

Sparklers Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspector	Sylvia Shane

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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

Sparklers Playgroup is owned and managed by the St Deny's Community Help Projects, a registered charity, which is based at St Deny's Church Centre in Southampton. It was first established in 1997. The playgroup is registered on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. A maximum of 24 children from two years to under eight years may attend the playgroup at any one time. There are currently 29 children in the early years age range on roll. Children come from the local and wider areas.

The playgroup is open each weekday morning from 9am to 11.45am, during school term times. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area. The playgroup is able to support children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language. The playgroup employs six staff all whom have suitable qualifications and experiences in line with their roles and responsibilities, the leader is qualified to degree level in childcare and education, and two staff are currently undertaking a level 3 qualification.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children are secure, happy and relaxed in this welcoming and nurturing setting. They are cared for by staff who are qualified, experienced and motivated and together they ensure children's individual care and learning needs are well met. Children enjoy good quality play and learning experiences and staff plan and monitor their progress, ensuring each child is included and has the opportunity to reach their full potential. The group demonstrate an ongoing commitment to continuous improvement through training and a generally effective process of self-evaluation.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- continue to develop the activities in the garden area and further encourage free flow play
- further develop the use of self-evaluation processes and ensure parents are fully involved in the process.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children are cared for by staff that have been fully vetted. Their safety and security is given high priority and effective systems are in place to ensure all children are safeguarded. All staff are aware of their responsibility in protecting children from possible abuse. Parents are fully informed about the policies and

procedure that outline and underpin the group's good practice. Risk assessments take place on a regular basis and when hazards are identified, action is taken to eradicate or minimise the risk to children. Arrivals and departures are closely monitored with one member of staff staying by the door at these times, this ensures that they are collected by an identified adult. Since the last inspection all documentation and procedures are reviewed to ensure their continued effectiveness. Fire drills are regularly practised with children, as a result they are learning about the benefits of keeping themselves and others safe. Children are well supervised and learn to use equipment safely, for example, when using the climbing frame and slide. Records relating to children's health, safety and welfare are kept to a good standard in line with regulation.

Children are valued for their uniqueness and their backgrounds and abilities are respected. Staff work closely with parents to ensure each child's individual needs are recognised and met. Staff foster effective links with outside agencies and as a result can act promptly should a child need additional support. Activities are planned around the children's interests, ideas and capabilities and promote individual children's learning and development. A picture enhanced timetable is used so that all children understand routines and know what to expect.

Partnerships with parents are fostered well. At inspection parents interviewed state that they find the staff approachable and welcoming so feel confident to raise any issues regarding their child's welfare and development and are well informed. They understand there is a complaint system in place, but feel the staff are very approachable and would be their first point of contact. They state their children are very happy and making good progress. The group have established links with local schools and parents receive support in preparing their child for ongoing education, fostering a smooth transition into school.

The group have developed a system for self-evaluation using reflective practice, this leads to positive outcomes for children. A recent review of how space and resources were being used indoors has resulted in children having more table top space to do creative activities. The reorganisation of materials and how these are accessed has meant children have more choice and are able to experiment with a wide range of different materials. This has also led to boys being more interested and involved in creative activities, the materials and their uses. The group use the garden daily, however, following a review recognise the limitation of the building in regard to providing free flow play. They are currently reviewing this with the church and looking for grant aid to support this. All recommendations set at the last inspection have been positively addressed, with staff demonstrating an ongoing commitment to continuous improvement. However, although staff casually ask parents to make comments about the service they provide, they do not have clear systems in place to fully include parents in the process of evaluation.

Staff are proactive in their own development and together with management identify their training needs. Courses are planned and attended, this ensures their knowledge is updated and leads to the development and sustaining of good practice. The group has close links with local authority early years advisors and other professionals and builds on existing good practice.

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

Children are happy in this warm, friendly setting. The group are careful to monitor the ratio of staff to children so they get the attention they need. The keyworker system is implemented well and staff have good knowledge of the Early Years Foundation Stage. Staff meetings are used successfully to discuss the children's progress and to plan for their ongoing learning and development needs. Each child has a portfolio of photographs, observations and samples of work and these are reviewed to ensure that children continue to make good progress.

Children are happy and relaxed in their play. They are developing good relationships with staff and each other, together they enjoy small and large group activities. They are given lots of opportunities to make choices. They share the resources, and staff support children in becoming adept at negotiating and taking turns, as a result there are few incidents of conflict and children behave well in line with their age and stage of development. Adults teach children to be safe, for example, they learn to be mindful of others when using the wheeled toys and climb safely on the climbing frame. Children regularly practise the fire evacuation procedure so that they learn to understand how to leave the building quickly and safely.

Children are excited by the activities and have a positive attitude to learning. Planned activities take into account the children's interests and ideas and cover the six areas of learning. For example, children showed an interest in the aircraft as they are situated close to an airport, so have made their own collage about air travel and holidays. Children listen well to each other and take part in story times. Favourite stories are read by staff who use clear expression to engage children. In addition, puppets are used to add more interest and provide visual images for children. Furthermore, the children have contributed to their own story book which is used regularly. Staff make good use of the storylines to talk to ask children what they can remember to problem solve and think situations through for themselves.

Children use their imagination and explore the many areas of the garden. They enjoy looking for bugs and insects and dig and plant, learning how to care for living things. All children enjoy creative activities both indoors and outside and their work is proudly displayed, this builds children's self-esteem. Children like to explore the craft resources, for example, they help themselves to paint and make swirls on paper, and then explore what happens when they use a wheel to make a pattern. They mix sand with water and staff talk to them about how it has changed the colour and texture. Children show good concentration as they construct collages out of lolly sticks and glitter and comment on how it sparkles.

Children are learning to adopt a healthy lifestyle, they have regular access to water and are encouraged to pour their own drinks. Children learn the benefits of fresh air and exercise. Parents are asked about their child's individual dietary needs and to provide healthy snacks for their children. Staff reinforce the importance of healthy eating.

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