

# The Beeches Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

---

**Unique reference number**

EY412924

**Inspection date**

25/11/2010

**Inspector**

Carol Johnston

**Setting address**

Milborne Port Primary School, North Street, Milborne Port,  
SHERBORNE, Dorset, DT9 5EP

**Telephone number**

07929 626847

**Email**

magwag80@hotmail.com

**Type of setting**

Childcare on non-domestic premises

---

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

T: 0300 123 1231  
Textphone: 0161 618 8524  
E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
W: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

© Crown copyright 2010

## 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.

Please see our website for more information about each childcare provider. We publish inspection reports, conditions of registration and details of complaints we receive where we or the provider take action to meet the requirements of registration.

## **Description of the setting**

The Beeches Playgroup is a privately owned and managed setting. It is based in its own building in the grounds of Milborne Port Primary School, near Sherborne, Dorset. The group is fully accessible. They are open Monday to Friday in term time only. Sessions run from 8.50am to 11.20am and from 12.30pm to 3pm. A lunch club runs between the two sessions. The group are registered on the Early Years Register and the compulsory part of the Childcare Register and may care for 22 children in the early years age group. There are currently 29 children on roll aged between two and five years. The accommodation consists of a main play room with adjoining toilet facilities and an enclosed paved and grassed outside play area. The setting also has use of some of the school facilities, such as the computer suite, playing fields, hall and playground. There are four members of staff working with the children. All have National Vocational Qualifications at level 3.

## **The overall effectiveness of the early years provision**

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children are very happy and settled. Staff create a relaxed and friendly atmosphere and the children clearly enjoy attending, excitedly finding their name cards to display on arrival. There is a strong emphasis on finding creative ways to help children learn, for example, using particular interests to engage boys in mark making and tabletop activities. The children are known well by the staff and their next steps in learning are identified. However, some aspects of the planning are not always sharp enough in ensuring these will be speedily met. Although there is no formal written self-evaluation in place, the manager and the team continually evaluate the activities, how resources are used and what areas could be further developed. The staff work hard to engage parents in the children's learning with the use of regular information and discussions about children's progress.

## **What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?**

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

- further clarify the links between children's identified next steps and the planning of activities to ensure that the focus is maintained
- ensure that there is always a balance of adult-led and free play activities.

## **The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision**

Staff have a clear and detailed understanding of how to safeguard children. They all keep their knowledge regularly updated in order to be able to quickly identify a

child at risk of harm. All of the staff know the procedures to follow should a concern arise about a child and would be able to quickly obtain support for them. The safeguarding policy is regularly updated and is given to all parents at the outset of care to inform them of the staff's responsibility in this area. A copy of this and all the other policies and procedures of the group are displayed on the parent noticeboard, clearly outlining details of the care provided. Risk assessments are done on a daily basis to identify any areas that need attention. Any repair issues are promptly brought to the appropriate person to deal with. Risk assessments are also carried out before any outings to ensure that the children will be safe in the new environment. Particular attention is paid to raising children's awareness of road safety when they are out and about. Staff are very careful when giving the children any necessary medication and a witness is always present to record the amount and the time. Any minor accidents are recorded correctly and parents are notified on collection. All staff keep their first aid training up to date and regularly check the first aid box contents. This enables them to give the appropriate care in an emergency.

Staff carry out evaluations of the sessions each day, in particular making a note of what children have particularly enjoyed doing. This information is used to help the forward planning and also used in creative ways to engage specific groups of children in their learning. Areas for development have been identified by staff, for example, how to make full use of the new outdoor facilities and to help plan some new outings. Regular appraisals are carried out to identify training needs and there is a commitment to developing staff's knowledge in all areas in order to continuously improve children's outcomes. Staff are very friendly, motivated and proactive in supporting the children. This results in a very happy atmosphere where children are secure, confident and settled, although at times some more adult-led activities would provide a better balance to the mainly free play sessions.

Parents are provided with clear information at the outset of care and the manager personally explains the Early Years Foundation Stage. In addition, there are displays of the six areas of learning on the parent noticeboard with photographs of the activities and the links between them. The planning is displayed for parents so that they can see what is happening on each day. In addition, there are regular parent meetings where assessment folders are looked at and progress discussed. A daily informal discussion also occurs when parents collect the children and there are frequent newsletters. Parents are very happy with the care provided, saying "the staff are warm and caring", "my child is always bringing things home that he has done", "he loves all the toys and the activities and the ladies are all like mums to him". There are close links with other providers caring for the children, such as other pre-schools. In addition, the children who will be soon at school have reciprocal visits with the reception class of the host school, helping them become familiar with the teacher and new class mates. There are established links with health professionals such as speech and language therapists and they work closely with the special educational needs coordinator to ensure that children with particular needs are well supported. Additional staff are employed if there is a child attending with severe learning disabilities in order for the Senco to dedicate her time exclusively to the child and provide them with consistency and security.

