

Lakenham Pre School Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	254136
Inspection date	05/06/2009
Inspector	Lesley Gadd
Setting address	Jubilee Community Centre, Long John Hill, Norwich, Norfolk, NR1 2EX
Telephone number	01603 616957
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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

Lakenham Pre-school Playgroup is run by a committee of parents and carers. It opened in 1998 and operates from the main hall within a single storey community centre in the city of Norwich. The building is easily accessible and there are toilets for people using wheelchairs. Children and staff make use of an adjoining outside park and the playgroup opens Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Fridays from 09.30 until 11.45 during term-time only.

The playgroup is registered on the Early Years Register. A maximum of 24 children may attend at any one time. There are currently 28 children on roll, who are in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), aged from two to under five years. The playgroup welcomes children with disabilities and/or learning difficulties and children with English as a second language.

There are five members of staff, three of whom hold appropriate early years qualifications, one who is on maternity leave and one staff who is starting training shortly.

Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is satisfactory. Children are happy in this caring environment and their welfare is given generally sound consideration by staff and committee. Systems in place are effective in supporting children with particular needs and the group has started the process of self-evaluation to identify further areas for improvement. Children are making steady progress with their learning and development. However, assessments of children's skills and the planning of activities are not yet securely established and not all areas of learning are robustly supported. The partnership with parents is often sound and links are developing with other provisions the children attend to support their care and learning.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- make sure risk assessments cover anything with which a child may come into contact
- consistently use observations and assessments to identify learning priorities and plan relevant and motivating learning experiences for each child
- make sure there is time and space, both indoors and outdoors throughout the session, for children to concentrate on activities and experiences, develop their own interests and select resources independently
- provide further routine opportunities for children to experience numbers, stories, develop their phonological awareness and their critical thinking through the use of open questioning.

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

- ensure risk assessments are kept that show by whom they were carried out, the date of review and any action taken following a review or incident (Documentation) 17/07/2009
- ensure records, particularly current paediatric first aid certificates held by staff, are easily accessible and available for inspection (Documentation). 17/07/2009

The leadership and management of the early years provision

Most staff hold relevant qualifications and work well together to ensure children's welfare needs are met. Work has started on self-evaluation and the new committee and local advisors are offering on-going support to help the group move forward and improve the service for all users. For example, a computer and digital camera are being borrowed from the local Children's Centre for the children to use, and help them learn about technology, and staff are undertaking regular training about the EYFS to continue to further develop their knowledge and skills. Progress has been made on most actions from the last inspection, including ensuring Ofsted is informed regarding new committee members and that the outdoor park area is secure when used by the setting. However, further work is required with regard to risk assessment documentation and planning activities for individual children.

Children are generally safe and secure as staff undertake a visual sweep of areas used before children arrive and complete written daily risk assessment checklists. However, they do not record by whom the risk assessment checklists are undertaken or show the date of reviews and any action taken following a review or incident. The risk assessment checklists do not cover everything a child comes into contact with inside or on outings to the adjoining park. Staff have a clear understanding about safeguarding procedures. As a result, they know what action to take if they have concerns so that children may be appropriately protected.

Partnerships with parents are sound. Several parents express satisfaction with the group, commenting on the fact that their children 'love attending' and they are consulted regarding the children's care requirements before they start to attend to ensure children's welfare needs are met. The setting has established times to undertake regular reviews with parents about children's learning to further support children's development. Parents are included in complete assessments which are in place for children with disability and/or learning requirements and additional services are accessed to ensure these children's needs are fully met. Policies are in place which inform parents about a range of matters in relation to the children's care, including what they can do if they have a complaint about the service. However, records that demonstrate staff have up-to-date skills in paediatric first aid are not easily accessible and therefore, parents cannot be quickly reassured about their children's care in this regard. The setting is committed to ensuring all children can take part in the play activities on offer and are aware of the culture of

families within the area, making arrangements for them to be included appropriately.

The quality and standards of the early years provision

Children make satisfactory progress within their learning and development. Staff observe what children are doing, note their interests and sometimes use this in their planning. For example, interest was shown by a child in a picture of a child using a watering can. This, led by the supervisor, developed into an activity the next day where children planted seeds and used watering cans, developing their knowledge about gardening tools, their purpose and growing conditions. However, staff do not always use their knowledge, or notes about children's interests, effectively and records kept on children's skills and activity planning sheets are variable. As a result, whilst children are keen to take part in activities, they are not always actively engaged in relevant, planned and motivating learning experiences and miss some opportunities to progress. Staff are attentive towards the children fostering warm working relationships.

Many children are confident on arrival; they know where to hang their coats and quickly settle to activities. However, children are not easily able to select resources independently and they do not enjoy the time and space to concentrate on activities and develop their own interests throughout the session, either indoors or outdoors. This is due to the setting's rigid routine that means indoor toys are cleared away mid-morning and times are restricted for outdoor play until the end of the session. Children show delight at seeing their friends and older ones chatter freely, being keen to communicate what they enjoy doing at the group. Several children make marks on paper and older children are beginning to form recognisable shapes. Children are beginning to recognise the written word as they self-select their name cards at snack time. However, there are too few routine opportunities for younger children to enjoy stories in small groups and develop their phonological awareness of early sounds.

Children eat a range of fruit and items to promote healthy eating at snack time. They learn more about food origins as they plant produce and discuss why eating too many sweets is not good for their body. Children play outside in the fresh air and develop their physical skills as they climb on the slide, dig in the sand and ride wheeled toys. Regular opportunities are provided for children to practice fire escape routines making them aware of how to keep themselves safe in an emergency.

Messy activities such as painting and gluing help children to develop their creativity and older children are keen to show finished pictures to staff who praise them enthusiastically, promoting their self-confidence. Children enjoy singing and demonstrate their growing imagination as they pretend to serve tea to friends and dress up as 'mummies' in the house area. Whilst staff readily engage with children and encourage them in their creative play, they miss opportunities to ask open questions which reduces opportunities for children to clarify ideas and actively develop their critical thinking. Older children are keen to problem solve as they work out how to divide the number of spades between them when digging outside,

however, younger children have too few routine opportunities to use numbers in their play. Children enjoy exploring the natural world outside as they prepare to wear appropriate clothing in the hot sun and they build competently with bricks showing their developing design skills.

Younger children are generally well behaved and are learning to share, being guided positively by staff who have clear behaviour management strategies in place.

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?	3
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?	3
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?	3
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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