

The Learning Station Playschool

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number 113771
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Inspector Gail Robertson

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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

The Learning Station Playschool is a privately owned group and opened in 1998. It operates from Rose Green and Pagham Youth Centre, Rose Green, Bognor and is adjacent to Rose Green Infant School. The setting has links with the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) provision in the Infant School. The playschool serves the local and surrounding areas. The group share the premises, although have sole use of the building when sessions are running. There is easy access for all to the building.

The playschool is registered on the Early Years Register for a maximum of 26 children. The group is open Monday to Friday 09:00 - 12:00 during the school term. Children are provided with the option of bringing a packed lunch and staying for an additional 55 minutes.

Children stay for a variety of sessions and have access to an enclosed outside play area at the front of the building. There are currently 32 children from two years to under five years on roll. Of these, 26 children receive funding for nursery education. Some of the children have learning difficulties or disabilities and few have English as an additional language.

The owner is a qualified early years practitioner and works directly with the children across all sessions. In addition, five staff work with the children. Four practitioners are qualified and one is currently waiting for a placement to study a child care qualification. The owner is currently studying for a higher qualification leading to a teaching degree.

Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is satisfactory. Children have an enjoyable morning here. All children are fully included at all times. They readily try out the activities that staff plan for them to do. Parents speak well of the playschool reporting how their children want to come here, to play and meet their friends. Parents know that the staff take care of their children. Evaluation of what goes on and the action taken to improve practice shows that there is satisfactory capacity to make the playschool better.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- proceed with the learning journals to make a personalised summary of the children's learning and development and continue to involve the parents in the process
- develop the planning further to ensure that it reflects the children's interests
- complete a self-evaluation form that shows there is monitoring what goes on in the playschool, clearly identifying the priority areas for improvement

- keep detailed minutes of all staff meetings as an accurate record of what had been decided

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

- complete a fire drill termly and write up an evaluation
(Safeguarding and promoting children's welfare) 31/03/2009
- keep written records of the daily risk assessments
(Safeguarding and promoting children's welfare) 31/03/2009

The leadership and management of the early years provision

The owner and her staff are a good working team. They have regular staff meetings to discuss how they can improve the provision. The emphasis this term has been to look at children's achievement and the teaching of phonics. The owner and another member have received training and then in turn trained the rest of the staff. During the inspection a member of staff was seen helping children to recognise the sounds in their names to good effect and the children's learning needs were planned for in the day's activities. There is however no formal means of evaluating what goes on and minimal minutes from the staff meetings are kept. The importance of regular training to ensure the playschool improves is well understood by the owner and taken on board by all the adults. This shows that the setting has satisfactory capacity for continuous improvement.

The staff care for all the children. It is a priority in their work. The manager and staff are vigilant and ensure that the children are registered into the setting and a check made as to who will collect them at the end of the morning. Doors are locked at all times and the outside area is made secure before the children go out to play. The fire alarm system is on the same circuit as the infant school. Last term the fire alarm was activated by the infant school for a fire drill when the playschool was not in session. The owner and staff talk to the children about the procedure and what is expected of them and where they will go. The owner has been informed that the playschool accommodation is to have its own fire alarm circuit in the near future. There are rigorous policies for health and safety and the owner carries out a risk assessment check every morning but these are not always recorded.

Planning documentation in response to the new development matters has just begun. The staff take into account children's needs and have started to work out how they can also accommodate children's interests. They have carefully considered how they involve parents. A questionnaire asking parents to inform them of their children's likes and what they do at home was devised. There has been an excellent response from the parents. Planning is work in progress. The staff have made sharp assessments of what children can do however, the building up of children's learning journals has only just begun. A start has been made in putting together what a journal will look like and the staff have the assessments but as yet these have not been put together.

There are good relationships with the parents. Parents appreciate the information they receive and know their child's key worker. Parents reported that their children enjoyed coming and having fun especially outside play. The links with the Infants school are good. The term before children transfer they are helped through the transition by visiting their new school, classrooms and teachers with the playschool staff. Parents think this is 'terrific'. The links with other providers of pre-school education are equally as strong.

The quality and standards of the early years provision

Children run into the playschool looking expectantly at all the activities as soon as they arrive. They settle down quickly to the fun things to do. They work at what interests them and ask adults for what they need if it is not available. One boy went to the mark making table but decided he would make a telescope. The staff responded to him by providing him with masking tape to keep his rolled up paper together. Soon a group of children were observed copying him. The group then went on to make treasure maps. Staff joined in their world of make believe and took the opportunity to extend children's vocabulary and creativity. Children love drama and story time. They all went on a Bear hunt just before they had lunch. They watched the staff carefully carrying out the actions with gusto. They put so much energy into the exercise, that at the end they were able to feel their hearts beating faster! There is a good balance of child initiated activities and adult led tasks through out each session.

Staff encourage children to be independent and to make choices. At snack time they choose from fresh fruit and vegetables what they would like to eat and cut the portion if they think it is too big for them. Staff reported that the knife they use is a special one for children's use and a risk assessment had been carried out. Children also help themselves to a drink, carefully pouring the milk or water into a beaker. Staff use this time to teach children about healthy eating, to have good manners and a time to be social with each other.

Outside is a time for children to explore and have fun. Staff make sure they are well wrapped up to protect them against the rain and what fun they have in the puddles. They watch the mud move as they splash the water. Their laughter tells of their delight and glee in finding out how waterproof their Wellington boots are. Staff make observations whilst they are enjoying this big water play. Staff understand that children's learning is progressive and stems from their needs and interest. Children are well prepared for their next steps in their education.

Children learn to share, play together and have fun together. The staff know how to keep the children safe and keep up to date with their safe practices. Children behave well because they know what is expected of them. They know when they must wash their hands and change their footwear. Children are tired by the end of the session because they put all their energies into the activities and have such a good time at the Learning Station.

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?	2
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?	2
How well are children helped to enjoy and achieve?	3
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?	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.