide care for up to 24 children. There are currently 36 on roll, all of whom are in the early years age group.

The playgroup employs a qualified play leader who holds NVQ Level 3 in child care and education. She is supported by four members of staff, three of whom have, or are working towards, a recognised child care qualification. The setting receives support and advice from the local authority.

Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Children are happy and safe within the playgroup as they are supported by the caring staff team. They are offered a suitable range of activities which keep them busy and involved during the session, but at times these lack sufficient challenge. Staff have an adequate understanding of children's needs and consider these when planning the daily routines to benefit children's health and well-being. There are basic systems in place for the setting to evaluate strengths and weaknesses, which limits their ability to secure future improvement.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- continue to develop staff's awareness of the Early Years Foundation Stage, and of how they can use this to better support children's learning and development
- produce and implement a clear procedure to be followed when recruiting new staff, to ensure children's safety is fully promoted
- make regular observations and assessments of children's achievements, interests and learning styles, and use these to identify learning priorities and plan relevant learning experiences for each child
- review the organisation of the areas within the playgroup, to ensure children are provided with an accessible and challenging environment in which to play and learn.

The leadership and management of the early years provision

Children's safety is supported due to the generally effective practices and procedures followed by staff. Checks are frequently made on indoor and outdoor areas to ensure they are suitable for use. Staff are generally confident in the procedures regarding child protection, which helps them to safeguard children's welfare. However, there is no clear procedure in place regarding staff recruitment, to ensure children's safety is fully protected in the event of a new member of staff being appointed. Daily routines and the procedures implemented by staff generally support children's ongoing health. Staffing levels ensure children are well supervised at all times, and most staff hold a first aid qualification, which ensures any minor accidents can be dealt with effectively. Consideration is given to promoting safety when organising the playgroup environment, for example, safety mats are placed under climbing equipment to prevent children hurting themselves should they fall. However, there are some areas within the main room which are not presented well to encourage children's full involvement. The setting have developed some strong links with the local school to which most children go on to attend, this supports the transition from playgroup to school.

Parents are provided with detailed information about the setting and are introduced to the Early Years Foundation Stage, which enables them to further support their children's learning at home. Useful information is exchanged through the two-way diaries, which record children's achievements at home and playgroup. Recently introduced 'all about me' books help staff to gain a better understanding of children's home lives and individual needs. This information will help staff to plan for children's progress. Parents report good relationships with staff and are offered many opportunities to discuss their child's development with their key person.

The setting relies on feedback from outside professionals to identify areas for development. There are no formal systems in place to use self-evaluation to monitor and evaluate their own practice. Some progress has been made since the last inspection which improves children's health and safety, however, areas relating to children's learning and development which were identified previously, remain ongoing issues. Staff attend training when possible to develop and update their own knowledge, however, they have not all attended training on the Early Years Foundation Stage. This means that they lack confidence in using the framework to better support children's learning and development.

The quality and standards of the early years provision

Children enjoy the interaction they receive from adults within the setting. Staff plan routines to suit children's needs, for example, all the children have opportunities to take part in the shake and wake session and physical play activities on arrival. Children move confidently around the playgroup and are able to make choices in what they play with. They seek support and guidance from caring adults, who take time to support children who are new to the group, helping them to feel secure and settled. There is space within the playgroup for children to

engage in a range of activities, however, the areas are not always set up well to encourage children's full involvement. For example, the role play area is cluttered with resources and not organised to encourage children to engage in purposeful play.

Children are developing an awareness of healthy lifestyles through their daily routines as they enjoy regular exercise both indoors and out, eat healthy snacks and are reminded to follow appropriate personal hygiene procedures. Children's physical development is supported very well as they have many opportunities to use a wide range of equipment to develop balance, control and co-ordination. Children learn about safety as they take part in practising the evacuation procedures, learning the routine so they are confident in the event of an emergency.

Children are developing a sense of belonging, they are welcomed into the setting by familiar staff and enjoy seeing the photo's of themselves and their friends on display. Children enjoy sharing books and listening to stories, some children tell a story to a small group of their friends, demonstrating their increasing confidence in communicating. Children see their own name written on wall displays, but are not often encouraged to have a go at writing their own name to label their work. Children engage in some number work as they take part in register time, they count the number of children present and talk about whether this is a big or small number. Daily routines and practical activities are not always used well to support children's learning further. For example, children are unable to pour their own drinks at snack time to increase their independence and there are no opportunities for children to use mark making in the role play areas to encourage them to engage in writing for a purpose. Children enjoy having opportunities to explore different materials. For example, they use a range of objects which they put in tubs to make shakers, they compare the sound the heavy beads make to the sound the dried pasta makes and comment on why no sound is made if the tub is too full. Overall, planning ensures children have opportunities to engage in activities which cover all six areas of learning. Staff have not yet established a clear system to make observations and use these to help them plan for children's progress. This means that many activities lack sufficient challenge to encourage all children to take the next step in their learning.

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?	3
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?	3
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?	3

Quality and standards

How effectively are children in the Early Years Foundation Stage helped to learn and develop?	3
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?	3
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 since the last inspection that required Ofsted to take action.

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.