

Bathampton Play Group

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspector Beverly Anne Brimble

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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 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

Bathampton Play Group has been registered since 1977. The group is situated in the local village hall in Bathampton, a village on the outskirts of Bath. The group have access to a main hall and side room. All rooms are on the ground floor with toilet and kitchen facilities available. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area. The group is open Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday mornings, from 09.15 to 12.00, during term times. Children attending the play group are mainly from the local area and surrounding villages.

The play group is registered on the Early Years Register. A maximum of 24 children may attend at any one time. There are currently 30 children on roll, all of whom are in the early years age group. The play group is registered to receive government funding for nursery education. The nursery supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

The play group is run by a committee who employ three members of staff to care for the children. Two of these staff hold appropriate early years qualifications to level 3, and one is working towards a level 3 qualification in childcare.

Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is satisfactory. All children are welcomed into the playgroup and good support is given to them and their families. Children are happy, settled and benefit from the comfortable and friendly atmosphere, which helps them feel valued and secure. They enjoy their time in the playgroup and appropriate learning opportunities are provided to sufficiently meet the children's needs and promote their welfare. Children are recognised as individuals and staff work successfully with parents to provide an inclusive environment. The staff team and committee demonstrate a positive attitude to further improving the provision and are beginning to use self-evaluation to identify areas for development.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- maintain a record of emergency evacuation practices
- further improve opportunities for children to develop their independence, particularly at snack time and to self-select activities
- use information gained from observation and assessment, to identify accurate next steps for each child which build upon what they already know and can do, to ensure children make the best possible progress
- develop systems to liaise with other providers delivering the EYFS for children to ensure progression and continuity of learning and care
- ensure regular staff appraisals are carried out to identify training needs of staff
- continue to develop systems for self-evaluation to help identify weakness or

build on already good practice in order to promote continuous improvement of the provision and outcomes for children.

The leadership and management of the early years provision

Staff are effectively deployed to promote children's welfare and development. The staff team work closely together and provide a warm, caring and stimulating environment for children. Systems ensure that children are kept safe in the setting. Clear risk assessments and daily safety checks are completed for both the indoor and outside environments, identifying and minimising potential hazards. The children are involved in regular emergency evacuation procedure practices to further promote safety, however, records to show these practices have been carried out are not maintained. Staff demonstrate a good understanding of their role and responsibilities in protecting children and are aware of correct procedures to follow if they have concerns about a child in their care. There is a clear safeguarding policy in place to support practice and help to protect children from harm. Robust recruitment and vetting systems ensure the suitability of staff and further promote children's safety. Staff attend a variety of training courses, although their continuing professional development is not reflected or monitored as regular appraisals for all members of staff are not carried out.

Staff build strong partnerships with parents and carers. They have recently introduced a questionnaire, which allows parents to contribute their thoughts and ideas, and the staff and voluntary committee are beginning to act upon these comments. The active involvement of parents as members of the management committee, and participating in the duty rota, enables them to be involved in supporting their children's learning. Parents feel well informed about their children's progress and achievements. They attend parent consultation meetings with key-workers and fill out feedback forms which are included in their children's progress records. Some of the children at the playgroup also attend other early years settings, however, systems to share information with all of these other Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) providers have yet to be developed.

The setting has made improvements since the last inspection, as previous recommendations have been addressed. Partnerships with parents have been improved as they now contribute to their children's learning and are made aware of the complaints procedure. Steps to implement some systems for self-evaluation have been taken, such as using the Ofsted self-evaluation form and parents questionnaires. These systems are still in their infancy though, and, as yet, are not fully effective in identifying all areas for improvement. Monitoring systems and self-evaluation are an ongoing area for development.

The quality and standards of the early years provision

Staff have built caring and positive relationships with the children, and actively support children in their learning by positively interacting with them at individual and group level. Children show good communication skills as they initiate conversations with their peers and adults. They are eager to share what they like

doing at playgroup, stating 'I like playing with the water' and 'I like going outside'. Older children confidently copy the letters of their name and younger ones start to practise their writing skills by tracing letters. Children start to make choices about their own play and learning as they choose from the wide range of toys and activities set out and they can ask for further resources that have not been set out. However, systems to show children what resources are available and enable them to select independently are not in place. Children make relationships with each other, they seek out friends to play with and enjoy each other's company. They work cooperatively together during play, for example, to build a train track. Children love listening to stories, as they are read to from a book at story time or as 'listening books' played on audio equipment. They sit in small groups wearing headphones as they listen to a story being played from a compact disc; there is no book but the children sit mesmerised by what they hear, concentrating well and not attempting to move until the story has finished.

Staff have a secure understanding of the EYFS and how children learn. They use this knowledge to plan a wide range of activities and play opportunities which enable children to make sound progress in all areas of learning. Staff use ongoing observation and assessments to monitor children's learning and development. Children have individual learning diaries which include photographs, observations and examples of their work to show their progress towards the early learning goals. However, present systems do not always effectively use the information gained from observations to accurately identify the next steps for learning across all areas, to ensure children's individual learning and development is continually promoted and builds upon what they already know.

Children learn about a healthy lifestyle. They have regular opportunities to benefit from fresh air during outside play and take part in physical activities, such as playing on the climbing frame or riding tricycles. They learn good hygiene routines as they wash their hands after using the toilet, before eating and after messy play. Children start to develop their independence as they hang their belongings on their coat pegs when they arrive and ask to go to the toilet. However, children's independence is not always fully encouraged, particularly at snack times when drinks are poured ready for them, and their lunch boxes are handed to them by staff. Children's welfare is effectively promoted. Staff constantly praise the children, which builds their self-esteem and encourages them to behave well. Staff closely supervise the children to keep them safe, and their warm caring interaction enables the children to feel secure. Children learn about safety through everyday routines and activities, such as tidying away the toys and learning how to use scissors safely. Staff also offer clear explanations to help about safety. For example, when a child finds a mushroom in the garden and asks 'can we eat it?', the member of staff explains why you should always tell a grown up if you find a mushroom and not to touch it; another child then states 'in case it is poisonous'.

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?	2

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?	2
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?	3
How well are children helped develop skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being?	3

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