

# Rainbow Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

---

<b>Unique reference number</b>	EY400382
<b>Inspection date</b>	09/03/2010
<b>Inspector</b>	Martyn Richards

<b>Setting address</b>	Grove Primary School, Campkin Road, CAMBRIDGE, CB4 2NB
<b>Telephone number</b>	07960 382405
<b>Email</b>	
<b>Type of setting</b>	Childcare on non-domestic premises

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It rates council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

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)  
W: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

© Crown copyright 2009

## 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).

Please see our website for more information about each childcare provider. We publish inspection reports, conditions of registration and details of complaints we receive where we or the provider take action to meet the requirements of registration.

## **Description of the setting**

Rainbow Playgroup is a well established setting operated as a registered charity and managed by a committee of parents. It has moved a short distance into the Grove Primary School in Cambridge City where it has use of a large group room with adjacent toilets and cloakroom. It was registered in this accommodation in 2009. There is an enclosed outdoor play area solely for the use of the pre-school children. The playgroup is able to accept up to 26 children in the early years age group at any one time. None of these may be under two years of age. At present there are 31 children on roll, 18 of whom were present during the inspection. The playgroup's opening times are 9.00am to 12.00pm Monday to Friday in term time only. From April 2010 it will also offer a lunchtime session until 1.00pm. Children may attend for a variety of sessions during the week. The playgroup receives some funding for early education. It supports children with learning difficulties or disabilities and has appropriate access for them. There are five members of staff, including the manager. Three have early years qualifications. The playgroup has links with a range of child support services and with other local early years settings. It is a member of the Pre-School Learning Alliance and is on the Early Years Register.

## **The overall effectiveness of the early years provision**

Overall the quality of the provision is satisfactory.

It provides a safe, welcoming and inclusive environment in which children play enthusiastically and where their developmental needs are met. Parents speak highly of its friendly ethos. The varied activities the playgroup provides help children to grow in self confidence through creative and physical aspects of learning. There have been significant improvements in the playgroup since it moved to its new building, and the staff clearly demonstrate the skills and determination to continue its improvement in the future.

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

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

- refine the playgroup's self evaluation process to focus more sharply on the progress and achievement of the children
- ensure that more staff gain a recognised early years qualification
- make it clearer in their planning what they expect children to learn from their activities
- extend the variety and challenge of activities to enrich children's knowledge and understanding of the world about them.

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

Staff rightly give the highest priority to keeping the children safe and this is an area of strength in the playgroup. The suitability of all adults working with the children is checked and visitors' credentials are also scrutinised carefully. The activity room and outdoor areas are secure from intrusion, or from children slipping away unnoticed. Staff and children take part in regular fire drills. They display their evacuation plans clearly, and emergency exits are uncluttered. Staff conduct daily and half termly checks of the site, the equipment and the furniture the children use, to ensure there is nothing to put them at risk. All staff have had training in child protection. They know how to identify signs of possible mistreatment and what action to take should this occur. They are meticulous in recording and managing any small accidents children may have and several have first aid training. The Key Person scheme is understood by parents, and links them with a single, named adult who knows their child especially well.

The Rainbow Playgroup welcomes all children and works closely with advisory and support agencies which help those with learning difficulties or disabilities. They contribute to the children's care plans and this helps ensure consistency in provision as children go from one setting to another. Several of the children have a first language other than English. They soon feel comfortable in the playgroup and enjoy all it has to offer. The provision ensures that all children make satisfactory progress from their various starting points.

Children enjoy a good range of resources, both for indoor and outdoor play. Equipment is maintained in good, clean condition, although, there is no suitable storage provision for outside apparatus. This issue is being addressed by the management committee.

Staff have undertaken additional training to enhance their skills and to manage new initiatives effectively. However, two of the five staff members do not have a recognised childcare qualification and this presents difficulties in meeting requirements if the manager is unavoidably absent.

The manager and her staff are ambitious for the playgroup and delighted with their new accommodation. They ensure it is orderly, colourful and inviting for the children. There is adequate space for the display of children's creative work and for important notices for parents. Staff periodically conduct a survey of parents' views of the playgroup and build these into their plans where possible. They have completed a systematic self review of the playgroup recently. This is a praiseworthy first attempt. It provides a clear description of what the setting offers, but does not focus sufficiently sharply on what improvements might be made to enrich children's learning in the future. There are too few planned activities to enrich and excite their knowledge and understanding of the world around them.

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

Children look forward to coming to the playgroup. As one mother commented during the inspection, "I can hardly get her out of bed except on playgroup mornings, then she can't get up quickly enough!" They settle down quickly and calmly to the activities set out for them. Adults quietly join them in their play, riding one of the toy bicycles for example, or helping to make a building with construction materials. Several children are sufficiently self confident to take equipment from the shelves for themselves and to put it away afterwards. They enjoy dressing up and playing with cars. Several boys and girls modelled adults very accurately when playing with a miniature cleaner's trolley. Another group was deeply involved in hand printing. This can be a messy activity, but they made attractive prints and managed to keep the paint in its rightful place. They also remembered to wash their hands afterwards.

As they get older, most learn to recognise their names, to identify some letters and sounds and to hold a book the right way up. Some imitate staff when holding their favourite book, as if showing it to an audience and pretending to tell the story. They learn to count and to order objects from biggest to smallest. They can operate a simple computer programme, and are beginning to know how to mix colours. They like vigorous play on the outdoor apparatus and many show good manual skills in handling brushes and pencils. Children enjoy the good range of healthy snacks provided for them. They use equipment safely and feel confident in their relationships with staff. Their good behaviour makes a contribution to the playgroup's family ethos. These skills and attitudes will help them in their future education.

Although, children play happily both indoors and outside, weekly plans make too little provision for adult led activities to stimulate their curiosity and build a sense of wonder and excitement about the world around them.

The plans are not clear enough about what it is hoped children will learn from their activities. Staff make regular observations of each child's response to the programme, and it is evident from these notes that children make headway in some areas of learning during their time in the playgroup. This is especially the case in personal and social skills. However, because the intended learning is not clear in activity planning, these observations seldom paint a sufficiently detailed picture of a child's progress over time.

## 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	2
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	2

### The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
--	---

### 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	2
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	3
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	3

Any complaints about the inspection or report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

