

Windsor Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspector

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Setting address

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Type of setting

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

Windsor Playgroup was registered in 1984 and operates from two rooms within the Methodist church hall, Burbage. The playgroup is open each week day, with the exception of Tuesday, term time only. On Monday and Wednesday it opens from 8.45am until 11.45am and on Thursday and Friday it opens from 8.45am until 12.45pm. The playgroup is also open on Monday and Wednesday from 12.30pm until 3.30pm. All children share access to an enclosed outdoor play area.

The playgroup is registered on the Early Years Register and on both the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. A maximum of 26 children under eight years may attend the playgroup at any one time. There are currently 42 children on roll, 26 of whom are in the early years age range. The playgroup supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who use English as an additional language. The playgroup provides places for children who are in receipt of funding for nursery education.

There are five members of staff, four of whom hold appropriate early years qualifications to at least NVQ Level 2.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children are provided with high levels of care and make positive progress in their learning and development. Practitioners offer an inclusive and welcoming service, supporting all children to actively participate in activities which meet their individual interests and developmental needs. Children are confident, independent and clearly enjoy their time at the playgroup. The playgroup is led by a motivated and experienced manager who embraces the process of self-evaluation and demonstrates a very positive attitude towards continuous improvement.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- develop further ways to involve parents in their children's continuous learning and development to enhance children's progress towards the early learning goals

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The manager and practitioners work together as a motivated and cohesive team as they share a commitment to offering the best possible experiences to children and their families. Children are cared for by practitioners who have completed a range of training to ensure they have strong knowledge and understanding of their roles

and responsibilities. The manager provides very clear guidance to the staff team and a comprehensive range of written policies and procedures are in place to fully support the running of the playgroup. Thorough risk assessments of the areas accessed by the children are conducted and the playgroup is stringent in the organisation of outings to ensure children's safety is prioritised. Robust vetting procedures are in place to ensure that children are cared for by suitable people. All practitioners have an up-to-date understanding of safeguarding children issues.

The manager and practitioners strive to improve their practice, consistently monitoring and evaluating the quality and standards at the playgroup. Regular staff meetings and in-house training sessions provide valuable opportunities for practitioners to share good practice and to identify their training needs, which are prioritised by the manager. Recommendations made at the last inspection have been fully addressed and have had clear benefits to children's experiences at the playgroup. For example, children are able to access hand washing facilities independently and they engage in role play to extend their imaginative skills. A positive equality and diversity policy outlines a commitment to promoting inclusive practice at the playgroup, ensuring all children can achieve as well as they can regardless of their background. Practitioners demonstrate a strong commitment to working with external agencies to support the inclusion of children with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

Practitioners demonstrate a clear commitment to working in partnership with parents and provide regular opportunities for parents to become involved in the life of the playgroup. Parents speak highly of the playgroup's approach to sharing their children's experiences and feel very well informed regarding their children's care. Although parents have some opportunities to become involved in their child's continuous learning and development this is not as fully promoted as it could be. Practitioners have successfully established links with the other early years settings that children attend to ensure optimum continuity of care. The playgroup dedicates time to getting to know children and their families, fostering strong relationships and helping to ensure that children settle quickly and feel secure. The manager employs a whole group approach and is enthusiastic and passionate about her role in raising standards for children.

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

Practitioners demonstrate a strong knowledge and understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage and how to promote children's learning and development. The playgroup effectively acquires children's starting points at registration and this enables practitioners to value and build upon their existing skills. Practitioners plan purposeful activities, which reflect a range of learning opportunities, covering all six areas of learning. Children benefit from a balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities and the routine is flexible to allow them to pursue their own interests. Children are motivated and interested to learn. The ongoing two-way exchange of information between playgroup and home has a positive impact upon children's welfare. Parents and carers are welcomed into the playgroup by friendly, approachable adults and information is shared readily on a daily basis.

Practitioners are intuitive of children's individual learning needs and routinely undertake sensitive observational assessment to identify children's learning priorities. As a result, all learning experiences are relevant and match children's stages of development. Practitioners demonstrate a positive approach to supporting children's learning needs and to enriching the quality of education provided. There are lots of opportunities for children to play alongside each other and practitioners introduce situations to encourage turn taking and sharing of resources. In addition, practitioners make good use of incidental opportunities to develop children's natural curiosity. For example, initiating discussions about insects after finding a caterpillar in the outdoor play area and providing plastic tools to enable children to emulate the actions of a builder who is on site.

Children thrive as practitioners spend the majority of their time at their level, interacting with them. Practitioners are skilled at asking questions to develop children's thinking and to consolidate their learning. Children are able to make choices and can easily access a wide variety of resources and equipment. Children develop good language skills as practitioners talk to them constantly about what they are doing. For example, children use the words 'clean' and 'germs' whilst washing their hands. Children's progress is carefully tracked with the use of 'learning journeys' and practitioners are competent at using observations and assessments. Practitioners are very sensitive and knowledgeable and the support children receive is personalised to meet their individual needs.

The learning environment is bright, welcoming and child friendly, affording children plenty of space to explore. Older children have free-flow access to toilet facilities which fosters their ability to manage their personal care needs. Children develop an understanding of how to stay safe as practitioners use outings as a valuable opportunity to discuss road safety and children routinely learn about health and safety through activities and daily routines. For example, through reminders about using the large play apparatus sensibly. The premises are clean and hygienic and the playgroup fully promotes healthy eating by providing all children with a well-balanced range of nutritious snacks. The rich, varied environment fully supports children's development in all areas.

Practitioners use positive strategies to help children to observe good social skills, behave well and respect each other. Children are offered praise, encouragement and rewards and practitioners understand that this helps to foster their confidence. Children are beginning to develop an understanding of diversity as practitioners encourage positive, open discussion about people's similarities and differences. Children develop basic numeracy skills from a young age to enhance their future economic well-being. For example, children are encouraged to develop their counting skills through everyday routines, such as counting the number of steps they take during a treasure hunt, singing counting songs and measuring earthworms.

Children are involved in learning which takes them into the local community. They attempt writing for a range of purposes as they scribe letters which they then post in the post-box. A librarian from the local library visits on a termly basis to read to the children, helping them to foster an interest in books. Parents with specific

roles, for example, a police officer, a fire officer and a nurse have visited the playgroup to share their experiences. In addition, one parent who lives on a farm has brought piglets and puppies to the playgroup, enabling children to learn about living things and the world around them. Children have regular opportunities to collaborate, negotiate and narrate as they build dens, make mud pies and play with the puppet theatre. Practitioners are effectively deployed and are always nearby to get involved and to support children's learning. Children learn to become independent through secure relationships with their key person. The playgroup's ethos and policy is inclusive and children's individual identities are nurtured. All children belong and feel part of the group.

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?	2
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	2

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

How effectively is the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	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

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
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Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	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
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The provider confirms that the requirements of the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are:	Met
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