

Birdwell Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number 302823
Inspection date 08/06/2010
Inspector Tara Street

Setting address Birdwell J&I School, Sheffield Road, Birdwell, Barnsley,
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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

Birdwell Playgroup is privately owned and managed. It was registered in 1993 and operates from rooms within Birdwell Junior and Infant School in Birdwell, Barnsley. There are no issues which may hinder access to the premises. Children have access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area. A maximum of 30 children aged under eight years may attend the setting at any one time. The setting currently takes children from two to five years of age. It is open Monday to Friday from 9am to 11.30am and Tuesday and Thursday from 1pm to 3.30pm term time only.

There are currently 56 children on roll who are within the Early Years Foundation Stage. Of these, 28 are in receipt of funding for early education. The setting supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. It is registered by Ofsted on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register.

There are five members of staff, including the owner/manager, who work directly with the children. Of these, three hold an appropriate qualification at level 3 in early years, one of whom is currently working towards Early Years Professional Status, and two hold a qualification at level 2 and are currently working towards a qualification at level 3. The setting is a member of the Pre-School Learning Alliance and receives support from the local authority. It has strong links with the host school.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children thoroughly enjoy their time in this welcoming and inclusive setting. They make very good progress towards the early learning goals through a varied and interesting range of activities. Policies and procedures are thorough and relevant and are implemented effectively to safeguard and promote children's welfare. The setting demonstrates a strong capacity to improve, having implemented a number of positive changes. The management team is constantly evaluating and identifying further areas for improvement.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- ensure planning clearly identifies how activities will promote individual children's progress towards the early learning goals
- promote children's experience by providing a wider range of signs, symbols and pictures displayed at child height around the provision which reflect all areas of learning, with particular regard to problem solving, reasoning and numeracy
- plan and implement a wider range of activities which enable children to

explore the local community and develop their understanding of the world around them.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The owner/manager and staff work together as a motivated and cohesive team as they share a commitment to offering the best possible experiences to children and their families. Children are cared for by staff who have completed a wide range of training to ensure they have a strong knowledge and understanding of their roles and responsibilities. Clear vetting procedures are in place to ensure that children are cared for by suitable people and all staff have an up-to-date understanding of safeguarding children issues. Thorough risk assessments of the areas accessed by the children are conducted and the setting is stringent in the organisation of routines to ensure children's safety is prioritised.

The management team and staff strive to improve their practice and work hard to monitor and evaluate the quality and standards at the setting. As a result the recommendations made at the last inspection have been fully addressed. Regular staff meetings provide valuable opportunities for staff to share good practice and to identify their training needs. A positive equality and diversity policy outlines a commitment to promoting inclusive practice at the setting, ensuring all children can achieve as well as they can regardless of their background. Staff's organisation of the environment and resources effectively supports children to become independent learners and develop confidence.

Children benefit from the warm and relaxed relationships that have been established between their parents and the setting's staff. Parents are very well informed regarding their children's care and are routinely involved in their child's continuous learning and development. The daily exchange of information both verbally and through written communication activities, such as the 'Talk to me about' board and 'Children's interests and preferences' sheet, ensures that children's changing needs are consistently met. Managers and staff have successfully established links with other early years professionals and external agencies to support the inclusion of children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. In addition staff have worked hard to build close links with the other early years settings that children attend to ensure optimum continuity of care and learning.

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

Children are happy and settled within the warm and welcoming environment in which they have many opportunities to make good progress in their all-round development. Staff engage very well with the children and develop positive relationships. They praise children's achievements, which motivates children to learn and develop positive self-esteem. An effective key person system enables parents to feel confident and children to feel safe within the setting. Staff

throughout the setting use questioning techniques effectively to extend older children's learning and thinking skills.

Staff use their very good knowledge of the Early Years Foundation Stage to plan a range of enjoyable activities. Planning documents cover the six areas of learning well. Ongoing observations and assessments are undertaken by the staff and provide a clear insight into the children's progress and achievements. However, despite identifying next steps for each child these are not clearly reflected within the planning process to keep a focus on children's individual and immediate learning needs. There is a good balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities.

Children are relaxed and confident, behave well, are eager to participate in activities and remain actively engaged. They enjoy stories and listen avidly when books are read by staff, joining in with discussions about the characters and animals. They are well supported to make marks and develop early writing skills. For example, children eagerly label their own work and self-register at the start of the session. Children frequently count during games and activities and have good opportunities to recognise numbers and learn simple calculations through songs and rhymes. However, due to the limited range of signs, symbols and pictures displayed at child height around the setting that reflect aspects of problem solving, reasoning and numeracy, opportunities to further promote children's learning are missed.

All children take part in a wide range of activities both indoors and outdoors which support their physical development. For example, children show good spatial awareness as they skilfully manoeuvre wheeled toys around the outdoor play area. A well-resourced role play area encourages children to use their imaginations and to play cooperatively as they act out scenarios. Children have access to natural materials and develop good small muscle skills as they play with sand, water and a variety of media. Their awareness of the wider world is extended in a number of ways. For example, through daily resources and involvement in a range of activities which look at different cultures from around the world. However, local resources are not fully utilised to further enhance children's understanding of their community and the locality.

Children are learning about the importance of healthy foods because they have snacks provided, which they serve themselves, and these offer a very good variety of healthy and nutritious options. A clear sick child policy and the good hygiene routines followed by the children are effective in helping to prevent cross-infection.

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