

Aldergate Pre-School 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*.

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Children only attend this setting before and/or after the school day and/or during the school holidays. The judgements in this report reflect the quality of early years provision offered to children during those periods.

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Description of the setting

Aldergate Pre-school Playgroup is run by private ownership. It opened in 2001 and operates from two rooms within the Central Methodist Church, in the centre of Tamworth, Staffordshire. The setting is registered on the Early Years Register. A maximum of 26 children may attend at any one time.

There are currently 44 children on roll aged from two to four years. Children come from the local and surrounding areas. The setting supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those children who speak English as an additional language.

The setting is open Monday to Friday 9.00am until 2.30pm. Children can attend for a variety of sessions. All children share access to a small secure enclosed outdoor play area. There are eight members of staff working with the children. Of these, seven hold appropriate early years qualifications. The setting receives support from the local authority.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

The inclusive nature of this setting ensures that all children receive a warm welcome and settle well with the support of caring adults. There are outstanding partnerships with parents, carers and other agencies and services that ensure any child's need for additional support is identified and met at an early stage. This ensures all children make good progress in their learning and development taking into account their starting point and capabilities. Ongoing evaluation, in consultation with staff, parents and children, provides a strong basis for continuous improvements. Most arrangements to prepare children for changes that occur in their routines and to allow them to continue to pursue their interest are in place. Most policies and procedures are reviewed regularly and demonstrate a strong commitment to the welfare of all children.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- review the storage and transportation of children's journals in relation to the setting responsibilities under the Data Protection Act 1998
- review routines to allow children to continue to pursue their interest and make choices about when they eat and drink, this particularly relates to morning snack time
- support children in feeling safe and secure by preparing them for changes that may occur in the routine, this specifically relates to the arrival of visitors.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children's safety and welfare are effectively protected and promoted. Rigorous recruitment and induction procedures are in place and ensure all adults are suitable to work with children. Adults are effective in safeguarding children's welfare. The named designated person for safeguarding is suitably qualified and all other adults complete relevant safeguarding training. As a result, they have a strong understanding of the possible signs of abuse and know the procedures to follow if they have concerns about a child. The environment is safe and secure because staff are vigilant in identifying and minimising risks to children. Most policies and procedures are reviewed regularly and demonstrate a strong commitment to the welfare of all children, although the storage and transportation of children's journals has not yet been reviewed in relation to the setting responsibilities under the Data Protection Act 1998.

Consistent and inclusive systems of communication with all parents, including those with English as an additional language, result in an excellent partnership and engagement. Parents' views are sought and valued and contribute to decision making about the provision. For example, following a parent's advisory group meeting more detailed information about children's activities is now displayed in the reception area. As a result of consultation, the setting is also planning two open day events and more key person meetings to provide further opportunities for parents to become further involved in their children's learning. Parents' comments and suggestions are also sought and taken into account when all written policies and procedures are reviewed and their preferences are sought in relation to identifying a venue for the summer trip. Staff exchange information with parents on a daily basis which ensures continuity in children's care and learning. Well-presented learning journals provide parents with good quality information about their children's achievements and progress.

Outstanding partnerships with other agencies and services mean that any child's need for additional support is identified and met at an early stage. These well-established working relationships ensure, where appropriate, records, information and action plans are shared to promote the learning and development of children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Children with speech, language and communication needs also benefit from these working relationships. Children with English as an additional language are effectively supported by bilingual staff and linguistic diversity is valued.

Systems to monitor and evaluate the quality of the provision are effective and include staff, parents, children and other professionals. As a result, reflective practice is embedded and continuous improvement is maintained. All staff are enthusiastic and there is a clear vision and specific action plans in place that drives through improvements for the benefit of children. For example, adult-led activities are now also made available as a child-initiated activity to allow children to consolidate their learning. Following a review of the indoor and outdoor learning environment individual staff have taken on responsibility to explore further ways to make each area in the setting more stimulating, rich in resources and fully

accessible to all children. Changes have also been made to the afternoon routine to provide a self-service café. This allows children to continue to pursue their interest and make choices about when they eat and drink, although as yet, this is not part of the morning routine.

