

Thorpe on the Hill Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	253575
Inspection date	09/02/2009
Inspector	John Foster
Setting address	The Portacabin, Thorpe on the Hill CE School, School Lane, Thorpe on the Hill, Lincoln, Lincs, LN6 9BN
Telephone number	07949 371609
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

Thorpe on the Hill Playgroup opened in 1992. It is managed by a committee, the Trustees of Thorpe on the Hill Playgroup, and operates from a small demountable building in the grounds of the St Michael's Church of England School in Thorpe on the Hill, a small village on the outskirts of Lincoln. The setting serves the local community and surrounding rural areas.

The setting is registered on the Early Years Register and both the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. It can take a maximum of 12 children at any one time. There are currently 23 children aged from two-and-a-half to four years old on roll. This includes 16 funded three-year-olds and three funded four-year-old children. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The setting supports children who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities and there is full access for people with mobility difficulties and disabilities.

The group opens each weekday morning and also on Tuesday afternoons during school term time. Daily sessions are from 09.00 to 11.45 and on Tuesday's from 12.30 to 15.00.

Five part-time staff work with the children. Four members of staff have early years qualifications to NVQ Level 3. A newly appointed member of staff is currently working towards a recognised early years qualification. The setting has support from a curriculum adviser from the local authority Birth to three years service.

The setting is a member of the Pre-school Learning Alliance.

Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

The setting offers good provision for children in its care. Children find the playgroup welcoming and interesting so that they come in eager to learn. The wide range of activities helps them to develop in the broadest sense and as a result children make good progress in their learning. All children have the same opportunities to take part in all the activities planned. Children are cared for well and their parents stay closely involved in their education. Good leadership and management are achieved because the leader is well qualified for her role, leads by example and works well with her staff. They regularly review their work so that activities are planned well and meet the needs of all children effectively. This robust process ensures continuous improvements in the playgroup's provision.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- ensure that all staff have full and regular updates in training for child protection.
- ensure that all policies and information relating to the management of the

setting are organised in such a way as to be readily available for improving provision at all times.

The leadership and management of the early years provision

Leadership and management are good. Although there have been recent changes to the membership of the management committee it gives the playgroup good support. The playgroup is led well by the manager and she is ably supported by her staff. Together they form an effective team and ensure that all children are provided for well. Their approach to continually reviewing the effectiveness of their work, has had a positive impact on the type of activities offered to children, progress made by children and improvements made since the last inspection. They are in a good position to ensure continuous improvement. Effective systems are in place for ensuring that legal requirements are met including the recommendations for safeguarding children. However, staff need to update their qualifications for child protection and the manager has already agreed arrangements for them to join training taking place shortly in a neighbouring primary school. Whilst records, policies and procedures are up-to-date, they are not organised well enough to always link directly to the setting's work.

Policies are in place and procedures are well established, but even more effective organisation of these is required to make them more readily accessible for use in moving the setting forward. The day-to-day management is good. Each member of staff is clear about their roles and performs them well. Staff evaluate their practice well and use the results to plan and implement improvements. Each member of staff is responsible for keeping close oversight of a group of children. Within this role they undertake the responsibility for the group's welfare; making assessments and recording progress made by each child. Assessments relate to each of the Early Years Foundation Stage areas of learning and are undertaken carefully. The outcomes are regularly shared with the parents or carers of each child.

The activities organised for the children are good overall, but outdoor provision for learning is limited as the playgroup does not have its own outside area. However, the adjacent school makes its facilities available and this goes some way to remedying shortcomings.

There are good links with the parents. Each child's successes are shared with their parents and any concerns are discussed openly. As a result, parents feel involved in the education of their own child. A recent initiative involved parents in the planning of their own child's learning. Staff and parents discussed the child's interests and talents and together they planned a programme of learning. Evaluation of this approach demonstrated that children made good progress and the initiative has proved to be successful.

The quality and standards of the early years provision

Children enjoy their activities and are keen to learn. They arrive excited, anticipating the day ahead and happily say goodbye to their parents. The children settle to a wide range of activities which help them to develop in the broadest sense and make good progress in their learning. Children are being well prepared for starting school in the future. In the home corner some children play at making 'pizza' and serve this to their friends, which encourages co-operation, taking turns and good use of language. Others, involved in creative work using a mix of materials, enjoy using their imagination and there is much chatter about their work. Adults plan these activities well and effective assessment, improved since the last inspection, ensures every area of learning is included and well promoted along with children's welfare. Good planning enables staff to maintain a sharp focus on engaging children actively in learning and becoming independent.

At the time of the visit there had been a significant snowfall. This event was used well as an opportunity for learning. Children were engaged in talking about making snowmen and about how big they were. This encouraged the use of mathematical language such as the height and shape of their snowmen. Staff brought trays of snow inside so the children could play with, touch and feel the snow. This worked well in developing their language and communication skills. When working outside in the snow, children behaved safely and were helped to stay safe.

Staff frequently draw children together to share in discussions or listen to a story. Children contribute well and express themselves confidently when talking about what they have done; for example, over the weekend. In story time they listen attentively and are keen to share thoughts about the story.

Children are encouraged to eat healthily and at snack time they have a choice of healthy drinks and pre-prepared snacks. As they go out to play, children are expected to put on their own coats. Throughout their time at playgroup children are taught to appreciate the wishes, feelings and views of other children and mix well with people. This was particularly evident when one little boy volunteered to help the manager with clearing away some of the toys that had been used that day.

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 B: the Childcare Register

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