

Carousel Under Fives

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	253042
Inspection date	28/05/2010
Inspector	Diana Pidgeon
Setting address	Lammas Compound, Lammas Road, Sutton-in-Ashfield, Nottinghamshire, NG17 2AD
Telephone number	07926308289
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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

Carousel Under 5's Playgroup opened in 1976 and is managed by a voluntary committee made up of parents of the children who attend the group. It operates from a single storey unit situated behind the Lammas Leisure Centre, close to the town centre of Sutton-in-Ashfield. Children have the use of one designated play room with adjacent toilet and kitchen facilities. There is an enclosed outdoor area with both grass and safety surface, directly accessible from the play room. The playgroup is open every morning from 9.00am to 12.30pm for 47 weeks of the year, closing only for one week at Easter, two weeks at Christmas, two weeks during the summer school holidays and all main bank holidays.

The playgroup is registered on the Early Years Register and both the voluntary and compulsory parts of the Childcare Register. It is in receipt of funding for the provision of free early education to children aged three and four years. A maximum of 24 children may attend the group at any one time and children attend from one to five sessions a week according to personal needs. There are currently 15 children from two to four years on roll. The playgroup employs three members of staff, all of whom hold relevant early years qualifications. The group receives support from the local authority.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

The playgroup provides a warm and welcoming environment for children and their parents. Staff use their experience and good knowledge and understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage to plan for and support every child as an individual. As a result, all children make good progress in their learning and development. Staff take effective steps to ensure children's health and safety are promoted and their welfare needs met. Partnerships with parents are warm and friendly, enabling key information to be exchanged. The playgroup has started to implement self-evaluation and shows a good capacity for ongoing improvement.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- develop further the outdoor play area to offer opportunities for doing things in different ways and on different scales than indoors; where possible, link the indoor and outdoor environment so that children can move freely between them
- embed the process of self-evaluation to help monitor progress and plan for continued improvement.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The staff and committee of the playgroup work collaboratively to meet the needs of the children who attend. They ensure all adults coming into contact with children are suitable to do so and that staff recruitment is done fairly and rigorously. Sound systems are in place to ensure new staff receive a supportive induction into the group and that ongoing monitoring of their work and training needs is undertaken. Children's care is clearly underpinned by staff following the appropriate policies and procedures, which are regularly updated. Full risk assessments help staff identify potential hazards and daily checks are made to promote safety. Staff demonstrate a good understanding of their responsibilities towards protecting children from abuse and know how to respond to any concerns.

Staff provide a welcoming environment for the children. The play room is bright and child friendly so that children are immediately drawn to activities. Cosy areas, such as the 'chitter chatter' area, are very well conceived and provide valuable opportunities for children to develop their communication skills. There is a wide variety of play activities for children to choose from, which ensures they are busy and involved throughout the session. Staff have improved children's access to freely chosen items meaning their games can be extended according to their own ideas. The outdoor area is currently being developed and already provides some valuable play experiences that support all areas of children's learning. However, children's access to the outdoors is limited during session and they rarely have the opportunity to choose as an individual whether to be in or outside. Also access to large equipment and resources is limited.

Parents report a high degree of satisfaction with the group and find staff approachable and informative. They receive good information about the group through written documentation, access to notices and verbally from staff. Good relationships with the key person ensure children settle well as they start the group and that targets for children's future learning are discussed and shared. The staff place high priority on aiding transition whether into or from the group and are working with other facilities in the local area to ensure this goes smoothly. Staff recognise the value of working with advisors and as part of local projects in order to improve the outcomes for children. They show high levels of dedication and commitment to the group and the service they provide. All of the recommendations from the previous inspection have been addressed and many new initiatives introduced. This demonstrates a commitment to improvement. The group has started to reflect upon their practice and undertake self-evaluation in order to plan for further improvements. This is still in the early stages and is beginning to take some account of the children's and parent's opinions.

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

Children enjoy their time in the playgroup and become highly involved in the activities available. They learn through handling a wide range of materials and

media that encourage them to investigate and explore. For example, children play with dough and show delight when not only is it orange in colour, but that it also smells of oranges. This fosters lots of discussions between the children and demonstrates their ability to communicate effectively with others. Developing children's listening and speaking skills is given high priority, along with promoting their social skills. Children use the 'chitter chatter' area effectively, joining in games and activities specifically planned to develop their listening and conversational skills. They love listening to stories and their attention is held because staff read stories with animation and use props and puppets so that children are fully involved. Some children are beginning to retell stories and to make up their own scenarios within imaginative play. Staff build upon children's interests so that these support many aspects of their learning. For example, by building on the children's interest in pirates the whole group 'visited' different countries over a number of weeks, learning about their language, food and customs. It is clear that all children are included and the welcome song, where everyone is greeted by name, is a key part of the session. Children look forward to seeing their friends and play together harmoniously. They understand the expectations for their behaviour and act responsibly as they line up to go outdoors. Children start to gain personal independence as they fetch their own coats, wash their hands and choose what they wish to do.

Staff plan effectively to ensure every child makes good progress in their learning. Planning is securely based around the children's interests and considering the skills they need to develop next. Assessment records show a clear journey from when the child arrives in the setting to the point of transition. Additional monitoring of children's communication development, combined with support based on individual children's needs, has been instrumental in raising children's attainment in this aspect of learning. Children show confidence in their dealings with others and are ready to express their ideas and wishes. Daily routines are clearly known and children understand the importance of washing their hands before snack time. Children benefit from a healthy snack of milk, toast and choice of two different fruits. They are developing a good sense of what foods are good for them and show a willingness to try new tastes. They recognise when they are thirsty during session and help themselves to drinks of water. Children like to be active and they spend some time outdoors every session. The number of activities available outdoors is rapidly increasing, which means not only do children play physically but they can also read, play imaginatively and explore sounds. However, currently there are some limitations to the equipment and resources available and systems rarely allow for children to choose whether to play inside or out. This is recognised by the group as a priority for further development.

Children receive good emotional support. For example, new starters receive close attention from a familiar adult and are reassured when they are upset. Staff ensure all children's voices are heard and that their work and contributions to the group are valued. Books showing significant events in the group, such as a visit by a local policeman, are highly popular and help children recall the important safety messages learned. Appropriate systems are in place to support children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and to help those at an early stage in learning English. Staff use signs and symbols around the setting and teach some basic signs to all children as an aid to communication. Children's numeracy and

spatial awareness is promoted in practical activities and children readily correct an adult who pretends not to know the sequence of numbers when counting. Children are developing good dispositions towards learning and this contributes significantly to building the skills for their future success.

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

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