

# Endcliffe Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Unique reference number</b>	300777
<b>Inspection date</b>	20/01/2010
<b>Inspector</b>	Karen Cockings

<b>Setting address</b>	Endcliffe Methodist Church, Neill Road, Sheffield, S11 7RG
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<b>Telephone number</b>	07980 433849 Playgroup Hours Only
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<b>Email</b>	
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<b>Type of setting</b>	Childcare on non-domestic premises
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Royal Exchange Buildings  
St Ann's Square  
Manchester  
M2 7LA

T: 0300 123 1231  
Textphone: 0161 618 8524  
E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
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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

Endcliffe Playgroup has been registered since 1993. It is managed by a voluntary management committee, which includes parent representatives. The playgroup operates from the Methodist Church Hall in the Endcliffe area of south west Sheffield, within walking distance of local parks, bus routes, shops and other amenities. It serves families living in the local community and surrounding areas. There are two rooms available for children's play and a fully enclosed outdoor area.

The playgroup is registered to provide care for a maximum of 20 children in the early years age group. There are currently 30 children on roll, aged between two and five years. The playgroup is open on Monday and Wednesday mornings during term time from 9.15am until 11.30am. It is registered on the Early Years Register only.

A team of four staff work with the children, all of whom have relevant early years qualifications or are working towards them. The setting is a member of the Pre-school Learning Alliance.

## The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a secure and welcoming environment, where their safety and well-being are given high priority. Partnerships with parents are strong in many respects, but opportunities for sharing and contributing to children's records are more limited and links with other settings are not yet fully established. Staff are steadily developing their systems for observing and recording children's progress, to comply with the learning and development requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), and to help them to meet children's individual learning needs. Required documentation is in place, although some procedures lack necessary detail. There is a clear commitment to a process of continuous improvement and an honest and realistic approach to self-evaluation as a way of identifying areas for future development.

## What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- develop further the systems for observing and recording children's progress, and use these observations to plan challenging learning experiences for individual children
- provide more opportunities, both indoors and outside, for children to practise and extend skills in problem solving, reasoning and numeracy and to develop their knowledge and understanding of the world
- consider additional ways of involving parents in their children's learning and

- building partnerships with other settings
- review and develop complaints procedures to ensure they fully reflect current regulations.

## **The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision**

Children's welfare is safeguarded due to clearly defined procedures for staff to follow if they have any concerns, together with effective recruitment and vetting systems, which ensure that staff are suitable to work with children. Parent helpers do not take any sole charge of children other than their own and notices are posted as reminders. A record is kept of any existing injuries. Positive steps are taken around the setting to maintain children's security, including the use of safety gates to restrict children's unsupervised access to other areas of the building. Staff are vigilant in their supervision of children and are careful to only consume hot drinks in the kitchen area. Risk assessments and daily checking systems are also in place and implemented well. Staffing levels meet and generally exceed requirements, taking into account the ages of children and the layout of the building. Required documentation, such as attendance, accident and medication records, is maintained satisfactorily, promoting the safety and well-being of the children. Policies and procedures are effectively shared with parents, although the complaints procedure is quite basic and does not fully reflect current regulations.

Parents speak very highly of the provision and many are eager to play a part in the inspection process by taking the opportunity to express their views. They refer in particular to the friendly and welcoming environment, where there are lots of activities for children and supportive staff who interact positively with them. Parents are actively involved as rota helpers if they wish or they may become members of the management committee. Information about the provision is shared well overall. The notice board is used to display significant documents, newsletters are distributed and there is friendly dialogue at arrival and collection times. Systems for monitoring and recording children's development have only recently been introduced, with little opportunity as yet to share these with parents and invite their personal contributions to them. However, parents appreciate the information about planned topics, which enables them to extend activities at home. Opportunities to share skills, such as playing a musical instrument for the children, also help to involve parents in their children's learning. There are appropriate links with the local nursery school, which many of the children go on to attend and with childminders who bring children to the playgroup. However, the setting recognises the potential to develop these partnerships further in order to promote continuity of children's care and learning.

