

Margaret Lloyd Playgroup & Holiday Playscheme

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	129368
Inspection date	10/03/2010
Inspector	Valerie Fane
Setting address	Washington Avenue, Grovehill, Hemel Hempstead, Hertfordshire, HP2 6NG
Telephone number	01442 217859
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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

Margaret Lloyd Playgroup and Holiday Playscheme is a registered charity managed by a voluntary management committee and was registered in 1985. It operates from a purpose built building in the Grovehill area of Hemel Hempstead. The setting serves the local area. It is accessible to all children and there is a fully enclosed area available for outdoor play.

The playgroup opens Monday to Friday during school term-time. Sessions are from 9.00am until 3.00pm with different sessions available for children of different ages. The holiday playscheme is open for several weeks during the Easter and summer school holidays Monday to Friday from 9.00am to 3.00pm. Children are able to attend for a variety of sessions. A maximum of 39 children may attend the nursery at any one time. There are currently 48 children attending who are within the Early Years Foundation Stage. The setting also offers care to children aged over five years to six years. The nursery is registered on the Early Years Register and on both the voluntary and compulsory parts of the Childcare Register. The setting provides funded early education for three and four-year-olds. It supports children special educational needs and/or disabilities and children who speak English as an additional language.

The setting employs four permanent members of child care staff and a number of casual staff or volunteers. Of these four 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.

Children settle well and enjoy their time in this lively playgroup where they receive a good preparation to move on to nursery or school. They make good progress because the staff understand how to support their learning with varied opportunities for both free play and planned activities indoors and outside. Children's welfare needs are mostly met very well because there is an effective key person system in place and staff develop close relationships with parents. They have a detailed knowledge of children's particular family circumstances so that they can provide very good support for children and their families. The committee and the manager work closely with the staff and are committed to making improvements to the provision, such as the recent development of the outdoor area. All required policies and procedures are in place but there are a few omissions in the documentation that is obtained from parents and confidentiality is not always maintained when accident records are completed.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- request written permission from parents for seeking emergency medical advice or treatment (Safeguarding and promoting children's welfare) 24/03/2010
- ensure that the following information is recorded for each child: the name and address of every parent and carer who is known to the provider and which of these parents or carers the child normally lives with and ensure that medication records are kept for three years after children leave the setting (Documentation). 24/03/2010

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

- maintain confidentiality when completing accident records.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children are protected because staff have a secure knowledge of safeguarding and they update their training on this subject regularly. The manager has a very clear understanding of the procedures to follow if staff have safeguarding concerns about their children and she works closely with the relevant authorities when they are involved in children's care. Employment procedures are robust and ensure that all staff are suitable to work with young children. All required policies and procedures are in place and are effective in practice. Children receive care in a safe and secure environment because staff have identified and eliminated hazards using detailed risk assessments. Ongoing improvements to the provision have included the provision of matting for the walls, floors and radiators in the ball pond room. Children use an interesting range of resources both indoors and outside to support their play and learning.

Children's welfare is potentially compromised because of some omissions in documentation. The manager obtains most legally required information from parents before children attend the playgroup but this does not include the name and address of all parents or carers known to the playgroup or consent to obtain emergency medical advice or treatment. Children's privacy is not maintained because other children involved in accidents are named on accident records.

In other respects children thrive because the playgroup staff work closely with parents using an effective key person system to get to know individual children and their families extremely well. Children are able to continue their learning at home because parents receive regular verbal feedback about children's progress and reading diaries are also used for parents of older children to exchange information with staff. The manager looks for different ways to communicate with parents that are effective. For example, she has recently begun to use a 'Facebook' page to pass information about the pre-school to parents. The manager understands the benefits of working in partnership with others to support children's welfare. She has developed good links with the local Children's Centre and exchanges information with a childminder who also cares for a child who

attends the playgroup.

