

Hopscotch Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspection date	11/03/2010
Inspector	Alison Edwards

Setting address	Church of the Martyrs, 19 Westcotes Drive, LEICESTER, LE3 0QT
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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

Hopscotch Playgroup registered in 2006. It is run as a not-for-profit organisation and operates from The Church of the Martyrs Church Hall in the West End area of Leicester serving the local community. During hours of operation, children have sole access to the ground floor hall and two adjacent playrooms, with use of associated cloakroom facilities. There is an enclosed outside area for outdoor play. The playgroup runs during school terms, opening from 9.00 am to 12.00 noon each weekday morning and from 12.45 pm to 3.45 pm on Thursday afternoons. It is registered on the Early Years Register and the compulsory part of the Childcare Register to care for a maximum of 24 children between the ages of two and eight years, all of whom may be in the early years age range. The playgroup is also registered on the voluntary part of the Childcare Register to care for children aged eight and over. It receives funding to provide nursery education to three- and four-year-old children. There are currently 35 children on roll. All are within the early years age range, and 20 receive nursery education funding. There are currently four regular childcare staff. Of these, the manager is a qualified teacher who also holds a recognised early years qualification at Level 3, and a second staff member also holds a recognised early years qualification at Level 3.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is satisfactory.

Children show good levels of confidence in their relationships with others, and often show interest and enjoyment in their play. Adults generally have a sound understanding of how to implement the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage in order to meet children's welfare and developmental needs. The playgroup gives high priority to establishing good relationships with parents, and with other relevant agencies and early years settings, in order to ensure a good shared understanding of each child's individual needs. The playgroup has addressed issues raised at its previous inspection, and is establishing systematic internal processes to review its provision in order to plan for continued improvement.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- keep required records, including details of the name, home address and telephone number relating to the provider, and ensure that these are easily accessible and available for inspection. (Documentation)
- 15/04/2010

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

- reappraise the management of internal unsecured fire doors to minimise the potential of children gaining access to other areas of the premises
- develop ways to promote children's positive attitudes to diversity through daily routines and well-planned activities and experiences that encourage children to recognise and respect individual and cultural similarities and differences and the reasons for these
- extend existing use of observations to more consistently identify the next steps in individual children's learning and make more use of these assessments to plan for the highest levels of challenge and progress across each aspect of development.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

There are generally sound arrangements to safeguard children from harm. Staff are aware of what child abuse and neglect are, and have ready access to a recently reviewed safeguarding policy to underpin their understanding of their responsibilities in the event of any concerns about a child or allegation of abuse. Appropriate recruitment procedures are in place to check the suitability of those caring for children. Staffing is organised to ensure that required adult:child ratios are maintained, and that there are sufficient qualified staff working with children. Staff are careful in their supervision of children, including vigilant management of arrival and departure times. They have recently introduced the systematic use of risk assessment procedures to identify potential hazards to children and ways to minimise these. However, a full review of how to best manage the security of internal doors in order to minimise the potential risk of children gaining access to other areas of the premises is not yet complete. Most required records, such as daily registers and details of any accidents, are methodically kept to underpin the safe management of children's care. However, there are occasional lapses in maintaining accessible written records of all required information relating to those legally responsible for managing the playgroup, such as contact details, so breaching a specific legal requirement of registration.

Parents speak highly of the playgroup's welcoming and flexible approach, and of staff's effectiveness in getting to know individual children and helping them settle readily. Parents enjoy daily discussion with staff about children's experiences and changing interests, and also value informal opportunities for more confidential discussion of any sensitive issues or concerns. The playgroup has established regular review meetings with parents to share more systematic information about children's progress. Children enjoy making links between home and playgroup, for example through their enthusiastic participation in a weekly book loan scheme. Parents are encouraged to become involved with the playgroup, for example by acting as parent representatives, and by sharing their skills and interests in playgroup sessions. The playgroup takes account of the results of parental questionnaires in developing its services, for example by introducing 'summer picnics' to retain links with families over the summer holidays. The playgroup has established links with other early years settings, such as the local schools to which children progress. Staff are experienced in working with other agencies and relevant professionals to support the identification and inclusion of children with

special educational needs and/or disabilities. Children use some resources, such as books, dolls and puzzles, which reflect different clothing styles, skin tone and lifestyles. However, experiences and activities are not yet consistently planned and used to best effect to fully promote children's understanding of individual and cultural diversity.

