

St. Johns Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number 319310
Inspection date 26/01/2011
Inspector Julie Morrison

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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

St Johns Playgroup has been registered since 1992 and is managed by the Trustee Officials of the Church. It operates from two rooms in St Johns Church in the Kingston Park area of Newcastle upon Tyne. The playgroup is open Monday and Tuesday from 9.15am to 12.30pm and Wednesday and Thursday from 9.15am to 12.15pm during school term time only. The group is registered to care for up to 24 children aged from two to under eight years of age, of these no more than 24 may be in the early years age group. They currently have 31 children in this age range on roll. The playgroup supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language. Links have been made with the local school and partnership arrangements established with other early years settings. The playgroup employs four members of staff, all of whom hold an appropriate early years qualification to a minimum of Level 2.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

The playgroup provides all children and their families with an extremely welcoming and caring environment where children are very happy and very well motivated to learn. Effective procedures are in place to work closely with parents to ensure that children's individual needs are being met. This is combined with a very wide range of activities covering all areas of learning. As a result, children are making good progress in their learning and development. Effective self-evaluation processes have been established to promote outcomes for children. Consequently, staff have a good understanding of their strengths and areas for improvement.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- develop systems to ensure that observations include all areas of learning and to show how identified next steps are used to inform future planning
- develop procedures to share children's learning and development records and any other relevant information with other providers.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children's safety is promoted well within the playgroup as staff have a good understanding of child protection procedures and know how to implement them effectively to safeguard the children. Clear recruitment procedures, along with attending regular training ensures that children are well cared for by suitable and experienced staff. A record of risk assessment along with daily checks and effective systems ensure that children are cared for in a safe and secure environment. For example, entry to the setting is secure and all visitors to the

playgroup are required to sign in and out using the visitors' book. This ensures an accurate record of everyone coming into contact with the children is maintained.

Effective systems are in place to monitor and evaluate the provision to identify priorities for improvement. Staff have made good use of the Ofsted self-evaluation form and meet regularly to discuss practice. Parental questionnaires have been used to good effect to further identify areas for development, this helps to promote outcomes for children. The recommendation raised at the previous inspection has been positively addressed; this ensures continuous improvement. Staff deployment is good; ensuring all children are fully supervised and receive support and encouragement throughout the day. Good use is made of the environment, providing children with excellent opportunities to move around freely and independently choose from a wide range of activities. This is conducive to children's learning and promotes their good progress towards the early learning goals. Staff have good systems in place to support children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and English as an additional language. The Specialist Educational Needs Coordinator has a good understanding of her role and all staff demonstrates a positive attitude towards working closely with parents to meet individual needs, such as gathering key words if appropriate.

Parents speak very highly of the learning and care their children receive at the playgroup. Staff work closely with them from the start so that they are well informed about the setting. For example, parents receive an informative welcome booklet which includes relevant policies along with information about children's individual key worker. In addition, important information such as staff qualification, the certificate of registration and public liability insurance details are clearly displayed. Parents are kept well informed about their child's learning through verbal feedback and access to their children's learning records. The staff have a positive attitude towards working with other providers; they have developed a transition policy for children as they move from one setting to the next and take the children for introductory visits to the local nursery. Previous evidence shows that they work closely with other providers of the Early Years Foundation Stage to support children's achievement and well-being. However, as yet systems to share information for current children who attend more than one setting have not been fully established. The impact of this however, is only slightly negative as those children are still settling into the playgroup.

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

Staff have a good knowledge and understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage learning and development requirements and use this knowledge to provide a stimulating and interesting learning environment. Children at the playgroup display high levels of confidence and self-esteem; eager to learn they enthusiastically join in with the wide range of activities provided for them. Individual files are in place for each child; these include examples of their work and some observations which are linked to the areas of learning. However, these do not clearly show how identified next steps are used to inform future planning and do not consistently

identify progress in all areas. This makes it sometimes difficult to see the progress children are making in specific areas. Nevertheless, staff clearly know the children very well and interact well with them to extend their learning. Children's communication skills are developing well; they are highly confident and articulate. This is evident through their clear enjoyment of books which they read independently and join in enthusiastically with staff at story time. Staff ask lots of open-ended questions to extend children's learning and encourage them to problem solve. For example, as they role play children pretend to staff that the toy microwave has broken. Staff encourage them to think about what could be wrong with it and what they might need to fix it. They have good opportunities for counting and developing their mathematical language. They talk about how big or small items are and use rhymes to introduce early counting skills. Children have good opportunities to learn about the world around them, for example, they grow sunflowers and talk about the builders as they watch them from the window. Their awareness of diversity is promoted very well through a wide range of resources, along with planned activities such as celebrating the Chinese New Year and Eid. Children explore information and communication technology confidently. They use cameras to take photos and use the computer with ease as they play matching games and print out pictures they have drawn. This helps them to begin to develop skills for the future.

Children's good health is promoted very well at the playgroup. Healthy snacks are provided by parents and staff explain the importance of eating a healthy diet. An outdoor area is currently being developed. However, staff ensure that children have very good opportunities to be physical by planning exercise into each session. For example, children enthusiastically join in as they pretend to be dinosaurs; stomping, jumping and waving their arms around. They show a very good awareness of the importance of physical exercise as they confidently explain, 'we do exercise to make our bodies big and strong'. Staff take time to explain dangers to children and to encourage them to consider their actions. This results in children beginning to show an excellent awareness of responsibility for example, they confidently explain, 'if we run we might fall over and bump our heads'. Children are very well behaved at the playgroup and this is encouraged by the staff, who are positive role models and create a calm and positive environment by listening to and praising children. Consequently, children demonstrate an extremely strong sense of security and belonging at the setting. They approach staff confidently to ask for help and search out their friends to proudly show them pictures they have drawn. Children are very happy and settled in the playgroup.

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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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