

Chuckles Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspector Alison Edwards

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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

Chuckles Pre-School Playgroup opened in 1986 and is a privately owned provision. It operates from Keldholme Lane Community Centre in Alvaston on the outskirts of Derby, serving the local area. Children use the main hall and associated cloakrooms. There is an enclosed outside area for outdoor play. The playgroup runs from Monday to Friday during school terms. It is open between the hours of 9am and 3pm, offering morning and afternoon sessions and lunch provision. Children attend a variety of sessions.

The playgroup is registered on the Early Years Register and the compulsory part of the Childcare Register to care for a maximum of 30 children between the ages of two and eight years. There are currently 35 children on roll, all in the early years age range. This includes a small number of children with English as an additional language. The playgroup receives funding for the provision of nursery education to two-, three- and four-year-old children. It is also registered on the voluntary part of the Childcare Register to care for older children. Including the proprietor, there are five childcare staff. Of these, three hold recognised qualifications at Level 3.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is satisfactory.

This well-established playgroup provides a stable and secure environment which reflects children's backgrounds and some aspects of the wider community. Children are settled and relaxed, enabling them to enjoy their play and activities. Consequently, this helps them to make steady progress in their development and learning. The playgroup has taken appropriate steps to address most issues previously raised by Ofsted. It shows a sound commitment to further reviewing and developing its provision for children.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- develop use of ongoing observational assessment to better inform planning for each individual child's continuing development
- explore further ways of involving parents in the observation, assessment and planning cycle
- explore ways to develop a more challenging and varied environment, indoors and out, to more fully support children's learning and development across all areas
- review ways to improve arrangements to minimise risks of cross-infection, with particular regard to hand drying facilities.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

A well-established staff team help to provide a stable and secure environment for children. The proprietor has sound recruitment procedures in place to assess the suitability of any new staff. She keeps systematic records for existing staff to show that relevant clearances have been completed. There are sound arrangements to manage any accidents appropriately. For example, staff first aid training is regularly updated, and confidential records provide relevant information to parents about the circumstances and treatment of any accidents. The playgroup has improved its systems to underpin the safe management of any outings. For example, risk assessments now give specific consideration to transport of children by car, and the playgroup ensures that relevant insurance cover is in place for car use. Relevant policies and procedures help to ensure that staff know what to do in the event of any emergency such as a fire or a child being lost. The safeguarding policy is readily accessible and has been reviewed to ensure that it is in line with current national and local procedures. This helps to ensure that staff are aware of what to do in the event of any concerns about a child or allegations of abuse. Sensible safety precautions help to keep children safe. For example, the corners of head-height metal window grilles in the outdoor play area are covered with padding to reduce accident risks. There are sound arrangements to help ensure that children are unable to leave the premises unsupervised, and that unauthorised adults do not have access to children. For example, a security chain and buzzer are used at the main door, and staff offer careful supervision at arrival and departure times. The playgroup has successfully obtained funding to improve its outdoor play provision by installing an all weather play surface, and is currently in the process of purchasing grant-funded low storage units to improve children's independent access to toys and play materials inside the building. Toys and furnishings are in good condition and are generally suited to children's interests and abilities. However, indoor and outdoor areas are not yet used to best effect to consistently provide a challenging and stimulating environment to fully extend children's play and learning. The playgroup takes appropriate account of advice and guidance from external sources, for example, by improving its presentation of books to make them more appealing to children. Staff attend local meetings of early years settings in order to share ideas for improving their practice. In addition to informal daily discussion, staff use 'job chats' and termly meetings to review aspects of their own skills and to contribute to a realistic self-evaluation of some aspects of the playgroup's strengths and priorities for further development. Consequently, the playgroup shows a suitable capacity for ongoing improvement.

