

Linden Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspector

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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

Linden Playgroup was established in 1967 and is a voluntary organisation managed by a committee of parents. Care is provided in two rooms in the basement of St Cuthbert's Church in Birkby, Huddersfield and serves the local residential community. A secure outdoor play area is available. The group is open term time only from Monday to Friday 8.45am to 3.15pm with a lunch club available. The setting is registered on the Early Years Register and there are currently 55 children on roll. The setting is also registered on the Childcare Register. Children occupying these places share the same facilities as the children in the early years age range, although there are currently no children on roll in this age group.

There are nine members of staff, most of whom have appropriate childcare qualifications. The group receives regular support from the Local Authority and they are affiliated to the Pre School Learning Alliance.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children's welfare, learning and development needs are mostly well met within a friendly, inclusive environment. Staff work well together to provide individual care for each child, and they communicate with parents to share information about many aspects relating to their child. Partnership with others is given due priority to enhance opportunities for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Indoor space is used well to meet the children's needs and accessible play resources enable children to make effective progress in the six areas of learning. The provider has addressed the issues from the last inspection and is aware of the setting's strengths and areas to develop. Systems to evaluate and monitor the quality of the provision are developing.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- continue to develop ways to monitor and evaluate the quality of the provision, taking into account the views of parents and children
- ensure children's good health is successfully promoted in relation to handwashing facilities
- extend opportunities for children to spontaneously access the outdoor environment, to support their learning in all areas
- develop ways of working with parents to establish children's starting points and next steps in their learning and development.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Staff clearly understand their responsibilities to ensure children are safeguarded. They are aware of the signs of abuse and the procedures to follow should there be concerns about children's welfare. Recruitment and induction procedures are robust, and staff are appropriately vetted to ensure they are suitable to work with children. Risk assessments identify any hazards, and staff ensure the children are closely supervised. In spite of the building needing some improvement and being used by other groups at different times, staff ensure displays are attractive and space indoors is used effectively to meet the children's needs. However, rooms are not always adequately ventilated, because of the limitations on the premises. The outdoor area is used daily, but this is planned into the routine and is adult initiated. Toys and play provision meets the learning and development needs of the children, although adequate facilities for hand washing are not always available to support children's good health. Children engage in a range of freely chosen activities, accessing areas of continuous provision and they can rest and relax as they need to.

All required documentation is in place and filed securely. Policies and procedures that underpin the practice are available to all parents and staff, and these are revised in line with any changes. The setting gives good consideration to promoting equality and diversity; practice is inclusive and staff take steps to ensure all children are integrated. Staff work with other professionals to ensure that the needs of individual children are met. Children who are soon to attend the local school, are helped to become familiar with their teacher, who visits the setting. Systems for communicating with parents are varied to meet the diverse needs of those who access the provision. For example, policies and notices are written in other languages as well as in English and members of staff speak more than one language. Notice boards are used to convey relevant information, such as photographs of staff and what is planned for the children. Staff have a good rapport with parents, and they are very happy with the service and the quality of care their children receive. Parents provide individual information at the start of each placement about their child, although this does not include information about learning and development in order for staff to establish their starting points. Staff are given allocated time to ensure children's profiles are up-to-date and parents are welcome to view these at any time. Parents are invited to be involved in what their children are doing, such as, attending sessions, meetings and on occasion joining in with long trips, such as to the seaside.

The provider has a clear commitment to making further improvements to the provision and outcomes for children. For example, the outdoor areas are designated for improvement. Self-evaluation is undertaken largely by all staff, but does not yet extend to include the views of parents and children.

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

Children engage in purposeful free play and staff provide good opportunities to extend their learning and development in all areas, particularly in their personal, social and emotional development. Children respond well to the secure routine of each session. For example, they know when it is snack time and they willingly tidy up with their peers. Key staff understand each child's preferences and their developmental needs. Planning of activities are in place for children and staff regularly observe children's development using 'look, listen and note' methods for tracking progress. Observations are compiled in each child's individual profile with photographs and examples of what they have been doing, although the next steps in their learning are not always clearly defined.

Staff organise story and singing sessions in line with children's level of understanding, separating into smaller groups as appropriate for their concentration and using props, such as story sacks to bring the characters to life. Children enthusiastically join in with repeated refrains in familiar stories, such as when trying to 'huff and puff and blow the house down' and staff maintain their interest well. Children are happy and settled, and they assertively initiate conversations with others. Staff communicate well with the children to develop their language skills, and children confidently make their needs known. Children who do not speak English as their first language are given good support and reassurance through close working with skilled staff, who enable them to hold familiar comfort objects if they feel insecure when settling in. Children are invited to bring family photographs to display 'all about me' information, which helps them to feel valued. Children engage in self-chosen challenges and they show independence and initiative in their play. Children count in everyday ways and their understanding of number is reinforced through repetition of simple songs and rhymes. Children talk about colours and this is extended within the current topic, for example, the colour red is examined in the children's clothing, in the play-dough and in pictures of tomatoes and fire engines. Children are given planned opportunities to experience the outdoors and they enjoy developing their physical skills in addition to exploring and investigating. Children enjoy role play and they become engrossed in preparing fresh food in the home corner, serving up things, such as, carrots, cabbage and potatoes using real resources.

Children enjoy a wide range of fresh fruit and vegetables at snack time and they talk about the benefits of healthy eating. They make simple choices about what they would like to eat and drink and their self-help skills are encouraged well. Staff have a clear understanding of children's individual dietary requirements and preferences. Children who stay for lunch have food brought in from home, which is stored and served in line with individual needs and parents' requests, and all food surfaces are cleaned with antibacterial solution. Drinks are always available to children, so they do not become thirsty in the setting. Very good opportunities are in place for children to share responsibilities, such as, giving out the cups, which gives them a sense of being valued and trusted and giving them skills for the future. Policies and procedures support children's health and staff mostly encourage children to be aware of how to stay healthy. Consistent reminders are

given to children about hand washing, especially before they eat their snacks, although facilities for them to wash their hands are limited and do not prevent the spread of infection. For example, soap is not consistently available and the warm air hand drier is seldom or ineffectively used. Children are encouraged to feel safe, with gentle reminders given to help them. For example, they are reminded not to run indoors and not to drink from the container used for exploring water, with appropriate explanations that help them develop their understanding.

Staff use effective strategies to encourage children to behave well, depending upon their understanding. Children are encouraged to share and consider each other's feelings, and staff are consistent in their approach to managing behaviour. Praise and encouragement is given to all children, and they respond well to this. Good manners are encouraged through staff setting a good example and children enjoy singing the 'please and thank-you song' before they eat their food.

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	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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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