Staff work very hard to overcome the challenges of shared premises and to create a stimulating environment, which captures children's interest as they arrive. There is a cosy, inviting book corner and role play areas are arranged imaginatively. Outdoor spaces are used with enjoyment by children, but are not always fully exploited to promote all areas of children's learning. There is a welcoming atmosphere, with a varied range of toys and activities available, so that children are able to make choices about their play for much of the session. However, the

organisation of daily routines can sometimes hinder children's opportunities to return to activities they may have been enjoying earlier. Staff liaise closely with parents where there are additional needs and they make efforts to overcome communication barriers, when they have children attending who speak English as an additional language. Resources, such as dressing up clothes and books, as well as some planned activities, help children to learn more about the wider world in which they live.

The staff team work well together, supported by the newly established management committee, who are all very committed to the future development of the provision. Recommendations from the previous inspection have been suitably addressed overall, which has a positive impact on the safety and welfare of children. For example, a clear record is now kept of when evacuation procedures have been practised with children and improvements have been made to the arrangements for hand washing. The support of other childcare professionals and organisations is welcomed and 'working together' agreements are reached, in order to improve outcomes for children. The provision is also beginning to make use of self-evaluation systems to identify specific areas for future development.

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

Children benefit from this small and friendly setting, where staff get to know them and their families well. Parents feel comfortable to stay as long as they feel is necessary to support the settling in process for their children and enjoy being actively involved. Introductory visits with parents are planned for children who are not quite two years old. Children are greeted warmly and most are familiar with arrival routines, finding their name tags on the table for self-registration and quickly settle down to an activity of their choice. Some aspects of their growing independence are nurtured well as they help to prepare their own snacks, carefully spreading butter and choosing fillings for their sandwiches. However, it is more difficult for them to manage dressing independently because they sometimes struggle to find and reach their outdoor clothing. Staff are attentive, supporting children effectively as they learn to play cooperatively together. For example, they thank children for sharing and make positive comments on their achievements. Importantly, children learn how to use their environment and equipment safely as they play. Staff remind them to sit properly on their chairs, so they do not fall and to walk carefully down the ramp to the garden. They take part in regular fire drills, which helps them to become familiar with the procedures they should follow in an emergency.

Children's health and well-being are suitably promoted within the setting. They enjoy healthy snacks, which include fresh and dried fruit, as well as, foods they have helped to prepare, such as sandwiches or crackers and cheese. Drinks of water are readily available throughout the session. Staff are attentive to any special dietary requirements, ensuring that the foods offered are appropriate and are also seeking additional training if necessary to help them to deal with any allergic reactions. Children know that they need to wash their hands before they eat and are learning to follow safe hygiene practice. Their good health is further

promoted through opportunities at each session for outdoor play. They develop physical skills and confidence as they steer bicycles and scooters around the garden, balance on stepping stones and play with balls and hoops. Indoors, staff set up the climbing frame and play tunnel for those children who learn better through active play.

A key worker system has been introduced, together with systems for observing and recording children's engagement with activities. Staff use their observations to find out more about children's interests and abilities, although they are not yet clearly linking these to specific areas of learning or identifying children's next steps. Children's records are developing, but are not yet being used sufficiently well to inform planning and to ensure there is sufficient challenge in all areas of children's learning. For example, opportunities to develop children's skills in numeracy, reasoning and problem solving are not always fully exploited as part of daily routines and play experiences. However, staff are to be congratulated for the very thoughtful way in which they present some imaginative activities. For example, to reflect their 'Row the boat' topic they create a watery expanse with blue plastic sheeting and a small dinghy, with binoculars and picnic foods nearby. Children's interest is quickly captured as they pretend to set off in their boat, while others are engrossed in preparing food on the 'barbecue'.

Children also thoroughly enjoy making colourful patterns with rollers and stamps on a long roll of paper taped to the floor. They listen intently to stories and take an enthusiastic part in performing action songs and rhymes. Children are beginning to recognise their own names as they find their labels and some can write them legibly on their art work. Outings are not generally planned due to time constraints and safety issues, but on occasions the outside world is brought in to help children find out more about the world around them. For example, they explore shells and cones on the interest table or learn about small animals when a parent brings in her family's pet tortoise. There are plans to provide more opportunities for children to use technological equipment, such as taking photographs of themselves for display, and to be involved in gardening projects. Children enjoy the time they spend in playgroup, building positive relationships with adults and with each other and making steady progress in 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

<b>How well does the setting meet the needs of the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?</b>	3
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	3

### The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

<b>How effectively is the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?</b>	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	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

<b>Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	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	3
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	3
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	3

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