

Mordiford Dragons Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspector	Parm Sansoyer
Setting address	Mordiford School, Mordiford, Hereford, Herefordshire, HR1 4LW
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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

Mordiford Dragons Playgroup was registered in 1992. It operates from a portacabin in the grounds of Mordiford School. The group serves the local area. A maximum of 16 children may attend the setting at any one time. The setting is open from Tuesday to Friday from 8.45am to 2.45pm during the school term. Children have access to a secure outside play area.

There are currently 26 children aged from two to under five years on roll. The provision is registered by Ofsted on the Early Years Register. The setting is in receipt of funding for the provision of free early years education to children aged three and four-years-old. There are effective systems in place to support children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery employs five members of staff, of whom four hold an appropriate early years qualification. The setting receives support from the local authority and is a member of the Pre-school Learning Alliance.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is satisfactory.

Children are welcomed into a warm and friendly environment where staff recognise the uniqueness of each child and support them and their families well. Children make steady progress in their learning and development. Systems to ensure that all groups of children are consistently progressing are developing. Fostering the children's personal, social and emotional development and helping children adopt a healthy lifestyle and the partnerships with parents and other settings are the key strengths of the setting. Appropriate provision is made to ensure the children's safety, health and well-being. The developing self-evaluation system identifies most of the strengths and areas for improvement of the early years provision.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- plan and provide a broader range of resources and experiences across all areas of learning both indoors and outdoors to further extend children's learning
- achieve a better balance of adult-led and child-initiated play to help further extend children's learning
- make better use of observation and assessment to help plan more effectively for all children's next steps in learning, paying particular attention to the learning needs of the more able children and for boys and girls, to fully extend their development in all areas of learning
- develop and build on the systems for monitoring and evaluating the early

years provision in order to maintain continuous improvement.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

There are systems in place to ensure adults having contact with children are suitable to do so. There are clear written policies and procedures in place in relation to safeguarding children and there is a relevant designated member of staff with overall responsibility. Staff have a satisfactory understanding of the safeguarding policy and the procedures to follow if they are concerned about the children's welfare and safety. The provision maintains and updates all the required records, policies and procedures to ensure the safe and efficient management of the service. Staff take the necessary steps to ensure that the children are safe indoors and outdoors and that the furniture, equipment and toys are suitable and safe.

Partnerships with parents and carers and other settings and organisation are good. Parents receive detailed information about the early years provision and its policies. They are kept well informed about the children's achievements and progress through regular parents meetings and well-written reports. They are actively encouraged to be involved in supporting their children's learning and development through taking part in regular events, such as, accompanying their children on visits and taking an active role in fundraising. There is an effective two-way flow of information, for example, well used home diaries ensure information about what the children do and enjoy is shared. Children also enjoy taking home the group's soft toy dragon and children along with their parents report how the dragon has spent its weekend. This helps strengthen the links between home and the playgroup. Links with the local school and others are strong. The transition process ensures continuity between all settings and the children's personal, social, emotional and educational needs addressed appropriately.

Staff have a developing knowledge of the Practice Guidance for the Early Years Foundation Stage and are beginning to use it to support the children's learning and development. Through developing close relationships with the children and spending most of their time interacting with them and observing their interactions, they know what children like and enjoy and provide well for their interests. However, children do not always have access to a full enough range of experiences and resources across some areas of learning to further extend learning and promote new interests. Observation and assessment systems have recently changed and staff are developing their knowledge of the current system in place. Staff make regular observations of what the children are doing but do not sufficiently use this information to guide their planning to help plan for the children's next steps or plan effectively enough to further extend the more able children.

The person in charge has a hands-on approach and acts as a positive role model to the team. The staff team are enthusiastic about the children's care and learning and work well together. The setting has made steady progress since the last inspection. All the previous recommendations have been tackled to improve

outcomes for children. Self-assessment is beginning to be used effectively to ensure the welfare requirements are met. However, it is not sufficient linked to the learning and development requirements to help monitor the progress of teaching and learning.

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

Children are welcomed into a relaxed and inviting environment where they have the autonomy to decide how to invest their curiosity through mostly playing spontaneously. This means a balance of child-initiated and adult-led activities is not always achieved, therefore, children do not always make the most of what is available. For example, boys in particular, often spend a lot of their time playing with cars and outdoors on the bikes and not enough time involved in making marks and increasing their early literacy skills.

Children's personal, social and emotional development is promoted well. All children develop close relationships which are warm and caring which leads to the growth of their self-assurance, sense of belonging and emotional health and well-being. Children are confident within their environment and enjoy the routine, they seek to do things for themselves and easily move from one activity to another showing appropriate levels of involvement in their play. Children spontaneously interact with adults, who engage them well in conversation and promote their language and communication skills, during registration time and group time. Most children have appropriate opportunities to increase their communication, language and literacy. A cosy book areas and regular story sessions increase the children's fondness for books. Children enjoy music and singing.

The children's knowledge and understanding of the world is supported well to help them make sense of the world. Children engage in a range of experiences in which they encounter creatures, people, plants and objects in their natural environment and real-life situations. Children have been planting and caring for a variety of vegetables, such as, potatoes, spring onions and radishes. When outdoors children independently go and fetch their watering cans and are busy watering the plants and flowers. Children begin to learn about caring for the environment through recycling. Children have also been actively involved in observing the lifecycle of the frog. They have a real sense of place and community due to the various visits they have made to places, such as, the library and local farm. Children are introduced to a range of cultures through books, puzzles, visual aids and a variety of resources as they play. For example, children have been following the story of 'Handa's Surprise' a Kenyan story depicting fruits and animals from Kenya.

Children develop their creativity through a satisfactory range of arts and crafts activities, using the role play area and through using musical instruments. Children are beginning to develop an understanding of problem solving, reasoning and numeracy as they seek patterns, make connections, count, sort and match through using puzzles and construction toys. Opportunities for the more able children to learn about weight, capacity, measurement and take part in early scientific experiments are less well planned. Children begin to show an interest in the

computer and are developing mouse control.

Children benefit from a varied range of snacks, drinks and meals which are healthy and nutritious. There are good hygiene practices in place and children learn healthy habits, such as, washing their hands before their meal and after using the toilet. Children enjoy being outdoors but staff do not make this area available throughout the session. Therefore, they do not fully exploit the learning possibilities available to the children. There is a broad range of physical play equipment available for the children to learn and test their physical skills. They also have use of the school field which has a good range of challenging climbing and balancing equipment. Indoors they benefit from a regular dance and movement session. Children are well behaved and develop appropriate habits due the praise and encouragement they receive. They develop skills that contribute to their future economic well-being through making satisfactory progress in their learning and development.

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?	3
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	3

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

How effectively is the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	3
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding	3
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	3
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

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
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Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	3
The extent to which children feel safe	3
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	3
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	3

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