

Playbox Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number

113653

Inspection date

26/01/2010

Inspector

Felicity Gaff / Jacqui Lloyd

Setting address

Methodist Church Hall, Gloucester Road, Burgess Hill, West
Sussex, RH15 8QD

Telephone number

07947 229628

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 0300 123 1231, 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: 0300 123 1231
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

Playbox Playgroup is run by a voluntary management committee representing the Burgess Hill Methodist Church. It opened in 1974 and operates from the church buildings in Burgess Hill, West Sussex. All children have access to a secure outdoor play area. The playgroup runs during school term times only. It is open from Monday to Friday from 09.15am to 11.45am; on Tuesday and Thursday from 12.15pm to 2.45pm; and on Wednesday and Friday from 12.30pm to 2.30pm. A maximum of 30 children in the early years age range may attend the playgroup at any one time and there are currently 50 children on roll. All children are drawn from the surrounding urban area. The playgroup supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and makes provision for children who speak English as an additional language. There are 10 members of staff, nine of whom hold early years qualifications to at least level 2. The playgroup receives support from the local authority and provides funded early education for three - and four-year-olds.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Staff create an interesting, child-friendly environment, where children and parents feel valued and at ease. The provider involves all staff in monitoring the quality of the care and education offered, creating an ethos of continuous improvement. There are effective systems for monitoring children's progress, which enable staff to plan for their individual learning needs. By working closely with parents, staff are able to provide activities that engage children's enthusiasm and interest, and successfully promote all areas of learning. Overall, the systems to support children's welfare and learning are good.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- improve the organisation and regular updating of the documentation designed to support the safe and efficient management of the provision, including policies and procedures, to ensure they are easily accessible to all who need to see them.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Clear procedures for safeguarding promote children's safety and welfare effectively and ensure that staff can recognise and report any concerns about children's welfare. Staff are well qualified and regularly attend in-service training to enhance their knowledge and skills. The provider carries out rigorous vetting procedures to ensure staff are suitable to care for children. Children enjoy a warm, welcoming

environment where all adults work very well together to assess and minimise hazards on the premises as well as on outings. All the documentation required to support children's welfare is in place. However, the organisation of policies and procedures does not make them readily accessible to staff and parents. The playgroup has put in place exemplary systems for evaluating the service it offers. All staff actively contribute to a thorough process for assessing and developing their practice. They evaluate the effectiveness of changes they initiate in order to ensure children benefit from them.

The relationships that staff forge with parents are outstanding. Parents say that both they and their children feel very comfortable at the playgroup. They are welcomed as full partners in their children's care and education. There are well thought-out systems for exchanging information before children first attend, which ensure that staff fully understand each child's care and learning needs. Key workers and parents share information about children's progress and jointly plan for the next steps in their learning. Consequently, children make good progress in all areas of learning. The playgroup uses bilingual staff very well to ensure that the needs of families with home languages other than English are fully met. For example, in addition to verbal communication, they are developing translations of key documents to ensure all parents can understand them. Staff work very closely with other agencies to support children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. They work in partnership with other early years settings that children attend, which helps them to complement the care and education children receive elsewhere. There are particularly good systems for supporting children when they transfer to school.

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

Children are confident and at ease in the playgroup. The well organised workshop areas encourage them to enter enthusiastically into a broad and interesting range of play activities. They manage their own personal hygiene independently. This supports their confidence and self-esteem, and helps them develop a positive attitude to learning. Staff organise playgroup sessions to maximise opportunities for children to decide what to do and where to do it. This gives children the opportunity to work for extended periods of time at self-chosen activities that intrigue them. On arrival at the playgroup children settle happily to purposeful play. Their very good behaviour reflects the good example shown them by the staff. Children use their initiative in adapting space and resources to accommodate their own interests. For instance, they used resources from the home corner to create egg and spoon races, including both children and adults in their play. Staff supported their play by helping children rearrange furniture to create a suitable safe space for this activity to take place. Staff work individually and as a team to identify areas for development and to create a purposeful learning environment. They work closely with parents and with children themselves, to assess the progress children make and identify the next steps in their learning. They make very good use of resources, such as a pictorial time table to ensure all children know what activities are available during the session. Staff routinely use the most common Makaton signs with all children, who use them confidently. These

measures ensure the playgroup provides an exceptionally welcoming and inclusive environment for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities, as well as those who do not yet communicate well in English.

Children have very good opportunities to develop their linguistic skills because staff provide fascinating play activities that children are eager to use and describe. For example, children confidently explained that ice was 'freezing', that it 'melts' and that it then felt 'soapy'. Children develop a good understanding of literacy and enjoy listening to well read stories. They understand that print goes from left to right and use their emergent writing skills to name their own work. Staff make good use of everyday opportunities to encourage children to count and compare numbers. Children solve practical problems of shape and space by producing large scale constructions, such as enclosures that are large enough to play in. They take part in activities that encourage them to observe the natural world closely and they delight in what they find. They learn how to record their observations; for instance, they photographed a frog they found while gardening. There are excellent arrangements to help children develop an understanding of and respect for diversity. The playgroup marks a variety of celebrations and festivals from different cultural traditions that staff and children celebrate in their families. Children follow a healthy lifestyle and make good use of the outdoor area to engage in active physical play. They follow good personal hygiene routines before enjoying a healthy and nutritious snack of fresh fruit. The effective partnership between staff and parents ensure that each child's dietary needs are known and met.

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	1
The effectiveness of safeguarding	2
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	1
The effectiveness of partnerships	2
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	1

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
--	---

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

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

