

Sutton-on-the-Forest Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspector Diane Lynn Turner

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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*.

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Description of the setting

Sutton-on-the-Forest Playgroup was first established in 1987. It is a committee run group and is situated in the village of Sutton-on-the-Forest on the outskirts of York. The playgroup operates from the village hall which provides one main playroom, toilet and kitchen facilities and an enclosed area for outdoor play. Opening times are from 9.15am until 11.45am on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday and on Thursday from 9.15am to 3.30pm, during term time only. A lunch club is also provided from 11.45am to 1pm each day. A separate rising fives session is offered at the village school each Monday afternoon between 1pm and 3.30pm. This session operates from January until July and only those children who are eligible to start full-time education in the September term are invited to attend. This provision operates under a separate registration but is run by the playgroup staff and committee.

The playgroup is registered by Ofsted on the Early Years Register to care for 20 children at any one time, none of whom may be under two years of age. There are currently 36 children on roll who attend for a variety of sessions each week. There are six members of staff employed to work with the children, of whom, one is a qualified early years teacher, three hold a childcare qualification at level 3 and two are working towards level 3. The group receives support from the local authority childcare development support officer and early years consultant. The playgroup is a member of the Pre-school Learning Alliance.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children are cared for in a welcoming and safe environment where their individual care and learning needs are fully recognised and supported by the staff, enabling them to make good progress. Overall, children are offered a good range of well presented activities, including valuable opportunities to learn about their local environment. Good relationships are fostered with the parents. These alongside the very positive links that have been established with providers of other settings the children also attend, or will move onto, ensure an effective shared approach to their learning and development. Good systems are in place for evaluating the provision to ensure continuous improvement with staff, the committee, parents and children all involved in the process. This ensures the setting is receptive to the needs of all its users.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- ensure all medication records are completed accurately
- review the organisation of some whole group activities to ensure this is a meaningful experience for all children

- ensure children can use the computer comfortably.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Staff give high priority to safeguarding children. They have a sound understanding of their responsibilities in regards to child protection issues and they all sign to say they will implement the setting's health and safety policy. Effective safety assessments are carried out to minimise any risks to the children and these are backed up by daily checks, ensuring any necessary equipment, such as electric socket covers, are in place. Parents are informed of the staff member responsible for safeguarding and a clear record is kept of the checks carried out on all staff to determine their suitability to work with children. Clear policies are in place to show how the setting operates and documentation is well maintained overall, although staff sometimes omit to record the reason any requested medication is not given, such as in the case of the parent collecting the child early.

The dedicated staff team work well together, many of whom have been at the setting for a number of years. They value one another's skills and carry out their duties diligently which means the sessions operate smoothly. Staff organise the premises well, providing a good range of resources for the children to choose from. They display children's artwork wherever possible, showing their efforts are valued and appreciated. Staff are committed to improving their practice through training, with all members attending short courses and one currently working towards an additional qualification at degree level. The manager and her deputy have a clear vision of what it is they want to achieve for the setting and their drive and ambition is shared by the rest of the staff team and the committee. Areas for improvement are discussed and recorded at both staff and committee meetings. These are used, alongside responses from parent questionnaires and the setting's own development plans, to successfully complete the Ofsted self-evaluation form. This gives a clear picture of the setting's strengths and areas identified for future improvement, such as implementing a formal appraisal system for staff and improving the storage facilities to make resources more accessible.

Staff are committed to promoting equality and diversity. Great care is taken to gather as much information as possible about children's individual needs prior to them starting. Resources, such as books, are used to help the children learn about the diverse society in which they live. Staff fully understand that children do not learn in isolation and have developed good links with providers of other settings they may also attend, such as a local nursery. Staff ensure the children's transition to the local school is a pleasant experience because, for several weeks prior to starting, they join in with activities there led by the reception class teacher. Good partnerships are established and maintained with the parents. They are provided with good information through the prospectus and well presented noticeboard, and they are encouraged to be involved in their child's learning. For example, they are invited to 'stay and play' when they can observe their child's learning first-hand, and staff welcome and include their observations of their child's learning at home in their learning journey. Parents spoken to on the inspection visit were keen to express their satisfaction of the staff, the activities and the care provided.

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

Staff develop good relationships with the children. As the child's key person they know which children may need a little help to settle when they first arrive and provide sensitive support to engage them in the activities, making the separation from their parents easier. As a result, the children soon settle and enjoy their learning. Staff enable the children to direct their own learning, for example, choosing whether they want to play outside or indoors. They also offer group activities which they present in a fun way. For example, they make good use of props, such as a toy dinosaur they have named Patrick, to ask the children questions about the items they have brought in from home which helps maintain their interest. Staff celebrate the children's achievements in their learning. This is evident as they keenly capture the moment on camera, with the photograph then being added to the child's learning journey. These are then used alongside staff's written observations to effectively track the children's progress and ensure they develop good skills for the future.

Staff actively encourage the children to make a positive contribution to the setting. For example, they readily seek their opinions as to what activities they would like to see included during the session and what items of food they would like to see on the menu at snack time, implementing their suggestions wherever possible. The children help to get the table ready for lunch, making sure they have the correct number of chairs so everyone can sit down and they know to put their lunchbox next to their name card on the bench when they have finished eating. They decide when to have their snack, independently washing their hands first, choosing and putting the items of food they would like in their bowl and pouring themselves a drink, before sitting at the table to eat. The children demonstrate good manners, saying 'excuse me' if they want to gain staff's attention and they make good attempts to settle their own minor disputes, requesting help from staff if they need this. The children have valuable opportunities to learn about the local community as they take part in activities, such as visiting the church to listen to the organ, and a villager's garden for pond dipping. They enjoy visitors to the group including the band from the local school and the church choir. The children develop skills in information and communication technology, demonstrating, for example, that they know how to operate the computer. However, the monitor for this is not presented at their eye-level which means they are not able to use it comfortably.

The children develop good listening skills as they join in with the weekly music sessions led by an outside professional. However, some children lose concentration during the group 'show and tell' activity, particularly those who have not brought items in to share, which impacts on the enjoyment of others. Staff are aware of this and are looking at ways to resolve the issue. The children relish being outdoors in the fresh air. They demonstrate good control of their bodies as they confidently use the climbing frame, skilfully negotiate a pathway around the logs with wheeled toys and chase bubbles. They become fully immersed as they explore sand and water and use resources, such as guttering, very imaginatively as they create their own 'irrigation' system, working cooperatively as one pours water

in at the top and the others collect this at the bottom in their watering cans. Staff support the children well in keeping themselves safe. For example, they regularly practise the emergency evacuation procedures with them, discussing any issues that arise with the children afterwards. The children know to put on their sun hats and to have sun block applied before going outside and they discuss how they would go to a member of staff if they felt upset. This clearly demonstrates that they feel safe in their environment.

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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