

Little Lache Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	305163
Inspection date	09/02/2011
Inspector	Jean Thomas

Setting address	Poplar Road, Chester, Cheshire, CH4 8EY
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Telephone number	
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Email	
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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.

Please see our website for more information about each childcare provider. We publish inspection reports, conditions of registration and details of complaints we receive where we or the provider take action to meet the requirements of registration.

Description of the setting

Little Lache Playgroup was registered in 1972 and is managed by a voluntary management committee. It operates from a purpose built building in Lache in Chester. The playgroup serves the local area. The playgroup is accessible to all children and there is a fully enclosed area available for outdoor play.

The playgroup opens Monday to Friday during term times. Sessions are from 9am until 12 noon. Children are able to attend a variety of sessions. A maximum of 40 children may attend the playgroup at any one time. There are currently 40 children attending who are within the Early Years Foundation Stage. The playgroup is registered on the Early Years Register and on the compulsory part of the Childcare Register. The group supports children who speak English as an additional language.

The playgroup employs one member of staff and there are 18 volunteer staff. Of these, two hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 2.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is inadequate.

The committed staff team create a welcoming environment for children and parents. Positive partnerships are developed with parents which contributes to children's sense of security and their needs being met. Staff have limited knowledge of the Early Years Foundation Stage. Consequently the systems in place to support children's learning and development do not ensure they are progressing to their full potential towards the early learning goals. The committee and staff are not undertaking self-evaluation of the provision to promote continuous improvement and to identify the number of legal requirements not being met.

Overall, the early years provision requires significant improvement. The registered person is given a Notice to Improve that sets out actions to be carried out.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To comply with the requirements of the EYFS the registered person must take the following action by the specified date:

- ensure that there are effective procedures in place for checking staff are suitable to work with children including obtaining an enhanced Criminal Records Disclosure in respect of every person who works directly with the children (Suitable people W2.1) (also applies to the compulsory part of the Childcare register) 23/02/2011

- assign a key person to each child (Organisation W4) 23/02/2011
- ensure an effective safeguarding policy is in place and it includes the procedure to be followed in the event of an allegation being made against a member of staff (Safeguarding and promoting children's welfare W1) 23/02/2011
- ensure the designated practitioner who takes lead responsibility for safeguarding children within the setting attends child protection training (Safeguarding and promoting children's welfare W1.1) 23/02/2011
- make sure the outdoor spaces are safe (Suitable premises, environment and equipment W3)(also applies to the compulsory part of the Childcare register) 23/02/2011
- ensure the observation and assessment systems support the planning for each child's stage of development across the six areas of learning, towards the early learning goals (Organisation W4) 23/02/2011
- ensure the children's attendance record details their actual hours of attendance (Documentation W5) (also applies to the compulsory part of the Childcare register) 23/02/2011
- ensure the manager holds a full and relevant level 3 qualification and half of all other staff hold a full and relevant level 2 qualification (as defined by the Children's Workforce Development Council) (Suitable people W2.2) 23/02/2011
- prepare a written procedure for dealing with concerns and complaints (Safeguarding and promoting children's welfare W1)(also applies to the compulsory part of the Childcare register) 23/02/2011

To improve the early years provision the registered person should:

- devise an effective system for evaluating the provision in order to identify and address any weaknesses and sustain continuous improvement
- review the organisation of the session to ensure it provides children with a balance of child-initiated and adult-led activities to sustain their interest and promote their learning
- develop policies, including a behavior management policy, to ensure there is a consistent approach to childcare practice.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The committee and staff regard children's safety as priority. The staff are deployed to maintain close supervision of children. Risk assessments have been completed and documented to help ensure hazards are kept to a minimum. Although daily safety checks are carried out potential hazards had been overlooked in the outdoor play area which can be accessed by the children. The staff are aware of their

responsibilities to protect children from harm. The manager is the designated practitioner to take lead responsibility for safeguarding children and implementing the procedure. However, the manager has not attended child protection training. She is not secure in the knowledge of the procedure to follow if an allegation is made against any person working or looking after the children on the premises as legally required. The recruitment procedures are not effective in ensuring an enhanced Criminal Records Bureau disclosure is obtained for all staff and volunteers. This compromises children's safety.

