

Pilgrims Way Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	EY273751
Inspection date	05/03/2009
Inspector	Jane Richmond

Setting address	The Leys Primary school, Ripon Road, Stevenage, Hertfordshire, SG1 4QZ
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Telephone number	01438 369 519
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Email

Type of setting	Childcare on non-domestic premises
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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

Pilgrims Way Playgroup is managed by a voluntary committee. It has been open for over 20 years and moved to its current premises in 2003. It operates from one room within The Leys Primary School, situated in a residential area of Stevenage, Hertfordshire. A maximum of 26 children may attend the playgroup at any one time. It is open each weekday during term time only. The morning sessions are from 08.40 to 11.40 and the afternoon sessions are from 12.30 to 15.00. All children have access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 59 children from two to under five years of age on roll. Of these, 14 children receive funding for nursery education. Children come from the local catchment area. The playgroup currently supports a number of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and also supports an increasing number of children who speak English as an additional language.

The setting employs seven staff. The manager and four other members of staff hold appropriate early years qualifications. Two staff members are working towards Level 3 qualifications. The setting is registered on the Early Years Register and both the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register.

Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of provision at Pilgrims Way Playgroup is good. It successfully meets the needs of children in the early years. Children very happily come to the setting and settle well to a range of activities. Parents are pleased with the welcome they and the progress their children make. A good range of well planned activities enables children to enjoy their time in the playgroup and make good progress. Those in charge recognise children's individual needs and as part of their inclusive approach seek assistance when appropriate so that children have access to effective support. Although systems for self-evaluation are at an early stage of development, the playgroup leader is reflective, open to suggestions and is ensuring that improvements are made for the benefit of the children. Consequently, capacity for continuous improvement is good.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- practise fire drills even more frequently to ensure that children are very familiar with the procedure
- extend children's assessment records so that the progress made by children is very clear.

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

- notify Ofsted of any change to staffing or committee
- 03/04/2009

members so that records are up-to-date, easily accessible and available for inspection.
(Documentation)

The leadership and management of the early years provision

The provision is well led through a determined and professional approach to ensuring that all children make good progress within a safe and secure environment. Recruitment has been carefully managed to ensure that there is a common sense of purpose and children are cared for within a consistent and caring environment. All staff are enthusiastic about developing and improving their skills. There is a good climate of reflection, self-evaluation and review which enables the leader to identify accurately where improvements are needed and to devise strategies to address them. Consequently there is good capacity to continue to improve. The day-to-day organisation of the setting enables it to run very smoothly. There have been a significant number of changes to personnel in the recent past and while appropriate safeguarding checks have been carried out the setting has not kept Ofsted informed of these changes as required.

There is a good balance of activities which allows children to explore their environment, develop social skills and learn basic language and numeracy skills. Vetting, risk assessment and health and safety procedures are particularly robust and ensure that the children are cared for in a highly safe and secure environment. Nevertheless, there is scope to practise fire drills even more frequently so that children are confident and knowledgeable about the procedures to follow in the event of an evacuation. Links made with outside agencies and other providers ensure that children's learning difficulties and/or disabilities are identified and addressed. Partnership with parents is good. They recognise what the setting has to offer and appreciate that their children's welfare has a high priority. For example, parents and children appreciate how they are greeted at the beginning and end of each day so that the transition from home to setting, and vice versa, is smooth and straightforward.

The quality and standards of the early years provision

In this safe, calm, caring environment, children learn how to understand their feelings and communicate with others in respectful ways. They enjoy eating their healthy snacks and successfully learn how to make choices which could impact on their later health. The opportunities they have both within the setting and beyond encourage them to enjoy taking exercise and develop an understanding of taking 'safe' risks. The variety of cultures and nationalities within the setting enables children to learn how to play harmoniously with those from different ethnic groups and cultures. As a result of careful support and guidance by adults, children learn to develop a sense of responsibility for themselves and others.

The high quality planning and the increasing use of assessments help staff to know the children well. This is enabling them to identify the next steps in the children's

development and to provide suitably challenging experiences. For instance, a child with poor balancing skills was encouraged to walk across the balancing steps holding an adult's hand before trying it by himself. Children exhibiting a love of music were encouraged to use rhythm and song in their use of musical instruments. The work that all children produce is valued and staff have rightly identified the need to record children's progress in even more detail to ensure even better continuity and progression in learning. Adults are very well deployed to encourage children to make the most of their learning experiences through discussion and demonstration. However, more could be done to encourage the children to talk to each other. Some strategies are in place to assist children with English as an additional language to develop their understanding of English, and the leadership is aware that more needs to be done to develop this area. Parents are well supported in helping their children to develop successful attitudes to learning.

Staff are highly committed to promoting all children's social, physical and economic well-being. Visits to local shops to support cooking and letter writing activities enable children to develop an understanding of money and visits to local parks help them to understand the changing seasons. Behaviour is very well managed and all staff have recently attended training on positive behaviour management, although the policy is in need of updating. Children at risk are identified and parents and relevant agencies involved at an early stage. All children are well cared for and thrive in this secure and welcoming environment.

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?	1

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.