

Lymm Village Hall Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspector Suzette Butcher

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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

Lymm Village Hall Playgroup was registered in 1972 and is managed by a voluntary parents' committee. It is based in two rooms in the village hall which is a single story multi-use building in the centre of Lymm, South Warrington. The playgroup serves both the village and local areas. The playgroup opens five days a week during school term times. Sessions are from 9.15am until 12pm, 3pm on Tuesday, Thursday and Friday mornings, and from 9.15am to 11.45am and 12.30pm to 3pm on Mondays and Wednesdays. The playgroup is registered on the Early Years Register and a maximum of 28 children, aged over two years, in the early years age group may attend at any one time.

There are currently 50 children in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) on roll. Funding for early years education is in place for three and four year olds. Also caters for children with bi-lingual needs. Children attend for a variety of sessions. There are nine staff employed, of whom, seven hold appropriate early years qualifications, one is working towards a qualification and one is unqualified. The pre-school is a member of the Pre-School Learning Alliance and receives support from a local authority early years teacher.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children feel safe and are rigorously safeguarded through good procedures. Their welfare requirements are well met in the indoor environment. Outdoor play opportunities are limited. The whole setting approach drives improvement, and plans for the future are well targeted to improve outcomes for children. The pre-school's supportive, community ethos overcomes barriers and creates an inclusive environment, where families are all valued and children learn about their local environment. Children make good progress towards the early learning goals and assessment procedures are developing to support their learning.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- ensure there is a balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities, delivered through outdoor play. (Organisation) 13/01/2010

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

- further develop systems to identify starting points and next steps for individual children to share with parents and others in EYFS.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children are safe and secure in the pre-school, where they are protected through comprehensive policies and procedures. These are reviewed on a regular basis to ensure they comply with requirements and fully safeguard children. A designated health and safety officer vigilantly reviews risks, responds promptly to potential hazards and dangers and records risk assessments on the premises and outings. Key staff attend safeguarding training on a regular basis to update knowledge on the Local Safeguarding Children Board. Robust recruitment and employment procedures and ongoing appraisal systems maintain staff suitability and protect children.

Staff and management communicate effectively with each other, and meet regularly on a formal or informal basis to reflect on their practice and monitor the quality of outcomes for children. Staff, parents, children and the management committee are actively involved in the provisions self-evaluation process, and clear targets for the future are prioritised and recorded. Outcomes are regularly monitored and reviewed to continually improve practice. The lack of opportunities for children to freely access outdoor play space on a daily basis has been clearly identified as a crucial area for improvement and given a very high priority. Funding from the local authority is in place to equip an outdoor play space, and consultations with the Parish Council are well underway to designate a suitable outdoor play area in the near future. Staff arrange the shared premises to make the most of the opportunities available and strive to create a welcoming, enabling environment. They ensure that the daily organisation and removal of equipment and resources does not impact negatively on time spent with the children. They regularly consult children, value their opinions and make appropriate changes, such as removing tables to make more space and reorganising snack. Small groups of children go out for organised walks each day and each session ends with energetic, physical games. Nevertheless, the high quality and balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities delivered in the indoor environment does not extend to outdoor play. This is a breach of requirements that has a negative impact on children's health, play and learning.

Staff are qualified, experienced and highly committed towards continuing their own professional development. For example, the manager is currently working towards an early years degree to ultimately achieve Early Years Professional Status. Staff understand their roles and responsibilities and work well together to create a friendly, supportive staff team. An inclusive ethos is promoted within the setting to ensure that every child is valued and respected as an individual. Staff access a language line to translate any documents and support induction. Children who speak English as an additional language or are bi-lingual are sensitively supported linguistically and culturally. Practical opportunities are provided for children to develop and use their home language in their play and learning. Inclusion audits are completed to improve practice and daily routines and opportunities are reorganised to meet children's different learning styles. Good partnerships are maintained with parents and appropriate support agencies, such as speech therapists, to ensure that children's additional needs are recognised and supported

at an early stage by everyone involved. Robust procedures are in place to support children who have allergies and staff are trained to respond in an emergency.