Parents value the stability and continuity which this well-established playgroup provides. Initial visits enable new parents to see and discuss arrangements for their children's care. The playgroup records appropriate information from parents about each child's personal, contact and care details. This enables staff to take account of children's individual welfare needs, for example with regard to medical, dietary or cultural requirements. Displays and newsletters help to keep parents informed of any ongoing events and changes. The playgroup helps children make some links between home and playgroup, for example by bringing in items for a 'nature table' or by taking home sunflower seedlings sown at playgroup. In

response to a parental survey, the playgroup has introduced more regular meetings with parents to update them on children's progress to supplement informal daily discussion with staff. However, it has not yet fully explored the most effective ways of consistently encouraging parents to contribute their own observations of children's initial and changing abilities and to share ideas on ways to promote the next steps in their learning. The playgroup is familiar with ways to work with other agencies, for example speech therapists, to help meet the needs of any children with identified special educational needs and/or disabilities. It has established regular links with the local school to which most children transfer, and with other local nurseries which children also attend.

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

Children settle quickly on arrival, including those who are new to the setting and begin to develop secure relationships with others. For example, younger children play alongside each other when using play dough, whilst more established children readily identify their friends or the adults who are caring for them. Staff help children begin to recognise their own and other people's feelings and experiences, for example, by sharing books about different family events and circumstances. A selection of resources such as books, puzzles and dressing up clothes reflect different cultures and lifestyles, so helping children recognise and respect some aspects of diversity. Children develop some aspects of independence and responsibility, for example as they begin to pour their own drinks, or use tissues to wipe their own noses. Arrangements to promote children's healthy lifestyle are generally sound. For example, staff encourage children to take part in daily energetic play in the fresh air, and talk with them about what makes them feel hot or cold. Children enjoy meals and snacks which are suited to their tastes and which help to contribute to a generally balanced diet. These typically include a morning snack of toast and milk, lunch such as fish fingers, potato waffles, spaghetti and salad vegetables, with an afternoon snack of chopped fresh fruit. Children learn to wash their hands after using the toilet or before eating. However, risks of cross-infection, which were identified at the previous inspection, have not yet been fully addressed. This is because children continue to use shared towels after washing their hands. Children begin to learn to safely use simple tools such as scissors and cutlery. Staff talk with them about how to act safely, for example when using step stools in the cloakrooms, or when crossing roads during local outings. Visits from local community police officers help them to learn about some aspects of safety in the wider world.

Children are usually busy and interested in their play and activities, and so begin to develop a positive attitude to learning. For example, children enjoy using sand to fill and empty different containers, so beginning to gain a practical awareness of shape and size. Children begin to recognise and understand number names as they join in familiar songs such as 'Five currant buns'. Staff spend time in the comfortable book corner, helping to encourage children's enjoyment of a selection of story and factual books. Consequently, children begin to use books independently, for example, experimenting with flaps and sliding panels, or beginning to describe what the pictures show. Staff use some planned adult-led

activities to help build children's vocabulary or to begin to express their own feelings. For example, they use different objects in a 'feely bag' to help children learn about different textures such as 'rough' or 'smooth'. They encourage children to talk about whether faces are happy or sad as they look at their reflections in a mirror. Children have access to a selection of resources such as paper and crayons to enable them to use their mark-making skills. They have some opportunities to develop their knowledge and understanding of the world through indoor and outdoor play. Adult-led activities such as sowing seeds help them begin to learn about aspects of the natural world, whilst local walks help them to become familiar with their local surroundings. Children regularly enjoy using substances such as sand or dough, so beginning to learn how these can be handled and used in different ways. Staff help them learn to use computers, for example, to paint different shapes and colours. Both boys and girls enjoy using dressing up clothes, showing pleasure in different colours and textures of the fabrics. Adults encourage children to use simple percussion instruments with control, enabling them to identify their different sounds. Systems to track aspects of children's progress and to plan further activities linked to specific learning aims across each area of development are already in place. However, these are not yet fully effective in accurately identifying the next steps in each child's learning and the best ways to fully extend progress and challenge for each child through all aspects of their play.

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

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|--|---|
| 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 | 3 |

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

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| 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 | 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