

# Costock Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Unique reference number</b>	253421
<b>Inspection date</b>	29/09/2009
<b>Inspector</b>	Alison Edwards

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<b>Type of setting</b>	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 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.

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## Description of the setting

Costock Playgroup registered over 30 years ago and is a committee-run organisation. It operates from the village hall in Costock, in the Rushcliffe district of Nottinghamshire, serving the local community. Children use the large and small hall for play with access to the adjacent cloakroom facilities. There is an enclosed playground for outdoor play. The playgroup opens from Monday to Friday during school terms within the hours of 9.00 am and 1.00 pm. It is registered on the Early Years Register to care for a maximum of 24 children from two years to the end of the early years age range at any one time. There are currently 18 children in this age range on roll. The setting is also registered on the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register to care for older children but does not currently provide care to children in this age range. It receives funding to provide nursery education to three- and four-year-old children. There are currently five regular staff. Of these, the manager holds Early Years Professional Status, two hold recognised childcare qualifications at Level 3 and another at Level 2, and one is a qualified teacher.

## The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children are settled and confident at this welcoming and friendly playgroup where staff know them well as individuals, so helping to ensure that they feel valued and secure. They make good progress in their learning because staff have a good overview of how to implement the learning and development requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). Staff build strong links with parents and with other early years providers to help ensure that all adults share relevant information and provide continuity for children. Staff show a commitment to continued improvement through their participation in on-going development and through use of a range of methods to review different aspects of their provision.

## What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- extend existing arrangements for reflective practice and self-evaluation to more clearly identify shared and specific targets for the future development of the playgroup to further improve the quality of provision for all children
- review planned use of available time, space and resources to fully extend children's learning and provide the highest levels of purpose, challenge and independence.

## **The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision**

The playgroup makes good use of recently reviewed policies to ensure that staff and committee have a clear understanding of their responsibilities to safeguard children from harm. There are robust recruitment and vetting procedures to ensure the suitability and qualifications of those caring for children. Staff provide consistently good levels of supervision and undertake systematic risk assessments in order to maintain children's safety within the premises or on any outings. Adults have a clear awareness of what child abuse and neglect are, and of how to implement agreed procedures in line with nationally and locally-agreed guidance in the event of any child protection concerns.

Parents value the playgroup's welcoming approach and have good opportunities to become involved in its operation and management. Prospective parents are encouraged to visit the playgroup to become familiar with how it operates, and receive comprehensive information about arrangements for children's care and welfare in written or electronic formats. Staff work closely with parents to ensure they have a good understanding of children's specific care needs and preferences, enabling them to recognise and value their individuality. As a result, children settle well and develop good levels of confidence in their relationships and play. In addition to informal daily discussion with staff about children's experiences and achievements, parents are encouraged to share children's progress records and have regular opportunities to review these with staff. The playgroup takes active steps to develop effective links with other early years providers. This helps to ensure continuity and progression in children's care and learning, for example if they also attend another nursery, or when they transfer to school. Staff are clear on the value of close liaison with parents and other relevant agencies to support the inclusion of any children with identified special educational needs and/or disabilities.

The playgroup operates in suitably-maintained premises where children benefit from easy access to a range of interesting outdoor play activities helping to support their overall development. The playgroup has taken good steps to address recommendations raised at its previous inspection, for example by improving use of assessment to track and plan for children's progress. Staff and managers already use a variety of methods to review aspects of current practice and areas for further development. For example, systematic appraisals and use of relevant training opportunities help to promote continued professional development for all staff. However, existing arrangements for reflective practice and self-evaluation are not yet used to full effect to identify and prioritise specific agreed targets to further improve the quality of provision for all children.

## **The quality and standards of the early years provision and outcomes for children**

Children are cared for in a secure and welcoming environment, enabling them to confidently and safely play and learn, for example as they move freely between

well-supervised indoor and outdoor areas. They begin to develop their own understanding of safety issues, for example as they build on their experience of a routine fire evacuation practise to develop spontaneous pretend play about dealing with an imaginary fire. Children show growing awareness of a healthy lifestyle as they talk knowledgeably with staff about the reasons for washing their hands, or as they enjoy nutritious snacks such as fresh fruit. Staff encourage their enjoyment of active physical play, and help them to develop their balance, coordination and movement skills through a range of games and activities. Staff implement good hygiene practices within daily routines, such as when preparing snacks or changing younger children's nappies. However, they have not yet fully evaluated whether the recent installation of an additional easy-access cloakroom offers potential ways to improve existing toileting arrangements.

Children readily develop friendships with others, and cooperate well with each other as they spontaneously play simple turn-taking games or take on roles in simple pretend play. Staff are consistent and positive in their dealings with children, so helping them to understand what behaviour is expected of them and to develop good levels of independence. Children enjoy using a range of good quality resources reflecting cultural and individual diversity, such as play people with mobility aids, or books about different family lifestyles, so helping them to recognise and respect similarities and differences. They show good levels of interest and concentration in their self-chosen play. However, staff are currently still experimenting with the best ways of managing adult-led group activities to fully engage children's interest and extend their thinking skills.

Staff have a good overview of what children need to learn, and of how to promote their learning through practical play and first hand experiences. They make effective use of observations of children's current abilities to identify the next steps in their learning and to plan an interesting range of experiences and activities to promote their continued progress. Consequently, children are developing good skills for the future. For example, children gain confidence in the use of everyday technology as they purposefully show an adult how to operate the controls of a CD player. They develop practical problem-solving skills as they select different sizes and shapes of cartons to design and make their own models. They show confident enjoyment in favourite books as they spontaneously re-tell the stories to each other, and begin to use purposeful writing as staff encourage them to name their own paintings and drawings. Children explore how different substances behave, for example as they see how a mix of cornflour and water becomes runny or dry. They show interest in the natural world as they observe mini-beasts, such as snails, in the playground or grow vegetables in containers. Children already enjoy acting out simple experiences in pretend play, for example as they spontaneously prepare boiled eggs in their 'café'. However, simple resources such as note pads, menus or play tills are occasionally not used to best effect to encourage them to purposefully extend such skills as numeracy and literacy in their independent play.

## 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*

### The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

<b>How well does the setting meet the needs of the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?</b>	2
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	2

### The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

<b>How effectively is the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?</b>	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	2
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding	2
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	2
The effectiveness of partnerships	2
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	2

### The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

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### Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

<b>Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	2
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	2
The extent to which children feel safe	2
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	2
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	2

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## **Annex B: the Childcare Register**

The provider confirms that the requirements of the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are: Met

The provider confirms that the requirements of the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are: Met