

St John Fisher Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspector Jenny Batelen

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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

St John Fisher Playgroup opened with a committee in 2004 and operates from a building within the grounds of St John Fisher School in Coventry, West Midlands. It is situated in the north east of the city. The playgroup is registered on the Early Years Register.

A maximum of 26 children may attend the playgroup at any one time. The group is open from 9.00am to 11.30am, five mornings per week and 12.30pm to 3.00pm five afternoons per week, term time only. A lunch club operates from 11.30am to 12.30pm. All children share access to a fully enclosed outside play space. There is disabled access.

There are currently 54 children aged from three to four years on roll. All children receive funding for early education. Children mainly come from the local area. The group supports a number of children who speak English as an additional language and children with special educational needs.

The group employs seven members of staff. All seven hold appropriate early years qualifications and one is working towards a further qualification. The group is a member of the Pre-School Learning Alliance and receives support from the local authority.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children's individual needs and interests are highly valued and responded to through observation. Staff have a very good understanding of the needs of Early Years Foundation Stage children. A wide variety of activities, both adult-led and child-initiated, ensure that all children are able to make at least good progress in this inclusive setting. Self-evaluation identifies areas to develop well. The commitment of the manager, committee and staff ensure that there is a good capacity to improve further.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- develop self-evaluation into an effective tool to raise standards further by increasing the involvement of all stakeholders to allow greater focus on specific areas to be evaluated.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The leadership and management of this playgroup are good. The commitment of the manager ensures that staff are well motivated and children are able to make consistently good progress. Safeguarding procedures that comply with current legislation are regularly reviewed and updated. The site is very safe and secure. Policies, procedures and risk assessments are in place. There is a very good understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage requirements. Adults have appropriate qualifications and undergo ongoing training. There has been good progress on the recommendations from the last report.

The importance of the welfare and safety of the children is reflected in established routines, helping children to keep themselves safe. The staff make very good provision to get to know families and to understand the needs and interests of all the children and their families and so ensure good and sometimes better progress. The playgroup encourages happy, confident and independent children, who play very well together, support each other and chat happily to staff and the visitor.

The quality and deployment of resources is excellent and the accessibility of the outside space in all weathers enables all children to make good progress in a wide range of activities of their choice. Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities are identified and key workers put plans in place to ensure that they make good progress with appropriate support. The staff evaluate the work they are doing, through staff meetings, although this is currently led largely by the manager and does not always include the views of parents and children. Self-evaluation is good, but staff could increase the involvement of all stakeholders and focus on specific areas to be evaluated. Staff discuss ideas and also analyse their training and development needs. They consider the views of parents as indicated on questionnaires, although parents and carers have limited involvement in decisions about the group, unless they are on the committee. Children's views are sought through discussions in their key worker group's 'gossip time'.

Links with parents and carers are very good. Key information is on display at the entrance to the playgroup. Newsletters keep parents informed about what is happening. Parents and carers are very positive about the playgroup. They feel well informed by induction procedures, including an effective 'Welcome' meeting. 'Very happy and my child is really happy,' is a typical comment from a parent. They feel that it is easy to talk to the staff, as demonstrated in the comment that, 'the key worker is always happy to talk and the staff are approachable'. Links with the school are excellent and strong, and there are close working relationships regarding transition to ensure all children make the move to school successfully. Links with external agencies are also outstanding. The playgroup is well supported by the local authority.

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

All children are able to make good progress towards the early learning goals. They thoroughly enjoy their time in the playgroup, make independent choices of their activities and exhibit sustained concentration in their chosen activity, such as washing the pedal cars, posting letters, reading a story together in the quiet corner and making their own recyclable pot and then planting the seeds.

The secure and safe space is very well equipped and resources are easily accessible. Both the inside and outside areas have a wide range of activities available and these reflects all the areas of learning. The provision of suitable clothing, by the group, ensures that children and adults can be outside whatever the weather. There is a strong focus on growing vegetables and flowering plants and fundraising activities mean that the group has provided plenty of equipment to enhance this and so make a very pleasant entrance to the playgroup site.

Children's safety and well-being is very important, with health issues being correctly addressed. Children are independent in their hygiene routines and adopt excellent healthy lifestyles. They understand how to keep themselves safe, helped by specific training in areas such as road and fire safety and 'Stranger Danger'. Key workers work closely with the children and keep parents well informed. Staff work well together as a team and children learn to work and play well together. They make an outstanding positive contribution as they care about and support each other, and learn to understand how their behaviour can affect other people.

Planning is based on the children's interests and developmental needs. Observations and discussion times within key groups help staff to identify children's interests and incorporate these into the planning. Children's work is valued and displayed effectively, including a range of mark-making. Assessments from observation and commentary are recorded in the children's individual files, and clearly show individual progress. Parents enjoy looking through these. Assessments are shared with the school through the transition document.

Children are strongly encouraged to develop a healthy lifestyle through healthy drinks and snacks, which they can select for themselves from the snack bar, open at certain times during the sessions. Children run and play outside, play football, use bats and balls, access climbing and sliding apparatus. Children's understanding of the wider world is exemplary and is developed through understanding the different countries that their families represent, having opportunities to see the different languages displayed in the signs around the site and access to a wide range of books that further support understanding. Children's start to the playgroup is well planned, with an induction process that includes children joining in with the group, whilst the parents fill in all the appropriate paperwork. The move to school and the development of future skills are supported very well, as children learn to work and play together. The cooperation of staff in the playgroup and the school, along with close links with parents and carers, ensure a successful transition to reception class.

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	1
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	1
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	1
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	1
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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	1
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	1
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	2

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