

Soham Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspector Clementina Ogunsawo

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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

Soham Playgroup was established in 1990 and is registered to take 25 children between the ages of two to four years. The setting operates from a purpose built premises in the grounds of St Andrews C of E Junior School in Soham, Cambridgeshire. There is an enclosed outdoor play area. The setting serves children from local area and the surrounding villages.

Opening times are 09.00am to 11.30am Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday mornings and 12.15pm to 14.45pm, Monday, Tuesday and Thursday afternoons, term-time only. Other sessions operate on other days and times at the nearby Weatherall's Primary School. There are currently 49 children on roll, all of who are within the Early Years and Foundation Stage age range. The setting supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who are learning English as an additional language. The setting is registered on the early years register. The setting maintains strong links with the main primary school and nursery, which facilitates the children's transition to the next stage of their learning. There is a ramp which facilitates access for children who may require disabled access. The setting employs six members of staff. Four staff have National Vocational Qualification Level 3 whilst two staff hold Level 2 of the same qualification.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children's learning and development is promoted well in a stimulating and caring environment. All children are included in a range of activities with good use of equipment. Partnerships with parents and carers is effective and supports good quality of care for children. The playgroup is well resourced and has the ability to sustain continuous improvement.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- improve the quality of planning by consistently specifying what children are to learn and the intended learning outcomes
- improve the quality of assessment by ensuring that assessment records reflect the small steps of progress that children make towards achievement of the Early Learning Goals.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The effective leadership and management ensure that policies are well maintained and are used in the effective care and education of the children. Safeguarding

procedures are secure and risk assessments are carried out on a regular basis to protect children. The premises are clean, secure, with controlled visitors' access and exit to ensure the safety of the children. Staff's good access to training programmes and continuous support from the local authority's Early Years Service and the nearby Children Centre are driving improvement and promoting inclusion. Partnership with others is good. The playgroup's positive links with external agencies for specialist advice and support is improving the quality of support and strategies for addressing the needs of all the children, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Staff's use of visual resources and dual language books are effective in facilitating communication and integration of new children who are learning English as an additional language. Established systems, such as a detailed transitional plan, enables children's smooth integration into the next stage of their learning.

Self-evaluation is good. Leaders have accurately highlighted the need for extending children's awareness of cultures other than their own and improving the quality of assessment to track the rate of progress children make towards the Early Learning Goals as the main priorities for facilitating further improvement. Staff work well as a team and take collective responsibility for the care and education of the children, thereby, promoting the children's welfare. The setting is well resourced and makes effective use of resources to promote children's learning opportunities.

Children use the outdoor environment for physical play sessions and messy play activities. The direct access to outdoor play opportunities ensures free-flow of activities between the indoor and the outdoor play sessions. Promotion of equality and diversity are good. Careful planning for individual children's needs ensure that children's specific medical and dietary requirements are met as well as their learning needs.

Partnerships with parents are outstanding. Parents provide helpful background information which assists staff in planning for the care and education of the children. The parental management committee ensures parents' active participation in the playgroup enables children to settle well into the daily routines. Leaders have effectively addressed the issues identified during the previous inspection. For example, the procedure for lost children has been revised in line with the recommendations from the previous inspection

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

The playgroup provides a wide range of interesting activities which stimulates the children's interest. For example, children persevere for extended periods of time to undertake painting tasks, and construction games to recreate the road and rail layout which was facilitated well by children's creative use of small cars trucks and imaginative 'human characters'. They particularly enjoy textural play sessions with shaving foam during which they make spiral patterns. Staff's positive interaction with children during the lively music and movement sessions makes learning fun and enhances the children's acquisition of new vocabulary. Fun dressing up

sessions is one of their favourite activities, book characters such as princesses, delights the children.

Well established routines during which children introduce themselves and share their daily experiences are helping the children to develop speaking and listening skills. Regular circle sessions to discuss their daily experiences are helping the children to develop confidence. Staff's consistent use of positive reinforcement strategies has a positive impact on children's social skills and development. Subsequently, behaviour is outstanding. Children enjoy each others company and cooperate well during tasks, such as group construction and messy play activities.

Opportunities for the children to use a magnifying lens are developing children's observation skills and future workplace skills. Story sessions are fun with children listening with interest. The comfortable reading area is used well by the children to sit and look at books. However, there are insufficient visual signs and text around the learning environment to develop children's phonic skills and explore letter formation styles. Snack times are enjoyable social events with children demonstrating increasing levels of independence in wiping the tables, pouring their own milk and assisting in clearing up resources after use.

Careful planning for each individual child ensures that the individual child's needs are effectively addressed. Plans cover all the areas of learning, although, the details of what children are to learn and the intended learning outcomes are not always specified. Staff make observation notes of children during activities and maintain records of their work which reflect their progress. However, there are some gaps in recording the little steps of progress children make towards achievement of the Early Learning Goals.

All children, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities are included in the range of activities. Children's specific individual dietary requirements are met and staff make effective use of dual language books to include children learning English as an additional language in the scheduled activities. Leaders acknowledge that more work is to be done to extend the children's knowledge of other cultures. Regular physical activity sessions are helping the children to develop an active lifestyle. They have excellent opportunities to positively contribute to the daily routines through putting their painted work in the drying tray without assistance and cleaning and drying the table in preparation for snack times.

Purposeful discussions about the importance of keeping safe during play sessions are developing children's good awareness of safety. Children demonstrate increasing safety awareness in their sensible use of a range of riding equipment during outdoor game sessions. Staff supervise children well during activities which promote their safety and well-being. Children have continual access to clean drinking water and are provided with a healthy selection of fruit and water during snack times, which promotes their health well.

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	1

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
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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	1
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	2

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