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

Children take part in a wide range of activities indoors and outdoors and across all areas of learning. There is an effective balance of child-initiated, adult-led and one to one activities. This provides a good balance of supported and independent learning. Staff provide good quality interactions at all times. They model investigative behaviour and encourage children to take the initiative by asking open question such as, 'why has that happened and what do I need to do?'. This supports children to become inquisitive and active learners.

Staff work extremely effectively with parents, other agencies and bilingual colleagues to develop a strong understanding of what children already know and can do, their likes and dislikes and their particular interest. This provides a firm basis to assess children's progress and achievement. Children's progress is effectively charted by way of observations, assessments and the completion of learning journeys. Improvements are currently being implemented to further strengthen the systems to inform future planning and to identify children's next steps in learning.

Children are supported to make good progress in their communication skills taking into account their starting points and capabilities. Staff effectively use visual clues, pictures and gestures together with speech and children's home language. This ensures all children are included, for example, children make and wear paper ears to remind them to listen to the sounds they hear when they go on a local walk and they pretend to put them on when they are sitting on the mat and it is time to listen. Children are well supported to mark-make and develop early writing skills. Children who are more able enjoy the challenge of recalling and predicting events in detail. They show high levels of interest and understanding that print carries meaning. They are able to write recognisable letters and recognise familiar words such as their name.

Fun activities and daily routines capture children's interest in number, shape and size and pattern. Children develop their understanding of number and counting as they sing rhymes with the aid of puppet space men. They are eager to become helper of the day and set out plates and cups for snack time. This provides purposeful and practical opportunities for children to match number and colour as well as supporting their self-esteem and confidence. Spontaneous jumping games are used well by staff to capture children's interest in numerals and shape. Children also develop a keen interest in playing with a suitable range of technology toys and equipment. Some children frequently visit the painting easel and spend long periods of time perfecting their art work. Children enjoy exploring textures and experimenting and modelling with materials such as clay and play imaginatively in the role play area.

Children of all ages play well together. They learn to show respect and consideration for others. Staff encourage sharing and taking turns which helps children to develop positive relationships with each other and skills for future learning. Praise is used well and helps all children to develop high levels of self-esteem. A wide range of festivals are celebrated and resources such as posters, dressing-up clothes, books, jigsaws and small world equipment help children to value and respect differences in others and make a very positive contribution to society.

Children clearly enjoy their time at the setting and there are good opportunities to help them to feel safe, for example, whilst under the watchful eye of staff even very young children show tenacity and a growing sense of confidence, finding new ways to climb up and over the climbing frame unaided. Strong key person systems and individually tailored settling-in programmes, that sometimes include many sessions where parents stay and play, contribute to children feeling safe and secure in the setting. However, children's sense of feeling secure and safe are possibly compromised as they are not always prepared for changes that may occur in the routine, such as the arrival of visitors.

Children's good health is effectively supported. Daily routines are in place to foster children's awareness of the need for personal hygiene. Children have good opportunities to learn about healthy lifestyles. Snacks provided by the setting are healthy and include a variety of fruit and vegetables and parents are actively encouraged to provide healthy lunch boxes. Children receive healthy eating certificates and take part in discussions about healthy food at lunch and snack time. A water dispenser encourages children to recognise and respond to their feelings of thirst and the afternoon café snack bar encourages children to recognise and respond to feelings of hunger. On most days children have free flow access to the small outdoor play area and they ride bikes and scooters in the large downstairs room. Good use is also made of the local town park where children access a larger range of outdoor equipment and take part sports day activities. Children make regular trips around the local area where they learn about their local community and come into contact with nature.

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	1
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
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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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