

The Avenue Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	205553
Inspection date	25/11/2009
Inspector	Jackie Phillips

Setting address	St Andrews Youth Hall, Charles Street, Cleethorpes, North East Lincolnshire, DN35 8QB
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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*.

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Description of the setting

The Avenue Playgroup operates from St Andrews Youth Hall, in the centre of Cleethorpes, North East Lincolnshire. It is a well established, sessional group and registered in 1999. The group is run by a voluntary management committee and is registered on the Early Years Register. Children attending mainly come from the local community. The group has sole use of the large hall whilst playgroup sessions are in operation. Kitchen and toilet facilities, including one disabled toilet, are also available. There is no outdoor play space available, although arrangements are in place for children to take part in a varied range of outdoor activities at the nearby St Peters Primary school and walks to places of interest within the local community.

The group is registered to provide care for 24 children aged from two to five years of age. There are currently 37 children on roll. The playgroup opens from 09.15am to 12.15pm on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday mornings and from 12.15pm to 3.15pm each Wednesday afternoon, term time only. The playgroup welcomes and supports children with special educational needs. Six staff are employed at the setting and all hold recognised childcare qualifications. The playgroup receives the support of the North East Lincolnshire Early Years Service and The Pre-school Learning Alliance.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a secure and welcoming environment. Adults recognise and respond to the individual requirements of children, and strive to ensure their care, learning and welfare needs are well met. Effective arrangements exist to ensure children are kept safe and healthy, although some written procedures are not securely established to support this. Partnerships with parents and others are strong and contribute effectively to children's progress and development. There is a positive commitment of those working at the setting to bring about continuous improvements to the provision, although plans to address areas of weakness are not robust.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- update the log to record complaints in line with Early Years Foundation Stage welfare requirements
- ensure the settings' child protection policy includes information about the procedure to be followed if an allegation was made against a member of staff
- record injuries that children sustain away from the setting, sharing this information with parents
- obtain parents written permission for the seeking of any necessary

- emergency medical advice or treatment
- include the celebration of different festivals and events in activity planning to raise children's awareness and understanding of the culture and belief of others.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Adults give high priority to ensure children's safety. For example, a very effective system is in place to keep children safe when they are taken out on walks and outings. When access doors to the setting are open, at collection and departure times, adults place themselves in a clear position to monitor and observe, to prevent children leaving unsupervised or unauthorised entry. However, some written procedures and recording systems are under-developed to fully support the setting's commitment to safeguard children. For example, those relating to the setting's child protection procedure, the complaints record, the obtaining of parents permission to seek emergency medical advice or treatment, or a procedure to record injuries that children sustain when away from the setting. This means that although good working practices exist to keep children safe and secure, and most written information is in place to support this, some procedures have limited information or are not clear to fully ensure their effectiveness.

The manager of the setting is enthusiastic and motivated in her approach to ensure children receive an enjoyable time whilst at the setting. She leads a well established team who work consistently to support children in their care. A strength of the group is the passion to ensure that children are enabled to make good progress and adopt positive attitudes to learning and well-being. For example, despite setbacks, an interesting indoor learning environment is made available for children, with a varied range of resources and equipment for them to use. There is a good balance of activities that are either adult-led or child-initiated and which are planned with children's interests and future progression in mind. Observation and assessment takes place regularly and information is shared between all adults, including parents. Planning systems have taken time to develop, but show a broad and balanced programme of events. Opportunities for children to learn about other cultures are currently limited. Although the setting does not have an outdoor play area on site, a successful partnership developed with the local school means that children are taken to use outdoor facilities, including a sensory garden, on a regular basis. Combined with walks around the local community, children have access to fresh air, exercise and opportunities to benefit from the outdoor learning environment, despite having no direct access to their own outside play space.

The setting values working with others to support the care, education and well-being of children. For example, positive relationships with parents exist and good working practices are being developed, enhanced and extended by fostering partnerships with the nearby school, Local Authority workers and other professional agencies. Visitors are invited to the setting to share their skills and experiences with children, encouraging learning to be enriched, for example, members of the Fire Service and a dental hygienist. Adults have a good knowledge

of children's backgrounds and needs, and recognises that each child is unique. Some attempt is made to introduce children to aspects of a multi-cultural society through toys, resources and a limited amount of activities. The setting has improved since the last inspection, particularly by addressing recommendations raised. It has the capacity to improve further, although vision for the future is currently not well targeted, so that impact is evident in areas in which it is needed, including some where it may be hard to achieve.

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

Children make good progress towards the early learning goals. They enjoy and achieve because they are provided with a broad and interesting range of learning events, experiences and activities, that take place inside the setting and outdoors. For instance they have their learning enriched by visitors to the setting and planned trips and outings, such as, the beach and library. Frequent walks within the local area help to foster their understanding of their place within the community. Children behave well and make progress in acquiring personal qualities that will enable them to develop skills for the future.

The flexible routine supports children to learn to play on their own or within small or large groups. Opportunities are presented for children to make choices and decisions, for instance, by making selections from a variety of toys, books and resources, or when to have their mid-session snack. They are able to independently choose to have a drink as they wish. Children are developing an awareness of personal safety, as they get involved in practising the setting's emergency procedure or when taking part in activities outdoors. The setting has made a good investment in purchasing commercially produced equipment aimed at keeping children secure and safe, as they form a 'walking bus' when transferring from the setting to a place of interest. Access to fresh air, exercise, fresh fruit for snack, digging, growing, baking and food tasting activities encourages children to adopt healthy lifestyles and positive attitudes towards a sense of well-being.

Children show confidence within the setting and build good relationships with their peers and adults. Their self-esteem is raised as they have some of their work displayed, although the occasions for this are limited due to the shared constraints of the property. Areas are created for children to work and play which helps them to focus and consolidate their learning. They participate in fund raising events and are able to perform to their parents, as they rehearse and prepare for the forthcoming Christmas concert.

An interest in everyday information communication technology is developing, as children have access to a laptop and digital camera. They particularly like to see photographs of themselves and their friends displayed on the screen, helping them to recall events and discuss their ideas and feelings with adults present. They are able to remember a broad range of songs and rhymes, many of which are new, as they learn Christmas songs or sing those that involve counting forwards and backwards. Children are able to express themselves through a host of art and craft experiences that involve paints, collage, colouring, mark making, using natural

materials and those with different textures. The group plan regular occasions when children are able to develop language and literacy skills, to enable them to communicate effectively and develop their language skills.

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	3
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	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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