The playgroup has taken appropriate steps to address issues raised at its previous inspection. For example, an additional staff member has completed the required Level 3 early years training to ensure that the specified qualification requirements are met, and arrangements to work in partnership with parents have been improved. Staff show continued willingness to make use of available local training and support to build on their existing levels of knowledge, for example as two further staff work towards completing Level 3 qualifications. The playgroup is also currently taking part in an accreditation programme to develop effective practice in promoting children's communication skills. The playgroup takes account of external monitoring and advice from local authority advisors. It has begun to involve staff in some internal review of current practice, and is in the early stages of systematically reviewing all aspects of its provision against nationally agreed criteria in order to establish agreed priorities for further improvement.

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

Staff help children begin to develop a healthy lifestyle. They encourage children to wash their hands thoroughly before eating and use relevant stories to help children learn about the reasons for good hygiene routines, such as teeth cleaning. Staff provide a range of snacks, such as toast, or cereal and milk, helping to contribute to a balanced diet. Children now enjoy daily opportunities for active play in the fresh air as they use equipment such as wheeled toys, or hoops and quoits, in the new outdoor play area. They show growing confidence using balancing beams and a sturdy climbing frame indoors. Children begin to develop their hand-eye coordination as they scoop sand into containers, or use chunky brushes for free painting. Staff seek and record relevant information from parents about children's individual health and dietary needs, and have appropriate systems in place to manage any accidents or illnesses appropriately. Staff help children understand how to behave safely as they remind them of the reasons for not throwing sand, or of the routines for getting ready to go outside. They make use some planned activities to help children learn about aspects of safety in the wider world, for example, as they use visits to a local garage or from a carpenter, to talk about the reasons for protective clothing such as sturdy boots or visors.

Children are consistently confident and relaxed in their dealings with adults and peers. For example, they readily approach staff to express their own needs or ideas, and enjoy identifying their friends and talking about recent experiences as they look at photographs of playgroup events. Staff make good use of initial information from parents to get to know each child as an individual. Children gain understanding of their own and other people's emotions and the reasons for these through well-chosen stories and adult-led activities. They begin to show good levels of cooperation and turn-taking, for example, when sharing buckets and

spades in sand play.

Overall, staff have a sound understanding of the areas of learning identified within the EYFS, and are clear on the value of practical play and first hand experiences in underpinning children's learning. They use relevant information from parents to help establish a shared awareness of new children's initial interests and abilities. Consequently, they provide a generally balanced range of activities helping children to make sound progress, and to establish a sound basis for their future skills. For example, children enjoy listening to group stories and begin to contribute their own ideas about characters' feelings or to anticipate what will happen next. Children readily and spontaneously make simple marks with available resources, such pencils and crayons. Children often recognise numbers up to 20 and begin to accurately 'add one on' in adult led activities. They begin to gain an awareness of shape and space as they build with different types of construction sets, or use containers and shovels of different sizes in sand play. Children begin to learn about their local environment and community as they visit the grounds of the neighbouring church, or nearby services such as a local garage. They make some use of everyday technology, for example when pretending to use a telephone, or pressing and naming the letters on a keyboard. Children are introduced to different creative techniques, such as bubble painting. They enjoy simple pretend play with a selection of different diggers, or with a dolls house and its accessories. They begin to act out simple roles, for example in a pretend hairdressers. Staff already record some observations of children's activities and abilities to track children's progress and share this with parents. However, they do not yet make best use of assessments to accurately identify and plan for the next steps in each child's learning to consistently promote the highest levels of challenge and progression in adult-led and child-chosen activities.

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	3
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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	3
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	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
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The provider confirms that the requirements of the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are:	Met
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