

The Kennington Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number 133403
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Inspector George Rayner

Setting address Old School Buildings, St Swithun's School, The Avenue,
Kennington, Oxford, Oxfordshire, OX1 5PP
Telephone number 01865 326606
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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

The Kennington Playgroup opened in 1969 and is managed by a voluntary committee. It operates from two rooms in the Old School Building in the grounds of St. Swithun's School in the centre of the village of Kennington in Oxfordshire. Children have access to secure enclosed play areas. The playgroup serves the local communities. It is open Monday to Friday during term times, from 09.00 to 11.30, and from 12.30 to 15.00 on Monday, Wednesday and Thursday. A lunch club runs from 11.30 to 12.30 Monday to Friday. Children attend for a variety of sessions.

The playgroup is registered on the Early Years Register. A maximum of 24 children aged between two and five years may attend at any one time. There are currently 43 children on roll and, of these, 18 receive nursery education funding. The maximum number of children that attend at any one time is 20. The playgroup supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and also those who speak English as an additional language. Some staff have been trained in these areas.

There are eight staff working with the children. Six have a National Vocational Qualification at level 3. Five of these are in pre-school practice and one is in nursery education. The manager and one other staff member are currently studying for a foundation degree in early years provision. Six staff have up to date qualifications in first aid for young children. The playgroup receives support from the local authority.

Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good. The playgroup meets children's needs well because staff are diligent and well qualified to do so. This includes training in areas such as provision for children whose first language is not English, demonstrating the playgroup's effective commitment to inclusive practice and its good provision for this. As a result, children are happy here and they thrive. The leaders have successfully introduced improvements since the last inspection and have a good understanding of what they need to focus on next. This shows their good capacity for ensuring continuous improvement.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- ensure that records of self-evaluation and planning provide an overview, so that staff can check that all areas have been covered
- make snack times more helpful to children for developing their social skills

The leadership and management of the early years provision

Leadership is well organised and based upon a good understanding of effective practice. This ensures the smooth and safe running of the setting. Teamwork between the experienced and knowledgeable staff is good. Great care is taken over safeguarding procedures. These ensure that children are well supervised at all times. Some staff have been trained to carry out risk assessments and they ensure that these are conducted efficiently. Policies and procedures are comprehensive, clear and accessible to all who need to refer to them. Effective use is made of guidance from local authority advisers to ensure that self-evaluation accurately identifies strengths to build on and areas needing improvement. This has helped the setting to tackle all of the improvement points from the last inspection. For example, each child's development is now comprehensively recorded, providing a valuable tool for ensuring that all of their needs are met. While records covering all aspects of the setting are comprehensive, they are not always kept in the most helpful form for checking that there are no gaps. This includes those for self-evaluation and for planning coverage of the areas that children need to learn about, where there are no overview checklists. Managers are aware of this, although work to create single checklists is at an early stage of development. Close links with the neighbouring primary school are enhanced by the manager being a governor there. Staff from the playgroup and school often work together, for example, in developing a shared approach to teaching children to read. The partnership with parents is outstanding. Parents are made extremely welcome when they bring their children to the playgroup and are encouraged to join in with many activities. Parents greatly value the excellent information that they are given to help their children to settle in and develop.

The quality and standards of the early years provision

Children enter the setting happily and eagerly start to play with the extensive range of toys and other resources, such as the computer. The children are effectively encouraged to develop their independence skills and contribute to the happy atmosphere and smooth running of the playgroup. For example, they have responded well to being asked to register themselves and do not need to be told to quickly get down to productive activity. Staff provide a good range of opportunities for children to enjoy playing. These are well balanced with learning activities, for example, when children enjoy settling down on the sofa to read a book with an adult. Children have good access to the outdoor areas, where there is plenty of equipment, such as tricycles and climbing apparatus on which to expend their energy. There are frequent special activities that help children well to develop their creative skills. For example, the recent art week gave children an opportunity to display their work and compare it with art produced by senior citizens who attend the neighbouring community centre – thoroughly enjoyed by young and old alike. Staff give the children much guidance on how to keep themselves healthy and safe. As a result, children know the importance of washing their hands before eating and are beginning to learn that some foods are better for them than others. They also know why it is important to follow the rules and behave responsibly when, for example, they walk to the nearby public library. Snack times are now

calmer than those reported by the last inspection. Staff know that these are still not used as well as they could be to help the children to develop their social skills, for example, by making choices and sharing and are considering ways of doing this. Overall, however, the activities that they take part in and the guidance that the adults give them help children to prepare well for the next stage in their learning. For example, the great majority who move to the adjoining primary school are already familiar with the method of learning to read that is used there because it is also used in the playgroup.

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?	1
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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