Effective partnerships with parents and carers are established during the supportive settling-in period. Parents' opinions are highly valued and used to inform future practice. Families are regularly consulted in questionnaires and any issues are addressed promptly. Communication systems, such as email, telephone, in person or in writing, are adapted to suit the differing needs of parents and families. Basic systems, such as key worker meetings with parents to review children's progress, are in place to actively involve parents and carers in their child's learning. A rota for parents to help during a session provides further practical opportunities for involvement and discussion. Strong links are maintained with local primary schools and the manager is involved in a local transition group to improve communication. Parents' written permission is obtained to develop links with children's other providers within EYFS, and promote the integration of care and education for children and families. Parents, grandparents and other providers in EYFS all comment that staff are very approachable and they are very happy with the communication and overall quality of care and education.

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

Children eagerly join their friends and excitedly chatter about what they have been doing and decide what to do next. Key staff's secure knowledge and understanding of the underlying principles of early years practice underpins the effective organisation and provides a firm basis for children's learning and development. Starting points are identified for individual children during discussion with parents although this information is not recorded to shared documents. Effective observation, assessment and planning procedures support children's ongoing development and learning. Next steps for individual children are informally identified and used to inform future planning for each child. However, this information is not clearly recorded to share with parents and others in EYFS. Activities are adapted and planning is differentiated to include every child. Observations and evaluations focus on learning styles and staff use in simplified schemas to plan the environment to meet children's needs. This helps children to become confident, active learners as they explore planned, purposeful play and exploration. Children's individual learning journey towards the early learning goals is monitored and recorded in photographs, art work and observations in their personal profile. Children proudly bring items from home to include in their profile and parental involvement is increasing.

Children are confident, highly motivated communicators because they are actively involved and empowered by staff. They are involved in decision making, encouraged to express their own ideas and develop a strong sense of identity and belonging. A good balance of adult-led and child-led activities are provided, and staff know when to stand back and allow children to initiate their own games. Informal learning opportunities are skilfully and creatively maximised by staff throughout the day. For example, children have fun estimating and calculating as they lie down to measure themselves and their friends against their long

construction of bricks. Imaginative role play games develop as children dress up, prepare a picnic for their friends or chat together in the tree house they have created. Mark making materials and creative resources are readily available to encourage children to think creatively. Consequently, children develop firm concepts and confidently make connections with other areas of learning.

A strong community ethos is nurtured within the setting. Children relish the opportunity to visit local areas, such as the art shop, café, bakery or canal, in organised small groups. Practical experiences are reinforced in the pre-school as children recreate the café in role play and help to cook bread, pizza, vegetable soup and fruit kebabs. Parents share their skills when they help to make oatcakes or food for Chinese New Year. Visits from local people who help us, such as police, fire officers, doctors, dentists and lollipop ladies, further enrich children's experiences and enhance their awareness of the wider world. Children's safety is given a high priority and they are regularly encouraged to consider and recognise potential risks and dangers through role play, topics and stories. Children are polite, well behaved and learn to consider different emotions and the needs of other people. For example, stories prompt children to reflect on how they would feel if someone was very angry to them. They confidently solve problems together and develop appropriate skills for their future well-being as they learn to share and take turns with their friends. Children access computers to research topics and use a range of technological resources, such as digital cameras, tape recorders or programmable toys, to extend their experiences. Positive attitudes are promoted towards diversity to help children to value aspects of their own and other people's lives. This ensures that children and families feel included, safe and valued.

Children learn about the benefits of healthy options when they help to cultivate vegetables or celebrate local grown food and produce. A choice of nutritious, healthy options are available for snacks, where children confidently help themselves and happily join their friends. Fresh drinking water is always available. Adequate hygiene routines encourage children to care for themselves, although hand washing and nappy changing facilities are not fully robust. The lack of outdoor play restrict children's opportunities although all the children eagerly participate in healthy, energetic exercise on a daily basis. They have fun doing Tigger dancing and being 'funky monkeys' as they learn about the benefits of a healthy lifestyle.

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	3
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

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	3
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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