

Carleton Rode Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	254007
Inspection date	09/12/2010
Inspector	Sarah Johnson
Setting address	Jubilee Hall, Mill Road, CARLETON RODE, Norfolk, NR16 1NQ
Telephone number	01953 788 916
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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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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

Carleton Rode Playgroup opened in 1985. It is a registered charity and is managed by a voluntary committee made up of parents of some of the children who attend the playgroup. It operates from Jubilee Village Hall situated in the village of Carleton Rode in Norfolk. Children have access to an enclosed outdoor play area. The playgroup is open on Thursday and Friday from 9.30am to 12.30pm, during school term times.

The provision is registered on the Early Years Register and both the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. A maximum of 26 children may attend the playgroup at any one time. There are currently 13 children in the early years age range on roll, all in part-time places. There are strategies in place to support children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. The setting has very close operational links with its other registered playgroup provision. This runs on Monday and Tuesday mornings from a cabin situated in the grounds of Carleton Rode Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School.

There are five members of staff, three of whom hold early years qualifications to at least Level 3. One member of staff holds Qualified Teacher Status. The setting provides funded early education for three and four-year-olds.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is satisfactory.

Children benefit from an inclusive environment where their individual needs are met and reasonable attention is given to promoting their awareness of diversity. They make sound progress towards the early learning goals and any gaps in their achievement are generally well planned for. Outcomes for children's health are strong and the procedures for risk assessment help to keep children safe and secure. Partnerships with parents are positive as the staff exchange information effectively and provide opportunities for parents to share their knowledge of their children's needs. With guidance from local authority advisors, the managers and staff team are beginning to work together to identify areas for development that will improve outcomes for children.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- develop the self-evaluation process to identify a wider range of priorities for development that will extend practice and continue to improve outcomes for children
- improve the short-term planning to clearly show how practitioners will support individual children to achieve the next steps in their developmental progress

- strengthen the children's awareness of differences in gender, ethnicity, language, religion, culture, special educational needs and disabilities by providing more positive images, and sharing and celebrating a wider range of practices and special events.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children are safeguarded from harm. Staff have a sound understanding of their roles and responsibilities to protect the children in their care. This includes their duty to record and report any concerns and to share the setting's safeguarding policy with parents. Appropriate procedures for the recruitment of staff are implemented including all required suitability checks. Staff demonstrate sound understanding of health and safety issues and have written policies and procedures in place to support the smooth running of the setting. For example, effective risk assessments are conducted each day to ensure all areas of the indoor and outdoor environments are kept safe and secure. Within the setting, staff are deployed effectively to meet the children's individual needs and ensure they are well supervised during different activities. The range of toys and resources is suitable to meet the developmental needs of the children and staff ensure these are rotated each day.

The setting has a positive relationship with parents and carers and encourages their involvement in several aspects of the provision. For example, parents are invited to join the management committee which offers them an opportunity to make important decisions about the playgroup. Parents are also welcomed into the setting to share their skills and expertise with the children. For example, they visit to talk to the children about their job as an optician. Good strategies are in place for sharing information between the setting and home, namely through informative notice boards, friendly newsletters and ongoing daily discussions. Parents are also encouraged to have free access to their children's learning journey records and staff continue to encourage parents to add their own comments to these. Staff have appropriate skills to assess any gaps in children's achievement and share information and records with parents and interagency teams. As a result, outcomes for children with special educational needs are improving and staff are taking suitable steps to ensure children receive the tailored support they need to progress. The setting has some basic links with the local primary school as the staff attend local cluster meetings to discuss the needs of the children who are due to move onto full-time school.

Managers and staff work together as a cohesive team and often take up opportunities for further training to build on their existing knowledge. Managers willingly link up with advisors from the local authority to review their planning systems and update key documentation. Although the staff are keen to make improvements to the provision, they have not yet established a rigorous system to self-evaluate across all areas of the provision. This means that actions taken by the setting are not always as well-chosen and carefully planned as they could be, and occasionally the most significant areas for improvement are not prioritised.

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

Staff demonstrate a sound knowledge and understanding of the learning and development requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage and have the required skills to promote children's steady progress. Children are settled and content in their surroundings. They develop secure attachments with key members of staff who provide practical and emotional support to meet their individual needs. For example, the youngest children in the group feel reassured that there is someone nearby to offer them support when they wish to reach the pencils in the middle of the table, and when they need to access the toilet. Staff know the children well as they observe and assess them as they play. Many of their observations are collated in a learning journey record for each child, together with meaningful photographs of the skills the children are mastering. In practice, the staff generally know how to extend children's play in order to promote the next steps in their learning. However, systems for planning do not give sufficient regard to this and it is not always clear how staff are tailoring the activities to meet the needs and abilities of individual children. This means that children do not always make as much progress as they could given their starting points.

The organisation of space in the large hall allows children to access a sound range of resources set out by the staff each day. There are well-defined areas for children to engage in small world play with various cars, animals and people. As they play, children chat freely together and discuss their families and favourite superheroes. This shows that they are developing positive social relationships and their skills in communication are developing steadily for the future. Children are keen to join in with planned cooking activities, during which they encounter new challenges and develop their problem solving skills. For example, they work out the best way to crack an egg and notice the changes in the mixture as they add different ingredients. The older children in the group begin to use mathematical language as they talk about adding 'more' or 'less' sugar, and recognise some of the numerals on the weighing scales. Children's behaviour is positive and they are learning to behave in a manner that is conducive to learning. They develop appropriate levels of confidence and self-esteem because staff provide them with regular praise, encouragement and direct support. Children are developing a basic understanding of the wider world as they access a small range of resources that are representative of diversity and celebrate some cultural festivals. However, the staff recognise that a wider range of cultural and religious events and practices are not incorporated into the planning as effectively as they could be. There are also few positive images displayed around the playgroup. This means that children's thinking about gender, language, religion or disabilities is not effectively promoted. The playgroup's computer is available during most sessions. This resource enables children to develop secure skills for the future as they learn how to operate various educational games and develop control in using a mouse and keyboard.

Children demonstrate a good awareness of their own health and hygiene needs. They are fully aware of the importance of washing their hands before handling and eating food and they recognise the changes that happen to their bodies when they are active. For example, they confidently state that they must wash away the

germs before they start a cooking activity and notice that they are feeling hot after running around outside. Children engage in discussion about healthy eating and are aware of the benefits of eating fresh fruit and drinking water and milk at snack time. Opportunities for children to access the outdoor area are planned during each session, ensuring they benefit from the fresh air whilst being physically active. Children are learning appropriate safety rules that help them to understand how to keep themselves safe. For example, they show awareness of the need to stay away from the hot oven when they are baking cakes, and develop their understanding of fire safety during a visit from the fire service.

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	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	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	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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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