

Wallerscote School Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	305417
Inspection date	29/04/2009
Inspector	Felicity Cooper

Setting address	Wallerscote Community School, Northwich Road, Weaverham, Northwich, Cheshire, CW8 3BD
Telephone number	01606 852148
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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

Wallerscote School Playgroup, registered in 1993, is a privately run pre-school facility. It operates from a classroom in Wallerscote Primary School in the village of Weaverham near Northwich. It has access to an outside play area, the school hall and associated facilities. The playgroup serves the local area, although children from other areas of Northwich may attend. A maximum of 26 children aged between two and five years may attend at any one time. There are currently 55 children on roll and, of these, 46 are funded three or four-year-olds. The provision is registered on the Early Years Register. The playgroup is open each weekday from 08.40 to 11.40 plus four afternoons, Monday to Thursday from 12.30 to 15.00. The setting currently supports children who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language. The playgroup employs five members of staff, of whom four hold appropriate qualifications. The setting receives support from local authority advisors.

Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall, Wallerscote School Playgroup provides good quality care and education for all children. Children make good progress in their learning and development in a safe and welcoming environment where they are valued as individuals. There is good support for children who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those learning English as an additional language. Whilst staff and parents carry out observations and assessments, this information is not yet detailed enough or fully used in planning for each child's individual learning and development needs. The manager shows an ongoing commitment to improving the quality of the provision through self-evaluation and her willingness to undertake further training.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- develop planning and assessment procedures further, so that information gained is fully utilised in order to ensure that each child's individual learning needs are met
- maintain a register of aspects of the environment which require checking on a regular basis and record when and by whom they have been checked.

The leadership and management of the early years provision

The manager of the playgroup provides strong leadership to the staff team and she is fully committed to improving the provision. Self-evaluation processes are developing well and ensure that areas for improvement are clearly identified. A grant is available to improve access for children with disabilities and work is due to start on the provision of a doorway, which will provide direct access to an outdoor play area.

Staff are aware of their responsibilities to safeguard children and there are clear procedures in place. All staff undergo the appropriate vetting procedures to confirm their suitability to work with children. Risk assessment checks are carried out on a daily basis. However, the checks undertaken of the outdoor area are not recorded. Staff maintain all required documentation to ensure the smooth running of the setting on a daily basis. The playgroup has positive links with parents and carers. Parents are pleased with the arrangements for settling children in and feel that they receive good information both informally and by means of monthly newsletters. Parents provide information about their children when they first start at the setting and they also have access to a comments book. However, at present, this information is too limited to enable staff to assess children's skills and abilities in enough detail so that they can plan effectively for the next steps in learning as soon as they join the group. There are good links with outside agencies and the host primary school so that children are well supported.

The quality and standards of the early years provision

Children enjoy learning through play in a bright and stimulating environment. They are provided with a good range of interesting activities, which enable them to develop their creativity well. Children happily construct 3D models using a variety of materials and tools. There is a good balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities. Equipment is well organised according to the areas of learning and is easily accessible to children so that they can select their own resources. Independence is encouraged, as children self-register and organise their own snack. Access to the outdoor area is difficult at present as children have to be escorted in groups. Staff are careful to compensate for this so children enjoy a colour mixing and painting activity outside. This activity also extends the children's vocabulary through the effective use of open questions. Overall, children make good progress towards the early learning goals.

Staff carry out regular observations of the children as they play and these assessments are used to identify the next steps in learning. The manager has identified the need to develop planning further so that greater use is made of this information in meeting individual learning needs. In addition, currently there are only limited opportunities whereby parents contribute to the ongoing assessment of their children's progress.

Behaviour is good because children respond well to expectations and instructions. Secure relationships between staff, children and their peers ensure that all children thrive in a safe and secure environment. The introduction of a key worker system ensures that children are effectively supported. The playgroup promotes healthy eating practices by providing children with a healthy snack. Good attention is paid to hygiene. Staff wear disposable gloves and aprons when handling food and children use anti-bacterial wipes to clean their hands before eating. Visits from a dentist and a nurse help to develop the children's understanding of how to stay healthy. They are also able to develop physical skills in the outdoor area and the school hall where they have access to wheeled toys and climbing equipment, and learn how to keep themselves safe by playing games, such as road safety lotto.

Staff actively encourage the children to share and take turns. Children demonstrate an understanding of the needs of others and these skills are preparing them well for the future.

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

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