

The Grove Pre-School Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

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13/01/2011

Inspector

Dinah Round

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*.

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Description of the setting

The Grove Pre-school Playgroup was established in 1984, and moved to its present accommodation in 1998. It is a community playgroup managed by a parent committee. The group operates from a converted bungalow, adjacent to the Damers First school, situated on the outskirts of the town of Dorchester, in Dorset. They are the sole user of the building. Children have use of a playroom with separate entrance hall, and adjoining toilets and kitchen area. There is an enclosed outside play area that surrounds the building with static climbing equipment for outdoor play activities. The playgroup also have use of the school playground.

The playgroup is registered on the Early Years Register to care for 20 children aged from two to five years. Children are offered a maximum of three sessions a week, and there are currently a total of 59 children two to five years on roll. The playgroup provides funded nursery education for children aged three and four years. The playgroup supports children with special educational needs and children who have English as an additional language. The playgroup is open each weekday during term time from 8:30am to 3.30pm, which includes morning and afternoon sessions and a lunch club between 11.30am to 12.30am.

The playgroup has a team of seven staff, all of whom hold appropriate early years qualifications to at least level 2. The manager holds the Early Years Professional Status qualification.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children are settled and secure in the welcoming and caring environment provided. Staff know each child well and take positive steps to ensure that their individual needs are met and that they are included equally throughout the provision. Overall, systems for planning and monitoring children's development are effective. The broad range of interesting and stimulating play opportunities means that children are making good progress in their learning. Children's welfare is promoted well and they benefit from the strong partnerships established with parents and carers. The manager values the importance of continuous improvement and staff work together well to help identify areas for future improvements to enhance the 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 further systems of observation, assessment and planning to

consistently support children in taking the next steps in their learning and development

- review organisation of resources and play opportunities to maximise children's independence in making choices about their play, to further enhance their ongoing development.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children's welfare is effectively promoted. Policies, procedures and records are well organised and updated frequently to support the provision and to meet children's needs. Clear recruitment and vetting procedures are followed to ensure that staff are suitable and have appropriate qualifications to work with children. High levels of staff who know children well means that children feel comfortable, settled and secure. Ongoing risk assessments, including daily checklists are carried out to identify and minimise risks to children which means that children can move around freely and safely. Staff have a clear understanding of the signs and symptoms of child abuse and procedures to follow if they have any concerns about a child in their care. This contributes towards safeguarding children.

The play environment is well-planned and provides opportunities for children to follow their interests and free-flow between the indoor and outdoor play areas. Resources are clean, well maintained and age appropriate. Children enjoy a balance of both adult-led and some self-chosen activities, although, opportunities for children to be able to freely access resources indoors and make independent choices about their play are not maximised. Children develop a good sense of belonging as they see a positive reflection of themselves through their photographs and artwork displayed around the room. Staff provide picture symbols to aid children's communication and these are used successfully to support children's understanding of the daily routine. Planned activities, such as creating 'Aboriginal Art' and making 'Didgeridoos' help to develop children's understanding of diversity and the wider world.

Staff are clear of their roles and responsibilities and work together well as a team to maintain the smooth running of the sessions. They communicate regularly to ensure that children's individual needs are consistently supported. Staff are pro-active in continuing to evaluate and reflect on areas for improvement and seek parents views through questionnaires, these are then used to inform decisions about the provision. For example, this has resulted in more outdoor clothing being purchased and a covered area being erected to provide a space for children to change wellingtons and coats. This provides children with greater opportunities for outdoor play and enhances the learning outcomes for children. These positive steps taken since the last inspection have increased children's independence in accessing the outdoor play space, but play activities accessible indoors are still mostly set out by staff.

Staff have established strong working relationships with parents which helps support them in meeting children's individual needs. Through the 'Child Profile' forms, parents provide staff with information regarding children's likes and dislikes

and the language spoken at home. Settling-in sessions are tailored to children's individual needs successfully supporting their transition from home to the playgroup. The daily informal discussions between staff and parents mean that information about each child's care and well-being is regularly exchanged. Parents have opportunities to view the children's individual diaries and record of progression to keep them informed of their child's achievements. Parents receive good quality information about the provision through the playgroup welcome pack, display boards, regular newsletters and opportunities to attend workshops about aspects of children's learning. Parents feel they are kept well-informed and are happy with the care provided.

Effective partnerships are established with other providers supporting children to ensure that information is regularly shared and used to promote children's well-being.

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

Children are happy and settled in the warm, welcoming and nurturing environment provided. They form good relationships with staff and each other and are confident to make their needs known as they are reassured of a friendly and caring response. Staff know children well and work together with parents to support children's holistic development. Children benefit from the positive interaction they receive from skilled staff who offer support and encouragement so children make good progress in their learning and development. Children get involved in a broad range of play and learning experiences and access a good variety of resources over a period of time. For example, children have fun outside as they turn the tap on the water butt to collect the water in their bucket, then carefully carry their bucket and brush so they can paint the wooden frame. Detailed observational assessments are completed to effectively monitor children's progress and achievements, although, these do not identify children's next steps to help staff ensure that children are fully supported in reaching their full potential. Staff are good role models providing regular encouragement and praise to boost children's self-esteem. Children are developing positive attitudes towards others through learning to share and take turns.

Children are motivated and confident learners. They are encouraged to develop their independence in practical skills, such as pouring their drinks at snack time and managing their own clothing when going outside. Children are confident communicators; they express their needs openly and talk freely about what they are making as they play. For example, children proudly show off their clay models and explain how their machine works, 'if you look through this you can see the treasure, and if you press that button you can take a picture'. Children listen well to stories and staff make effective use of props to keep children interested and involved. Children are introduced to counting, number, and size through both planned and spontaneous activities, such as the story and rhyme of 'Goldilocks and the Three Bears'. There are many opportunities for children to use their senses to explore different media and materials, such as clay, mud, paint, and playdough.

Children are developing a good knowledge and understanding of the world. They visit places within their community and support national initiatives, such as Jeans for Genes and Red Nose Day. Children learn about growth and change through planting fruit and vegetables.

Children's health and safety is well supported. They learn about keeping themselves and others safe as they move around in their play, such as waiting until the path is clear before riding their bike down the slope outside. The regular emergency evacuation practises are organised over a period of days to ensure that all children have been involved, so they all gain awareness of what to do in an emergency situation. Children have free-flow access to the outdoor play area for most of the day which promotes their fitness and physical development and ensures they get plenty of fresh air. Children enjoy sociable snack times, where they benefit from healthy choices of fresh fruit and toast. Staff follow children's individual dietary needs so that children remain healthy.

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	2

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	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
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Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	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

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