

Boughton Monchelsea Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	127031
Inspection date	20/04/2010
Inspector	Liz Margaret Caluori
Setting address	The Village Hall, Church Street, Boughton Monchelsea, Maidstone, Kent, ME17 4HN
Telephone number	07999 824478
Email	
Type of setting	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.

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
W: 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

Boughton Monchelsea Playgroup opened in 1968 and is a registered charity, managed by a committee of parents. It operates from the village hall in Boughton Monchelsea, near Maidstone. The hall has its own kitchen and cloakroom facilities and the group has occasional use of a smaller room. Children have access to a sectioned off area of the playing field directly adjacent to the hall.

The group is registered on the Early Years Register and may care for a maximum of 30 children from two to five years at any one time. There are currently 72 children on roll, all of whom attend on a part time basis. The group opens five days a week during school term-time. Sessions are from 9:15am until 11:45am five days a week with afternoon sessions running from 12:30pm until 3.00pm every weekday except for Wednesday.

The group is able to support children for whom English is an additional language as well as those with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

A total of 10 staff are employed to work with the children, over half of whom hold recognised early years qualifications. The number of staff present each session depends on the number of children booked to attend and also takes into account additional support required to meet the needs of individual children. The setting receives support from the local authority advisory team.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children thoroughly enjoy their time in the pre-school, playing happily with their friends in the safe, child-centred and inclusive environment. The care and attention given to identifying and addressing their individual needs ensures that they are making good progress in their learning and development. An extremely strong focus on self-evaluation results in the effective identification of areas for improvement. In addition, very positive relationships exist with parents, carers and other professionals enabling staff to provide consistent and coordinated care.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- review the planning for adult guided creative activities to ensure that the amount of direction offered does not unnecessarily restrict children's creativity
- improve the maintenance of written risk assessment records to more clearly reflect the good practices in place.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children are effectively protected by the robust safety precautions in place within the group. The manager takes lead responsibility for coordinating child protection concerns and has attended training to support her in this role. She is confident in her ability to recognise the potential signs and symptoms of abuse and understands her responsibility to report any concerns that she may have. A clear written policy is available for parents and carers, including the process to be followed should an allegation be made against a member of staff.

Daily checks are undertaken to ensure that all areas are safe before children arrive and staff are vigilant in their supervision throughout the session. There are written records of some of the risk assessments that have been undertaken, particularly those that relate to specific concerns arising from the needs of individual children. However, overall the quality of the risk assessment records does not reflect the good practices in place.

Highly effective arrangements are in place to support the staff team to reflect, self-evaluate and identify areas for improvement. This process results in the production of clearly prioritised action lists. The views of parents and carers are actively sought and taken into account to ensure that improvements are aimed at reflecting the evolving needs of the children and their families. An element of practice which has recently been reviewed is the arrangement in place to assess and monitor children's progress. As a result, a new system of observation and record keeping has recently been introduced. The group is also seeking to make improvements to the outdoor area and to provide increased support for children who speak English as an additional language.

Children benefit from the very friendly, positive relationships in place between staff and their parents and carers. In addition to having access to a very good range of written information displayed in the entrance to the hall, parents and carers also receive regular newsletters. This ensures that they are kept up to date with the day to day news about the setting. Parents also meet regularly with their child's key person to discuss their progress towards the Early Learning Goals. Sensitively planned settling in arrangements ensure that children and their parents and carers are given the time they need to become familiar with the staff and routines of the pre-school. The group is extremely proactive in liaising with other professionals involved in delivering the Early Years Foundation Stage to the children to share information which helps all parties to coordinate planning and provide consistency.

The warm, friendly and caring atmosphere within the group helps children to feel secure and settled. They are very well supported to develop an understanding and respect for diversity which ensures that they mix well with their peers and are well prepared to interact positively with people who will later become their friends and neighbours. Stereotypes are challenged very positively, for example, images of female construction workers are prominently displayed in the construction role play area.

The setting maintains all of the records and documentation required for the safe and efficient running of the service. These are generally clear, detailed and very well ordered.

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

Children play and learn in a very thoughtfully organised, bright and stimulating environment. Staff monitor their individual interests to determine which toys to set out and, as a result, children have access to a wonderful range of resources and activities that very successfully engage their interest. The majority of the session is given over to free play and staff offer extremely good support and encouragement to children in their chosen activities. They very skilfully extend children's language by engaging them in charming conversations and listening with genuine interest to the things that they say. As a result children chat happily, and very expressively, as they play and are developing excellent vocabularies. They also enjoy listening to the stories read by staff, either in large group situations or, if the mood takes them, sitting cuddled up to a member of staff on a one to one basis.

Activities aimed at promoting children's problem solving and reasoning skills are particularly popular. Throughout the hall children can be seen concentrating hard on building towers, working with friends to assemble extraordinarily complex marble runs or laughing as they mix and match the features to create comical Mr and Mrs Potato Heads. Children also have access to mark-making equipment to help promote their writing and prewriting skills. Similar support is offered for children to gain an understanding of number and mathematical concepts. Children are learning to count, to recognise written numerals and are beginning to understand how to use basic addition and subtraction, for example, by working out how many more plates are needed for their snack table.

Children make very good use of the impressively resourced role play area. They also produce very individual and expressive art work as they investigate the craft materials provided. On some occasions, a little too much adult direction may be given for projects, such as planned wall displays or making gifts to take home. However, overall good focus is placed on encouraging children to use their imagination.

Children are developing good self-care skills. They are becoming very independent in their toileting and routinely washing their hands. They are offered healthy snacks during each session and have constant access to drinks. They learn about the importance of following a healthy lifestyle and have free access to the outdoor play area for much of the time. This allows them to enjoy the fresh air and also encourages physical exercise.

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

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
--	---

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

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