Children benefit greatly from the commitment of the committee, manager and staff to provide a stimulating playgroup environment. They are constantly making improvements to meet the needs and desires of children and their parents and to help children to develop the confidence to face future challenges when they move to school or nursery. The manager uses a detailed self-evaluation document to identify the strengths of the group and to highlight areas for future development. These currently include further improvements to the outdoor area, such as a music line, and exploring different ways to encourage parents to provide more information about children's learning at home.

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

Children's welfare needs are met because staff work closely with parents to find out about their home backgrounds and any individual requirements. If children have specific medical needs a care plan is put in place and staff receive any necessary training from medical professionals. Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress because staff ensure that they are aware of their needs and make adjustments to the routines to support children's learning. For example, they sit with specific children at story time to help them benefit from the experience. If children speak English as an additional language staff obtain simple words in their language while also supporting them to learn English. They value their culture in the group and encourage parents to come in and share aspects of their culture such as cookery or clothing. This supports all children to improve their understanding of diversity.

Children develop their awareness of healthy lifestyles because they spend plenty of time outside. They have additional opportunities for indoor exercise in the ball pond room where they have fun on the soft play equipment and in the ball pit. They learn about road safety on the purpose-built marked roadway that runs round the outside area. They eat nutritious snacks such as pitta bread or wraps with different fillings and a choice of fresh fruit. Older children develop good self-help skills because they fill their own wraps. They learn to use knives safely. Future plans include growing crops such as tomatoes and carrots in the outdoor area so that children learn to grow healthy food. They enjoy a visit from a nutritionist as part of a healthy eating day. They make healthy turkey burgers and take recipe cards home to encourage them to 'cook healthy at home'.

Children behave very well and become enthusiastic learners. This is because staff are good role models and have appropriate expectations for the behaviour of children of different ages. They help older children understand the needs of younger ones, such as a child who has just started and who does not yet sit down throughout snack time. Children make good progress because the staff have a secure understanding of how young children learn. They provide a good balance of times of free play and some structured activities. They observe and assess children's progress and keep some records. They have a very good knowledge of individual children's current learning priorities. The activities provided also support

children's development of skills for the future.

Children of all ages settle well in this lively playgroup and confident and happy. Younger children choose to do paintings or to play outside in the sand or on the bikes. They explore the texture of play dough and develop hand control using the rolling pin to roll out their dough. They try to use shape cutters to make different shapes and staff talk to them about the shapes they are making, such as a green aeroplane. They develop problem-solving skills as they try to find the right pieces for a puzzle. They make a puzzle with coloured fingers and count how many fingers they have on the puzzle and on their own hands.

Older children plan their learning. They ask for help to put on an apron because they want to make a bus. Staff encourage thinking skills and mathematical language because they ask children what they need first for their bus and when they decide they need wheels they discuss what shape they will be. They select three wheels for their bus and then choose a piece of paper for the body. They cut out their bus and staff support their understanding of the meaning of text by writing what they have done on their picture. Children sit well for circle time and join in the words and actions of favourite songs such as 'Two little bugs on the trampoline'. They develop calculation skills because they count how many bugs they have on their trampoline and add or subtract the bugs that have fallen off. They have fun doing the movements to the song. Children play well together in the role play area. They invite each other to come to their shop to buy things and talk about what they want to buy. They use technology in their play because they use the cash register to charge people for their shopping.

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	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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Annex B: the Childcare Register

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

Not Met (with actions)

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

Not Met (with actions)

The registered provider does not meet the requirements of the compulsory and or voluntary part/s of the Childcare Register.

To comply with the requirements of the compulsory part of the Childcare Register, the registered person must take the following action/s by the specified date:

- retain for two years a record of any medicine administered to any child who is cared for on the premises, including the date and circumstances and who administered it (Records to be kept) (also applies to the voluntary part of the Childcare Register). 24/03/2010

To comply with the requirements of the voluntary part of the Childcare Register, the registered person must take the following action/s by the specified date:

- take action as specified in the compulsory part of the Childcare Register (Records to be kept). 24/03/2010