Children have opportunities to learn about the cultures and beliefs of others. There

are regular celebrations of festivals such as Diwali, where the children paint their hands and make special cakes. There are also food tasting days where children learn about and taste food from different countries. A range of resources reflect diversity and disability in everyday life. Children are encouraged to learn to respect and be kind to each other and many display spontaneous sharing. Staff are good role models in this, being very polite and warm towards the children and thanking them for their help with a particular task and for taking turns.

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

Children enjoy the varied range of activities on offer. Resources are plentiful and they are rotated each week to provide additional interest. There are plenty of construction toys, small world play, painting and colouring, dressing up, puzzles and board games. In particular, the children enjoy the cosy book corner and it is well used. There is a comfy sofa and blankets for children to snuggle up on and many children sit with their friends and read stories to each other. Children are very interested and engaged in what is going on around them and get excited when they see a favourite cartoon character on the magnetic card game. These interests are used to help the children learn. For example, children with a particular interest in something are encouraged to use the outdoor chalkboard to help draw pictures and talk about it, helping their mark making and language skills. Children who enjoy the outdoor area are also encouraged to gain knowledge and understanding of the world around them. Staff give them trays of earth to explore and they go on 'bug hunts'. Staff also sometimes hide cooked spaghetti in these for the children to discover.

Children are known well by the staff team. There is a key worker system in place, as the children are in one playroom together, all of the staff interact with all of the children and take observations of them during their play. These are then transferred to children's assessment folders and their next steps in learning planned. However, at the stages of linking the next steps and the planning of activities, some focus is lost and currently this system is under review by the staff. Lots of photographs are taken of the children during their play which both record achievements and which the parents appreciate. Children have benefited from the new outdoor play area and this encourages their health and well-being as they are able to go outside as and when they wish. There is now a large climbing frame, den, trampoline, sand pit and a huge chalkboard. Children relish their outdoor play and it is very popular. Children are wrapped up warmly with their gloves, coats and waterproofs and they go out excitedly. Staff show them the icy crystals on the ground and children explore how they feel, talking about how they got there. Staff are inventive in incorporating learning into the activities, for example a child bounces on a trampoline and she is asked to try and count how many bounces she does. At snack time, children count the beakers that a child has collected after the drinks have been finished.

Children have good opportunities to learn about their safety. There are regular visits from a local police community safety officer who comes and talks to the

children about what she does and how they can be safe when they are going out. The children go to the school hall and play a game involving the colours of traffic lights where they must run, wait and stop according to the colour of disk that she holds up. One of the children dresses up as a 'lollipop lady' and the children practise on the 'zebra crossing'. Children really enjoy the game and tell the Inspector 'I'm very tired I did lots of running'. This learning is later reinforced by staff at Circle Time where questions are asked of the children about how they should cross safely. There are also related art and crafts activities, for example, painting the zebra crossings and the local 'lollipop lady'. Children's knowledge of their own safety is also encouraged with 'assisting' the staff in their morning risk assessments.

Children's health is continually promoted, both with the free flow outdoor play and with the emphasis on healthy eating. A selection of fresh fruit is given at snack time along with milk. Water is always available for the children to help themselves to. There are displays of healthy foods and the importance of eating a good breakfast along with regular newsletters to encourage parents to send healthy options in the lunchboxes. In the summer, children grow their own vegetables and there are trips to the library to look at books about different foods. A crocodile puppet is used to help the children learn about keeping their teeth clean and brushing regularly.

There are opportunities for children to learn and explore different textures and shapes. Regular 'messy' play is encouraged. Staff provide jelly, foam, porridge, custard and soap flakes. Children use natural resources to make collages and displays and they feel the textures of the autumn leaves as they change and dry. There are opportunities for children to learn about technology with remote-controlled toys, cash tills and calculators. Children always have access to creative materials to make their own pictures and designs.

Children get on exceptionally well with each other, working well together during their play in pairs or in larger groups. Staff are clear and consistent in their behavioural boundaries and this is reflected in the happy and good-natured atmosphere. Children spontaneously offer each other toys and take turns during board games with no hesitation. They are always encouraged to say please and thank you. Staff interact very warmly with the children and show a genuine commitment to their well-being. The skills that the children are learning will stand them in good stead for the future.

## 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

<b>How well does the setting meet the needs of the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?</b>	2
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	2

### The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	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

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
--	---

### Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

<b>Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	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

Any complaints about the inspection or report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)



## **Annex B: the Childcare Register**

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

Met