

# Colerne Old School Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

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**Unique reference number**

199440

**Inspection date**

14/02/2011

**Inspector**

Margaret Davie

**Setting address**

Old School, Vicarage Lane, Colerne,, Chippenham, Wiltshire,  
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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**

Colerne Old School Playgroup has been in existence for approximately 30 years. It operates from the community centre in the village of Colerne, Wiltshire. Children have access to one large room and there is an enclosed area available for outdoor play. It operates from 8:45am to 12:45pm on Monday to Friday during term time. On Tuesday it operates from 8:45 am to 2.45pm and on Wednesday and Thursday there is a session for two and three year olds from 1.00pm to 3.00pm.

The playgroup is registered by Ofsted on the Early Years Register. It may care for a maximum of 30 children in this age group at any one time. There are currently 52 children in this age group on roll who attend for a variety of sessions. Children attend from the village and surrounding areas. The playgroup supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Children who speak English as an additional language are also cared for. The playgroup is in receipt of funding for the free early education for children aged three and four. There are strong links with the local primary school. Six staff are employed of whom five hold appropriate early years qualifications. One member of staff is currently on maternity leave.

## **The overall effectiveness of the early years provision**

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children are cared for in a welcoming and inclusive environment. Staff monitor them carefully and plan a range of activities which are tailored to their individual needs. As a result, they make good progress in their learning and development overall. Most areas of the playgroup are used well to support their learning and well established links with parents and other settings promote good levels of consistency in their care. Self-evaluation procedures are well established. Significant improvements have been made to the setting and plans to make further improvements to the outdoor area are well advanced.

## **What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?**

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

- provide time to further support children's understanding of how good hygiene supports their good health and in particular regarding the sharing of drinking cups
- consider using children's home language when appropriate so that their developing use of English and other languages support each other
- explore ways for children to move freely between the indoor and outdoor environment and provide a range of activities outdoors to promote all areas of learning.

## **The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision**

Rigorous recruitment and training procedures ensure that staff are well qualified and suitable to work in the playgroup. Background checks have been carried out for all staff and there is a clear understanding that adults who have not been vetted may only work with children under supervision. All staff have recently attended updated safeguarding training and have up-to-date knowledge regarding child protection procedures. A record is maintained of all visitors to the setting and a prominent notice on the main access door reminds staff not to admit anyone who is unfamiliar to them, without careful checks. Risk assessments are conducted for the premises as well as any outings children are taken on, to promote their safety.

Good overall use is made of the resources to promote children's learning and development. A good ratio of adults to children is maintained at all times and as a result they are carefully supervised. The premises has undergone a total refurbishment since the last inspection and now provides bright and welcoming accommodation. However, the outside area is not used as effectively as possible to promote children's learning. For example, children cannot move freely between indoors and outdoors at all times of the year. A strong commitment to promoting equality and diversity ensures staff know children well and work in close partnership with their parents to find out about their starting points and individual requirements. Children who speak English as an additional language are well supported overall by the use of sign language, which staff use regularly, as well as visual prompts. However, parents have not been requested to provide key words or phrases in children's home languages to further support their language development.

Relationships with parents are well established and friendly. They are kept well informed about their children's care with a wide range of communications. Regular newsletters are provided and there is a website where they can obtain useful information, such as how to help prepare their children for starting at the playgroup. Learning and development files are freely accessible and parents have numerous opportunities to discuss their child's progress and share their views. Discussions with parents indicate they are very happy with the care their children receive, particularly how well each child's individual circumstances are taken into account when planning activities. The playgroup works closely with other settings which children attend. For example, a daily handover is provided for children who are cared for by a childminder.

A detailed self-evaluation has been completed which provides an accurate diagnosis of areas of strength and those in need of further development. For example, additional training was recently undertaken by staff to further enhance the way in which they support children's literacy and numeracy skills. The recommendations set at the previous inspection have been addressed and as a result outcomes for children improved. For example, they now have greater independent opportunities to develop their creativity by independently accessing the art and craft materials. Plans for further improving the outdoor play area are

well underway. Strong leadership and good team work from all the staff ensure sustained improvements to the provision are secured.

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

Children are very settled and happy. They engage actively in the activities and enjoy their learning. They make good progress because staff know them well, including their individual preferences and interests, and use this information effectively to plan for their next steps. Consequently, they successfully develop the skills they need for the future. Staff are confident in observing their play and maintain journals for each child, clearly showing their progress in each area of learning. They work well together to plan future activities incorporating the needs and interests of individual children.

Children are interested in the world around them. They enjoy discussing the days of the week and think carefully when trying to remember their correct order. Celebrations of different festivals, such as the Chinese New Year, help them feel comfortable with different cultures and learn about the wider world. For example, as they use art and craft materials to make plates which depict the Chinese zodiac signs and paper fireworks. They learn how to care for living things as they grow beans and radishes in the garden and use small equipment such as a flashlight to explore the resources.

Children develop good early writing skills. They have many opportunities to develop pencil grip and learn to write for various purposes. For example, they make shopping lists while playing in the home corner as well as 'important' notes while pretending to be the police. They enjoy story times and listen carefully as staff read to them with good expression. They also like to explore the books independently, happily pressing the buttons which make the dinosaurs in the story roar. Show and tell time provides good opportunities for them to gain confidence as they speak, for example a child talked at length about a favourite car brought in from home.

Children develop their creativity as they paint dinosaur pictures, some using shapes to draw the outline and others happy to let their imaginations guide them. When a child asks how to draw the scales, staff use the opportunity well to extend learning by discussing what shapes could look like scales. Children enjoy making up their own stories based on favourite nursery tales, as they play with the finger puppets and theatre. They practise recognising numbers as they use the calculators in activities and learn about weight as they add or remove small bears from the scales. Staff support children's learning well, extending their thinking through discussion and providing additional resources for them to use in their play.

Most children gain a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe. They appear secure and confident in the playgroup and regular praise and encouragement from staff help them develop good levels of self-esteem. They learn about personal safety through discussions about topics such as stranger

danger. Regular fire drills ensure they have an understanding of what to expect in an emergency. They learn about healthy lifestyles including good hygiene procedures such as regularly washing their hands. They are provided with healthy snacks and have easy access to fresh drinking water from the cooler. However, the present arrangement for accessing fresh and discarding used drinking cups does not adequately ensure that children do not share cups. As a result, there is an increased risk of spreading germs. Outdoor play is available every day and children have access to a range of resources which help them develop their physical skills such as trikes and a climbing frame. While providing daily access to fresh air and exercise, the outdoor area is not used as effectively as possible to provide children with access to a wide variety of activities which encourage them to make progress in all areas of learning. Children behave well and willingly help with activities such as tidying away the resources before snack time. They are able to make their own decisions about the toys they wish to play with, however occasionally their choices are somewhat limited because some of the resources are not available during each session. For example, on the day of the inspection children could only access some of the dressing up clothes.

## 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

<b>How well does the setting meet the needs of the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?</b>	2
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	2

### The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	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

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### Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

<b>Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	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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