

Whitehouse Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

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25/06/2010

Inspector

Gary Kirkley

Setting address

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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

Whitehouse Playgroup opened in 1973 and is governed by a committee of parents. It operates from one room in a demountable building adjacent to Heycroft Primary School, in the residential area of Eastwood. The playgroup serves the local area.

There are currently 34 children from two to five years on roll. This includes 15 nursery education funded three-year-olds and 14 funded four-year-olds. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The setting currently support some children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and some for whom English is an additional language.

The playgroup opens five mornings a week during school term times. Sessions are from 9:00am until 11:45am.

Nine members of staff work with the children. Four have an early years qualification to Level three and another two are currently working towards a recognised early years qualification to Level three. The playgroup receives support from a teacher and mentor from the local authority and from the local school.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Whitehouse Playgroup has an outstanding capacity to improve and has shown much continuous improvement since the last inspection. All items raised at the last inspection have been systematically dealt with and are no longer issues, there are now written procedures in the event of a child not being collected from the playgroup and now parents are actively encouraged and able to view their child's records. This is confirmed by all parents interviewed, who believe that links with them are highly effective and contribute to the overall progress of their child. The setting is highly inclusive and supports all children attending who speak English as an additional language or with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- moderate the self-assessment form with some external source
- consider updating and reviewing health and safety training
- explore ways of using more cultural activities for children to increase their knowledge and understanding of the world around them.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

All staff have a highly positive attitude to their work in general and the children in particular. They take their responsibilities seriously and this results in high quality outcomes for all the children in their care. This attitude is deeply embedded in the playgroup and drives the ambition for further development.

The issue of safeguarding is dealt with highly effectively. All staff have current Criminal Records Bureau checks in place, which are kept centrally, with restricted access to these available to the manager and deputy. All staff qualifications have been validated and an up to date log of training informs future training events. The process for vetting and recruiting of staff is extremely secure, following local authority guidelines. The site is particularly secure, sharing some boundaries with a secure primary school. The parents queue for a few minutes before handing over children; this ensures a speedy registration process and knowledge of who is on the site at any time. There are plans to make the outside queuing area, which does not belong to the playgroup, more attractive over the next few months. Risk assessments are undertaken for all activities, with all accident and complaints books kept up to date and fully compliant with national standards.

Partnerships with the local authority, school and the early years development worker are excellent, with staff undertaking significantly high levels of up-to-date training, in the areas of the early years framework, safeguarding and child protection, risk assessment, first aid and issues relating to special educational needs. The setting should consider further training on keeping up to date on health and safety issues, to further improve the staff's high skills.

Equality and diversity are well promoted in the setting, with children being treated as individuals, with all their contributions valued and treated with respect. The playgroup could further explore ways of developing more activities around cultural differences and similarities to increase the children's knowledge and understanding of the world.

The process of self-evaluation is good, leading to a highly critical view of the setting's strengths and areas for improvement; it would be prudent to have some external moderation of this process and thereby evaluate its overall effectiveness in driving further improvement. The deployment of resources is excellent, with the indoor and outdoor areas creating a free-flow environment for play and learning. A wide range of toys and activities are available, including the use of electronic items to enhance and extend children's curiosity. The planning of all the activities is excellent, building upon initial ideas about children's needs, interests and capabilities, before thematic ideas forming the basis for the days and weeks. The systematic recording of children's progress ensures that they and their parents know their strengths and areas to build on. The application of a key worker system is used to produce good levels of support for all the children and their needs. This ensures the children build good relationships and trust the staff implicitly.

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

The setting has many excellent qualities, which are the result of the staff's hard work and skilful handling and organisation of the children. Staff model outstanding attitudes by being calm, patient, positive and friendly and by carefully intervening in activities to enrich the opportunities of the children. Language development is particularly embedded into the activities. The children respond well to these high expectations of the staff, by showing their curiosity, playing well together and through their excellent behaviour. Children develop levels of independence through their own initiated activities, which are skilfully extended by staff who introduce new ideas and excellent opportunities to talk and reflect on what they have done. The free-flow nature of the playgroup works really well for the children who are very active outdoors and then enjoy calmer activities inside. Some children were enjoying opening boxes to discover the contents with magnifying glasses, whilst others were collectively putting cones in a row outside, then supplemented the cones with rings on top. This sequencing and ordering was drawn upon skilfully by a member of staff who encouraged the children to talk about numeracy issues. Another group were making marks and sticking them into their books, developing fine motor skills.

All children thoroughly enjoy the activities and make progress at their own pace, consequently they learn good skills for the future. They act extremely safely at all times, never rushing or running carelessly. The staff thoroughly ensure that the children do not suffer in the hot weather, with sun cream and protective hats available for all. The children are strongly encouraged to adopt healthy lifestyles, with water and milk available for a rolling snack time and fruit and vegetables offered for all to eat. All hygiene practices are excellent, with children using plastic cups and plates. Toileting practices are sensitive and routinely embedded into the children's behaviours. All areas for hygiene were observed to be spotless and offer high levels of privacy, where appropriate.

Children make an outstanding positive contribution to each other and to the playgroup. They sit down for their snacks, take turns, wait patiently and then talk about what they have eaten and drunk. Social skills are being well developed through all the activities. The recording and monitoring of progress is systematic, using cameras and post-it notes, and these entries build into a strong profile of what a child can do and what they still may need to develop. These profiles are excellent and efficiently ensure a smooth transition for the next stage in the child's education.

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	1

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

How effectively is the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	1
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	1
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	1
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding	1
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	1

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	1
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	1
The extent to which children feel safe	1
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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Annex B: the Childcare Register

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