

Uplands Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number 101750
Inspection date 04/02/2009
Inspector Gail Robertson

Setting address Thompson Road, Uplands, Stroud, Gloucester, GL5 1TE

Telephone number 01453 762205

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

Uplands Playgroup opened in 1985 and operates from a mobile in the grounds of Upland Primary School. If wheelchair access is needed there is a ramp available because the entrance to the playgroup is via a small number of steps.

A maximum of 20 children may attend the playgroup at any one time. The playgroup is open each weekday from 09.00 to 12.00 during the school term only. Children share access to a secure enclosed play area. The playgroup is on the Early Years Register and is registered to take up to 20 children aged two years to five years at one time. However, currently the setting only takes a maximum number of 16 children in order to stay within recommended staffing ratios, because there are never more than two members of staff on duty. There are currently 23 children from under three to under five on roll, of these 16 receive funding for nursery education.

Children who attend come from the local area. Children with additional needs are fully supported although there are none on the register at this time. The playgroup employs three staff. All staff members apart from the administrator hold an appropriate early years qualification.

Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Children are happy, have fun whilst learning and develop well at Uplands playschool. The staff ensure that all children are safe, included well and have an enjoyable time working on the planned activities that suit their needs and interests. The staff and committee know what works well in the playgroup and show a good capacity to make any necessary improvements. Parents are keen to offer help and are a valuable partner in their child's education.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- continue to improve the assessments and observations of children's development that contribute to the learning journals
- ensure that the member of staff with responsibility for children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities receives up to date training so that she is better placed to carry out the role
- improve planning by including fully the children's interests

To fully meet the specific requirements of the EYFS, the registered person must:

- keep a complaints book or file (Documentation) 31/03/2009
- make sure all policies are signed by the committee chairman and dated (Documentation) 31/03/2009

The leadership and management of the early years provision

The playgroup leader is well organised and is building up a working partnership with the relatively new assistant. They work well together to make sure children have a safe, tidy, comfy, and busy place in which to work. The leader has plans to improve the provision and she takes into account parents' comments and suggestions. She has plans to involve children as she reported 'they know what they like and they have interesting opinions'. From the parent questionnaires, she realised that parents did not fully understand the purpose and procedures for complaints. The leader sent out a letter explaining the how, why and what to do if necessary, she talked to parents and now includes this in her discussions with new parents. However, the setting does not keep the required book or file of complaints, should any be made. The recommendations from the last inspection have been fully implemented, for example, all children now have free access to water inside and outside and there is more information about disability.

The leader and the committee evaluate what goes on in the setting effectively and then make good plans for any necessary improvements. The introduction of children's learning journals arose from greater knowledge of the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage documentation. The journals have been a good success, parents particularly commented upon how well staff know their children. The learning journals are at an early, but encouraging stage of development. Staff regularly assess their key group children by observing their learning and development, but as yet, these are not always entered fully in the learning journals. The play school works well with the primary school, the leader has very strong links with the reception teacher. She not only offers advice and makes suggestions; she is also the chairperson of the management committee. The partnership with parents is very strong. Parents are keen to support their children's learning and they appreciate the way that staff are approachable, kind and caring toward their children.

Parents are a valuable source of volunteer help in the setting. They work on a rota basis bringing enthusiasm and fun to the mornings' planned activities. Everyone involved with the setting work well as a team.

The committee meets regularly and manages the playgroup well. They have good input into the self evaluation process and enable the setting to improve by encouraging staff to attend training whenever it is needed. For example, the leader also has responsibility for children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Although keen to take on the role she has an urgent need to be trained to carry out the post effectively. Currently no children have such needs, even so the committee has sanctioned the training as a matter of importance.

All the necessary paperwork is well organised and filed so that it can be retrieved easily. There are effective safeguarding policies and procedures and these are implemented well to ensure children are safe at all times. However, these are not signed or dated, as required by the committee chairperson.

The quality and standards of the early years provision

Caring, diligent adults ensure that the children's welfare is safeguarded well. All children report that they have a good time, feel safe and like their activities. One said 'I like it outside, we have fun running and playing'. Staff plan interesting tasks and activities for the children to do that generally meet their needs and interests. However, the children's individual needs and particularly interests are not always identified sufficiently in planning. This makes assessing children's progress more difficult. Children show enthusiasm and make good progress when joining adults, for example, to make music together. Such typically enjoyable learning develops the children's personal skills well. On one occasion it began with one child playing the bells and soon a group gathered around the music boxes. They played together amicably, watching how the adults played the instruments and they soon followed creating sounds with the drums, tambourines, bells and other instruments from all over the world. Some sang happily and time passed very quickly.

At snack time children try out fruits and have a drink. They have a good awareness of healthy living and know before sitting down that they must wash their hands and dry them. Staff use the time to help children learn about healthy foods, being polite, having patience and importance of accurate counting. Children develop good independence as they make choices of fruit and a drink. Throughout the snack time adults allow the children to relax and children clearly show that they enjoy each other's company and chattering together.

Children simply love story time and show positive attitudes to their learning. The staff respond well to the children's interests at these times. Children join in eagerly and listen carefully adding in their comments when asked to do so. They look at the pictures and ask questions and then want the story read again. Staff encourage children to be independent, to make choices and work together so they learn to make a positive contribution to the playschool community. This happens as children share table top toys and at tidying up time when everyone helps to make the room smart again.

Staff plan opportunities and promote the children's physical development well, even when it is not possible to go outside. The children know what to do, how to keep safe and still have good levels of exercise on the climbing frame indoors. They know that they need to be aware of others in the room and keep their voices down. Parents commented on how much the children enjoyed the outdoor environment, particularly the boys. There is a good balance of well-planned indoor and outdoor activity. Outdoors children develop good knowledge and understanding of the world and learn about growing and what happens to seeds as they develop roots and shoots. They enjoy planting broad bean seeds and know that they must wash their hands after. Others knew that cress seeds should be watered as they were thirsty. Children develop good social, emotional, and communication skills, ensuring they are well prepared for the next steps in their education.

Children behave very well and respond to the high expectations of caring adults.

Children know that they must not run in the room and keep their voices down. They develop a clear understanding of how to be safe, how to make choices and eat sensibly.

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.