

Ashton under Hill Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspector Fiona M Robinson

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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

Ashton-under-Hill Playgroup registered in 1992. Children attend from the village and the surrounding areas. It is based in the Green Room of the village hall, which is attached to the school premises and has the use of the outdoor environment. There is ramped disability access. The playgroup is able to support children with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and those who speak English as an additional language. It is registered with Ofsted on the Early Years Register.

A maximum of 14 children aged two to under five years may attend at any one time. There are currently 15 children on roll, all of whom are within the early years age group. The playgroup is in receipt of funding for early education places. It is open each Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday mornings from 9am to 12 noon, during the school term. Children attend for a variety of the sessions on offer.

Two staff work with the children, both of whom have early years National Vocational Qualifications at level 3. One is working towards a BA degree in Integrated Childhood Studies. The playgroup is in receipt of support from the local authority. It is also a member of the Pre-school Learning Alliance and has close links with the adjacent school.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children enjoy coming to the bright, stimulating environment and are fully included in well-planned indoor and outdoor activities. Staff take into account their individual needs and interests and children achieve well. Staff's knowledge and understanding of safeguarding is outstanding. There are excellent links with parents, the host school and the community and staff are very skilled at increasing children's understanding of healthy eating. The manager and staff have a good knowledge of the playgroup's strengths and areas for improvement and are committed to continuous improvement.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- extend opportunities for children to explore and investigate their natural environment.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Staff safeguard and promote children's welfare extremely well because clear and comprehensive policies, procedures and documentation are in place. They have an excellent knowledge of safeguarding and child protection procedures and

undertake training very regularly. Risk assessments are very thorough and there are rigorous systems for parents to follow when collecting their children. The playgroup is very secure and children are supervised at all times, both indoors and outdoors to ensure their safety. Children use a good range of equipment that is safe and suitable for their age. There are robust staff recruitment and vetting procedures in place to make sure all those having contact with children are suitable to do so. Fire evacuation procedures are practised regularly so that staff and children are familiar with the routine.

The playgroup is well-led and managed. The manager and staff value the views of parents and children and take these into consideration when identifying priorities for improvement. Good progress has been made in addressing the recommendations from the previous inspection. Staff plan together and attend training opportunities to enhance their qualifications and expertise. They clearly identify what works well and outline areas for improvement, such as continuing to refine the systems for recording the children's experiences. Good self-evaluation systems ensure that improvements have a positive impact on the children's experiences. Staff make imaginative and effective use of a good range of resources to meet the needs of the children. Activities are regularly monitored and realistic, and challenging targets are set for the children. The layout and organisation of the outdoor area has been developed; however planning shows that opportunities for children to explore and investigate their natural environment are not fully exploited. Staff actively promote equality and diversity and ensure children are fully integrated into activities, such as the exciting morning children spent listening to a talk about Spain, Spanish culture and its customs, which was given by a parent.

Partnerships with parents and carers are outstanding. Parents say that their children enjoy the activities and get on very well with the staff. They receive regular and comprehensive information through informal discussions, newsletters and the parents' notice board. They feel they are kept very well-informed of their children's achievement and progress. Key staff regularly share their 'learning journeys' with parents. These are records of children's achievements and activities while at the playgroup. Formal meetings between staff and parents are held each term about the children's progress. Parents are very supportive of fundraising activities, such as the Mother's Day market, the Village Fete and the Strawberry Tea. They enjoy attending a wide range of parent workshops with their children to learn new skills, such as felt-making and glass-painting. The relationship with the host school is excellent and information is shared very effectively. Staff are very experienced in caring for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and children with English as an additional language. There are excellent links with outside agencies and the community and children are supported well in their learning.

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

Children benefit from well-planned activities and achieve well. Staff value the children's interests and ideas and include these in the topics and activities.

Themes, such as 'All About Me', 'Winter' and 'Around the World' enrich their experiences. Key staff evaluate the achievement of the children in their learning journals and are refining ways in which they record children's achievement and progress over time. Children behave extremely well and are highly valued by staff. They are kind, thoughtful and considerate of one another and help with the tidying up routine. This is because staff have a consistent approach to managing the children's behaviour. Children are respectful and share their resources sensibly. Staff have an excellent relationship with the children. They actively promote their independence and encourage them to choose their own activities. Festivals such as Diwali, Christmas and the Chinese New Year enrich their experiences and give the children an outstanding appreciation of other cultures. Parents from Spain and Japan talk to the children about their lifestyles, customs, dress and food. Children enjoy listening to the story of 'The Ugly Duckling' in Spanish and squeezing their own Spanish orange juice.

Children have an excellent understanding of keeping themselves healthy. They learn how to make healthy choices at snack time and help to prepare fruit kebabs and vegetables in the shape of happy faces. They learn how to use equipment safely as they make bread rolls. They have fun as they run, balance and ride wheeled toys. Children also have a good understanding of keeping themselves and others safe. For instance, they know the correct way to tidy their equipment and chairs away at the end of the session and they benefit from talks on safety from the fire and police services.

Children are keen to participate in a wide range of interesting and exciting activities. Their creative skills are developed well as they make clay pots and colourful collages. They listen attentively to stories, such as one about rainbow fish, and are keen to discuss the characters. Most can count up to fifteen and beyond and they enjoy practising their counting through singing songs such as 'Five Currant Buns'. They are keen to build dens and go for walks around the village. They enjoy dressing up for role play in the travel agents and planning their holidays. Their communication, language and literacy skills are developed well through their work on sounds and letters. Children are skilful at completing simple programmes on the computer. They benefit from exciting visits and talks from talented parents and visitors who share and demonstrate a wide range of skills, such as repairing locks, cooking, making music and storytelling. Overall, children are well-prepared for future learning experiences.

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	1
The effectiveness of safeguarding	1
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	2
The effectiveness of partnerships	1
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	1

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	1
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	1
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	2

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