

Sidford Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number 106029
Inspection date 17/09/2009
Inspector Sara Bailey

Setting address Sidford Social Hall, Byes Lane, Sidford, Sidmouth, Devon,
EX10 9QX

Telephone number 07966 953096

Email

Type of setting Childcare on non-domestic premises

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It rates council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 08456 404040, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

Royal Exchange Buildings
St Ann's Square
Manchester
M2 7LA

T: 08456 404040
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2009

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).

Please see our website for more information about each childcare provider. We publish inspection reports, conditions of registration and details of complaints we receive where we or the provider take action to meet the requirements of registration.

Description of the setting

Sidford Playgroup has been registered since 1992 and is run by a voluntary committee. Sidford is a village located on the northern edge of the coastal town of Sidmouth, in East Devon. The group meets each weekday during term time, from 09.30 to 12.00, at Sidford Social Hall. There is an enclosed area suitable for outdoor play and the setting is opposite a park.

The playgroup is registered on the Early Years Register. A maximum of 24 children, aged from two to five years, may attend at any one time. There are currently 18 children on roll.

There are three members of staff working regularly with children. The play leader has a Level 2 Early Years qualification, and is working towards a Level 3 qualification. One of the staff members has a Level 2 childcare qualification, the other is working towards this. The playgroup receives support from the local authority.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is satisfactory.

Children's individual needs are generally taken into account in the planning of activities, although their development along the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) is only just beginning to be recorded as some staff's knowledge of the EYFS is limited. Some activities are not sufficiently resourced to meet children's needs but inclusive practice is promoted. Although the supervisor does not currently hold a level three qualification in Early Years, which does not meet specific legal requirements, she has continued to make progress towards this qualification and is due to complete in October 2009. There is a commitment to further training in order to further improve outcomes for children. Children's welfare is mostly promoted in appropriate ways, although free-flow to the outside causes some safety issues and there are some weaknesses in documentation.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- ensure all supervisors hold a full and relevant level 3 qualification (Qualifications, training, knowledge and skills) 31/10/2009

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

- improve organisation of the free-flow play between the inside and outside to ensure children have sufficient resources, with particular reference to water

play, are adequately supervised and supported by staff at all times including improved supervision due to the doors being secured, safe from the hazard of the swinging doors and children are unable to access the rear play area during this time

- update policies and notice board to be an accurate record of the setting's procedures and staffing situation, ensure all documentation is available for inspection, including the complaints record, risk assessments and individual children's records; ensure all records are dated to show children's progress, development or concerns
- develop staff's knowledge and understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage to ensure all six areas of learning are adequately promoted to further develop children's learning and development
- develop the planning, observation and assessment to reflect children's choices of activities when they are current and meaningful; and ensure their starting points and progress towards the early learning goals can be accurately shared with parents to identify their next steps
- further develop fire drills to ensure they help children understand safety issues and use the weaknesses identified through drills to develop staff practice

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

There are appropriate systems in place to safeguard children. The playleader is clear about her role and responsibility to follow correct Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) procedures and the policy is up to date and shared with parents. All staff have been booked onto a safeguarding course in order to further protect children. This shows commitment to continuous improvement of the setting. Risk assessments of the premises and outings do take place and are recorded, although due to weaknesses in the organisation of record keeping, not all are available for inspection. Children's safety is generally well addressed although new doors leading to the outside play area are not secured when open, which puts children at risk of having their fingers trapped or being knocked by them swinging in the wind. They also obscure supervision during free-flow play between the inside and outside.

The deployment of resources, which include staff, is inadequate due to a breach of regulation in that the play leader does not hold a level three qualification in Early Years. However, she is very close to completing the course and therefore the impact on the children is minimal. Of the two remaining staff, neither are suitably qualified or experienced to be the named deputy but the setting have systems in place to use qualified bank staff in the event of the play leader being absent, supported by the regular staff. However, a commitment to further staff training shows how the setting are striving to improve outcomes for children. There are insufficient resources in the outside area to stimulate children in the free-flow system to the outside area and the water play trough, which is the only resource outside during this time is either left empty for long periods of time or when pointed out to be empty only a couple inches of water were added. This is inadequate for children to use the water wheel, funnel and other toys provided and

impacts on their learning and development. The whole organisation of outside space during free-flow is not meeting children's needs effectively. However, at other times their needs are met appropriately but free-flow is clearly needed by the children.

There are weaknesses in the organisation of record keeping. For example, the setting are clearly sharing individual records with other agencies and using documentation from the setting as evidence for training coursework, but the originals are being taken from the premises and therefore not available for inspection. Due to a computer breakdown, daily risk assessment checklists are not being completed and when they were, they were thrown away at the end of each week, which does not show how risks are identified and addressed. Other weaknesses in documentation are that the complaints record could not be found and entries in children's books between home and pre-school are not dated, neither are all their observations. This fails to show clear progress and development. The records are also limited as they are only just being implemented. The setting have begun to self-evaluate their practice and are accurate in identifying their strengths and weaknesses. The play leader is very directive to her staff, which ensures ratios are adhered to and children supported but shows a need for the organisation of staff and use of the outside to be revised, especially when at times there are only two members of staff working due to low numbers.

The setting promotes inclusive practice, with boys and girls being given equal access to all resources. For example, the play leader promotes interests such as diggers and lorries for all children rather than stereotypically just the boys in their self-registration pictures. Staff are aware of children's individual needs and backgrounds, meeting them effectively within the larger group in a consistent way. Working with parents and other agencies to achieve this is evident, although in the early stages. For example, parents helping to set up and pack away the room, newsletters, notice board and access to children's EYFS records. However, notice board information and policies are not kept up to date to reflect changes.

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

Children benefit from the small numbers who attend the group. They are confident to speak out in the small group as they feel secure, to voice their suggestions for the following weeks planning of activities, which they are involved in regularly. However, there is a long break between doing this on a Thursday for the following week, and children would benefit from having their individual needs met more effectively if their involvement in planning influenced the toys they have access to the same day. Children are able to self select toys from mobile units set up each day before children arrive and benefit from the member of staff dedicating her time to this to ensure they have a stimulating inside environment with a range of activities. However, the outside area is not meeting children's needs in terms of free-flow between the inside and outside areas. At designated 'outside' play time children are benefiting from physical activities. Children's learning across all six areas of learning is sound but due to some staff's limited knowledge of the EYFS,

learning opportunities are not always developed.

Children are happy and settled and most display appropriate behaviour. Staff are consistent in their handling of inappropriate behaviour and seek support to meet individual needs appropriately. Children's differences are explained when necessary in order for peers to understand and manage their own behaviour appropriately. This supports an inclusive approach. Children are praised and rewarded for achievement through stickers and certificates. This builds their self-esteem. Children respond positively when they hear the tambourine to sit on the carpet for circle time and behave well during a fire drill.

Children learn about safety through regular practices of emergency evacuation. They quickly leave the premises and hold on to a special rope to safely cross the road to the local park. However, their learning is not further developed through discussion before or afterwards. Children learn about the importance of hand washing before eating and enjoy using an electric mobile unit within the room which prevents them having to leave the room every time they need to wash their hands, unless of course they use the bathroom facilities. Children enjoy a healthy snack, consisting of four different fruits or raw vegetables each day, supplemented with squares of brown bread and butter. They pour their own drinks of milk or water and have easy access to water throughout the session.

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

How well does the setting meet the needs of the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?	3
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	3

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

How effectively is the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	4
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding	3
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	3
The effectiveness of partnerships	3
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	3

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
--	---

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	3
The extent to which children feel safe	3
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	3
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	3
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	3

Any complaints about the inspection or report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

