

COLLEGE ROAD PLAYGROUP

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspection date	21/09/2010
Inspector	Maria Conroy
Setting address	College Road, Harrow, Middlesex, HA1 1BA
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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

College Road Playgroup has been registered since 1992. It operates from the first floor of the Harrow Baptist Church, situated in the London Borough of Harrow. The group can be accessed by both stairs and a lift. There are three interconnecting rooms used by the children. The playgroup uses the roof terrace for outdoor play. The group opens five days a week from 9:30 am to 12:30 pm, term time only.

A maximum of 24 children from two years to the end of the early year's age group may attend the playgroup at any one time. There are currently 15 children in the early year's age group on roll. 12 children currently receive funding for nursery education. The setting is able to support children with special needs and those children who speak English as an additional language.

The setting employs six staff, including the manager, of those four hold an appropriate early years qualification and the others have substantial experience. The playgroup is a member of Pre-School Learning Alliance.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is satisfactory.

Children are happy and settled, they are beginning to form positive relationships with the staff and their friends. The manager recognises the need for continual monitoring and involves the staff and parents in doing so. Although the systems are in place to undertake self evaluation, they not fully effective and as a result not all regulatory requirements are met. The playgroup has worked hard since the previous inspection, making improvements to the provision, including the use of an outdoor space. The staff team work effectively with other professionals and parents and carers to meet the individual needs of the children who attend.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To meet the specific requirements of the EYFS, the registered person must:

- ensure that all staff are secure in their understanding of the steps to be taken in the event of an allegation of abuse being made against a member of staff, and that the procedures to be followed are reviewed and updated with all the necessary details of the steps to be taken (safeguarding and promoting children's welfare) page 22

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

- develop knowledge and understanding of the requirements of the independent safeguarding authority
- provide flexible resources that can be used in many different ways to facilitate children's play and exploration. These might include lengths of plastic guttering and water cans near the sand and water play areas, lengths of fabric and clothes, pegs in a box, large paintbrushes and bucket outside, boxes, clothes horses; old blankets and table cloth to make dens and shelters
- continue to develop the outdoor area to promote all six areas of learning
- review and update the policies and procedures to ensure they are comprehensive and reflect current practice

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Preventive measures are in place to protect children, for example, all staff have had a criminal record bureau check undertaken on them, as part of the recruitment procedures. Staff attend training on safeguarding and have sufficient knowledge and understanding of the steps to be taken if they had to make a child protection referral. However they are not as confident in their knowledge of the procedure for allegations of abuse against members of staff and the written procedure is not sufficiently detailed to support staff if the situation occurred. The setting identifies dangers as part of their risk assessments, and takes steps to eliminate those, helping children to keep themselves safe.

The group has various systems in place to evaluate their own practice and they have a satisfactory overview of the quality of the playgroup, in addition they are supported by development workers who regularly visit the setting. Managers are motivated to seek further improvement; they regularly send staff on training courses, conduct appraisals with staff and have opportunities to meet as a staff team. They actively seek the views of parents, children and staff, for example through parent's questionnaires and have made changes to the way in which they undertake some activities as a result. Policies and procedures are available for parents to see however they have not been updated for some time and not all reflect current practice or contain sufficient detail.

The key person obtains information on individual children when they initially come to settle, such as their interests and developmental support; this is discussed with parents and carers, to enable them to meet the specific needs of each child attending. Children who require support with language and communication are well provided for with the use of pictures and through gestures. Key words for those children whose first language is not English are obtained and used to ensure that children can make their basic needs known. Children from all cultural backgrounds are made to feel valued through the celebrations of various festivals throughout the year, which parents actively take part in.

The setting has a highly positive relationship with parents and carers, ensuring each child's needs are met. The setting seeks parents and carers views, through

many ways including questionnaires and regular verbal communication. Parents and carers are kept well informed about their children's achievement, well-being and development, through photographic displays and individual plans for their children's next steps. The setting helps parents and carers to support their children's learning in different ways, for example, through participation in workshops. The effective liaison with parents and carers contributes to improvements in children's well-being and development. There are clear and accessible channels for parents and carers to communicate with the playgroup setting, for example, the manager is available every day to meet and greet parents and carers. Parents comment they find the staff very helpful and supportive with issues relating to their children's developmental progress such as behaviour management; they welcome the feedback they receive about their child. They are encouraged to get involved in the group for example, they have recently organised the packing of boxes of supplies for the flood victims of Pakistan.

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

Staff have a sound understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum, and continue to attend training to enhance their practice, for example how children learn and think and children's language development. Observation and assessments and their use in planning are satisfactory, and this information is used to plan for future activities. The setting have developed the indoor environment to enable children to make independent choices of the activity they wish to take part in and self select from a range of resources. Children's choice is very much promoted, for example they can select resources that are not out from the photo album available. Staff are well deployed, indoors, they engage well with the children, generally asking open ended questions and supporting children in their play. Although the outdoor area is incorporated into planning, it has yet to be fully developed to effectively promote the six areas of learning, to offer exciting and challenging activities.

Children take part in a range of activities to promote the six areas of learning; they thread beads and count them as they go. They are developing their imagination as they take part in role play in the shop and the home corner. Children use magnifying glasses as they look at each others faces; they sing rhymes as they move from indoors to outdoors and back and they explore musical instruments during rhyme time. Children enjoy creating and mark making, they sit for long periods of time as they stick pictures of things they like such as sparkly rings and handbags.

Children are secure in the setting and most are beginning to develop a sense of belonging. Even though most children have recently started at this group, they are happy and settled and generally display confidence and self-esteem. Children are beginning to form positive relationships and most are developing skills working independently as well as alongside their friends. Overall, most children's behaviour is satisfactory and staff consistently manage their behaviour very well and use appropriate techniques.

Through planned activities children are developing a sense of how to stay safe within the playgroup. For example, the community police come to visit and talk to children about safety issues including stranger danger. They take part in fire drills on a regular basis and talk about the danger of hot equipment such as the kettle in the home corner. Children learn how to use tools such as knives through snack time as they enjoy cutting their fruit.

Children are beginning to show an understanding about healthy lifestyles. They follow appropriate personal hygiene routines, although sometimes need prompting by adults. Children have regular opportunities to go outside on the rooftop garden for fresh air and play. Children are provided with a variety of healthy snacks such as fresh fruit and vegetables and they have regular access to drinking water.

Children generally make satisfactory progress in communicating, literacy, numeracy and skills relating to information and communication technology. They are beginning to develop communication skills by listening to stories and with the support of pictures and gestures communicate with others at the playgroup. They have regular access to the computer and some use of battery operated equipment such as calculators. They are learning about mathematical concepts through activities such as building bricks as they count how many they have and then take pleasure in knocking them all down. Children actively choose what they wish to participate in and they are beginning to develop an understanding of the wider world through the planned activities. Overall, most children generally secure the skills they require in order to progress in their learning.

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

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	2
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	2
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	3
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	2
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	3
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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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