

Sconce Hills Pre-School Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspector	Janice Walker
Setting address	Christchurch Hall, Boundary Road, Newark, Nottinghamshire, NG24 4AJ
Telephone number	07772525092
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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

Sconce Hills Playgroup has been operating since 1966. It is a committee-run provision and operates from Christ Church Hall in Newark. The playgroup have access to a large hall and associated facilities and access the church grounds for outdoor play. Access to the property is via two steps although there is ramp access, by arrangement, at the rear of the building. The playgroup serves families from the surrounding local areas and adjoining villages.

The playgroup is registered on the Early Years Register and also on the compulsory and the voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. It is registered to provide care for 26 children under the age of eight, and accepts children from two to five years. Children attend a variety of sessions each week depending on the individual requirements of each family. There are currently 32 children on roll, all of whom are in the early years age range.

The playgroup is open each week day during school term-time from 09.00 to 12.00. A breakfast club and lunch club are also provided with extended opening for children attending this provision from 08.30 until 12.30. Four staff work with the children. Three of these hold relevant childcare qualifications. The playgroup receives support from the early years specialist team and the pre-school co-ordinators from the local authority.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a warm, welcoming and inclusive environment where their health and safety needs are considered generally well. They make steady progress in their learning and development as they can access a wide range of resources. They are valued as individuals and activities are planned according to their particular personal interests. Staff have established links with others who are involved with the children and have warm relationships with parents which can all be built on further to fully ensure the continuity of care and learning. There are effective links with other local providers and advisory staff and this enables staff to monitor the quality of the provision, helping to ensure continuous improvement.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- review the arrangements for hand washing to more effectively minimise the risk of spread of infection
- develop further the opportunities for sharing relevant information with parents and other providers for children who attend more than one setting, to fully ensure their continuity and progression
- ensure outdoor learning is planned for in order to better support children's

- progress in their learning and development
- extend the use of observations and assessments to better identify future targets across the six areas of learning so that children make more rapid progress.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children are effectively safeguarded in this provision. Robust procedures are in place to ensure that adults are suitable to be in contact with children and clear procedures are in place to ensure children's safety and well-being. Staff have a good understanding of their responsibilities regarding child protection and the lead member of staff has attended relevant training to support this. The building is safe and secure with comprehensive risk assessments in place to ensure that appropriate action is taken when potential hazards are identified. The staff team work well together providing good levels of supervision and support to children and ensuring that the session runs smoothly. They create a friendly, welcoming environment where all children feel welcome and valued. They keep abreast of good practice issues through good support systems such as regular access to training and meetings. Required documentation is well-organised and used effectively to enable staff to respond to children's individual needs. Space is effectively organised with ample room for children to move around and explore their toys independently. Daily routines are adapted when appropriate to ensure that all children are able to fully participate and staff are beginning to make good use of signing to support children not yet confident in expressing themselves vocally.

Good relationships are established with parents. They receive comprehensive information about the setting through the written policies and procedures, information displayed on notice boards and regular newsletters along with ongoing verbal updates. Systems for sharing information regarding children's learning and development are in place although not yet fully effective in supporting children's progress as best as possible. The setting have begun to establish links with other providers delivering the Early Years Foundation Stage where the care of children is shared but these are not yet secure in ensuring that children receive an integrated approach to their care and learning. The setting has acted on all the recommendations made at the last inspection which has reduced the risk of cross infection overall and improved the provision for children's learning and development. The new manager demonstrates a sound awareness of the priorities for improvement. She has introduced several new systems and practices which, when fully established have the potential to further improve the outcomes for children. The setting has strong support systems and responds positively to advice and support offered. All staff have attended numerous training courses to update and extend their skills and abilities and good systems are in place to share knowledge and experience resulting in children receiving interesting and enjoyable experiences in a safe and nurturing environment.

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

Children are happy and relaxed in this setting. They interact confidently with staff and make independent choices about what they want to do. They enjoy each other's company, play well together and are forming firm friendships. New children quickly settle due to an established routine and sensitive support from staff who help them understand what is expected of them through the good example they set along with consistent messages and patient explanations. During large group times children listen and participate well, understanding that they need to take turns and share, for example, when they are choosing songs or interacting with puppets. Daily routines are well-organised with lots of opportunities for children to initiate their own play. They keenly engage in the activities provided, moving around the room confidently and spending lengthy periods at their chosen activity, for example painting, making collages or completing jigsaws. They have high self-esteem due to the positive interaction with staff who value their contributions and respond constructively to their ideas and suggestions, such as displaying their work or providing their choice of toys. The large group singing session is hugely popular and children select songs and then sing and join in the actions with great enthusiasm. Meal times are relaxed social occasions where children display good table manners and are courteous and polite to each other.

Generally good planning systems ensure there are opportunities for every child to engage in activities which promote all the areas of learning. Children have individual preferences and these are respected. Through observations, staff identify children's interests and make effective use of these to influence planning which ensures that children are interested and engaged in play throughout the session. However, although regular observations are made of children, systems are not yet securely embedded in practice to ensure that children's next steps are identified across all the areas of learning nor fed into planning. This means that activities do not always provide an appropriate level of challenge to all children to ensure that they make the best progress possible in their learning and development.

Regular outdoor play times ensure children access fresh air and exercise to promote their good health. Currently however, best use is not made of the outdoor area as activities do not always have clear learning intentions. Additionally, the level of supervision required in order to ensure children's safety whilst accessing this area, has an impact on the quality of staff's interactions with the children during these times and consequently their opportunities for learning. Children are appropriately nourished. Healthy eating is promoted in the setting through the provision of healthy options at snack times along with the encouragement given to children who attend the lunch club to eat a well-balanced meal. Drinking water is available at all times throughout the session. Generally good hygiene routines, reinforced through discussion, support children's understanding of how to stay healthy. However, the current arrangements for hand-washing after messy play compromise this to some extent. Children develop an understanding of possible dangers and how to stay safe through planned events such as practising fire drills. Staff also seize opportunities as they arise to explain to children about the

possibility of accidents and how to prevent these. Children spontaneously demonstrate their affection for staff, asking for cuddles and demonstrating appropriate physical affection. Supported by staff, they are beginning to develop co-operation and negotiation skills as they play. They enjoy their time in the setting and are beginning to develop the knowledge and skills they require in order to progress their learning.

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	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	3
The effectiveness of partnerships	3
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	3

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	3
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	3
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	3

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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

The provider confirms that the requirements of the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are: Met