The committee has limited capacity for the ongoing improvement of the provision. There is no self-evaluation of practice to identify strengths, areas for future improvement and how they will meet the statutory requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. The recommendations from the previous inspection have been partially met. As recommended water is available to children at all times to help them learn to respond to their bodily needs and to drink when thirsty. The organisation of the free play time of the session offers children variety of experiences and encourages them to make their own decisions in play. The recommendations regarding the maintenance of documentation and developing policies have not been addressed. The policies are either not in place as required or lack detail to support practice. The children's daily register does not include their hours of attendance, this is a breach of a legal requirement.

The team of volunteers and the members of staff work well together. They are committed to their role to provide children and families with a reliable service. However, the qualification requirements are not being met and a key worker system has not been introduced. These are breaches of legal requirements. The staff team have limited knowledge and understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage to ensure it is effectively implemented.

The environment is clean, bright and colourful. The lay out of play equipment is attractive and organised to encourage children's independence in initiating their own ideas during the free play period of the session. The playgroup is well resourced with play equipment to offer children variety and challenge. These include resources which reflect positive images of the diversity of society to help children develop a positive attitude towards others. All children have equal access to activities and resources.

The manager and staff form strong partnerships with parents. There is a sense of community at the setting where children and parents feel welcome and included. Many parents attended the playgroup when they were children and speak favourably about the service. They report that they are very pleased with the progress their children are making. The older children have folders which contain samples of their work. Parents have access to these at any time. There are opportunities for staff and parents to exchange information. Staff value this to help them meet children's individual needs and support their progress. Information has been received from other settings where the Early Years Foundation Stage is delivered to the children for staff to build their knowledge of the children's stage of learning.

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

Children develop their confidence and sense of security through the familiarity of routines they experience each session. Their play experiences and opportunities cover the six areas of learning. Observations are carried out on the children and these are used to plan for children's individual learning and development.

However, these are not documented and it is not clear that the system monitors and tracks individual children's progress towards each of the early learning goals.

The organisation of the session involves child-initiated and adult-led activities. The adult-led group activities can be lengthy and some children become restless as their interest is not sustained. Children have many opportunities to be creative. They use their imagination and problem solving skills as they make their own bus using chairs. They position the chairs in the layout of a bus and talk to each other on their imaginative journey. The large designated role play area is frequently re-organised to reflect different aspects of community life the children experience, such as a dental surgery, a veterinary surgery and a shop. It is currently a cafe. Children play cooperatively together and they assume different roles as their play ideas develop. They become the cooks, waiters, cashiers and customers. The children develop mark-making skills as they take their customer's orders and show their understanding that writing carries meaning, as they select from the menu. The cashiers use mathematical language as they take the money for the bill and operate the cash till. There is a strong emphasis on developing children's language and literacy skills. Staff involve themselves in children's play to extend and support their language. There is regular singing of nursery rhymes and books are enjoyed by the children either independently or as a group activity. The children enjoy outings in the local community as they visit the library. This is valued as important aspect of developing children's understanding of safety issues, such as road safety procedures.

The older children play outside each day. This is not a daily feature for the younger children. Outside the children enjoy the opportunity for robust energetic activity. They show spatial awareness as they steer their bikes and scooters around the play area. Children are encouraged to develop their skills of independence as they put on their coats and hats before they play out side. Indoors the younger children pursue physical activity in the room which offers clear space for movement. The snacks are varied, fruit is offered twice a week. Milk is offered to the children as the nutritional snack time drink. Children's dietary requirements are met. Children develop their social skills as friendships form with their peers and also their understanding of acceptable behaviour through instruction and guidance from staff.

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?	4
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	4

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	4
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	4
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	3
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding	4
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	4
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	4
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Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

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:

Not Met (with actions)

The provider confirms that the requirements of the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are:

Not Met (with actions)

The registered provider does not meet the requirements of the compulsory and or voluntary part/s of the Childcare Register.

To comply with the requirements of the compulsory part of the Childcare Register, the registered person must take the following action/s by the specified date:

- take action as specified in the early years section of the report (qualifications and training CR4.3) 23/02/2011
- take action as specified in the early years section of the report (Suitability of persons to care for, or be in regular contact with, children CR3) 23/02/2011
- take action as specified in the early years section of the report (Suitability and safety of Premises and Equipment CR5.1) 23/02/2011
- take action as specified in the early years section of the report (Records to be kept CR8) 23/02/2011
- take action as specified in the early years section of the report (Procedures for dealing with complaints) 23/02/2011

To comply with the requirements of the voluntary part of the Childcare Register, the registered person must take the following action/s by the specified date:

- take action as specified in the early years section of the report (qualifications and training CR4.3) 23/02/2011
- take action as specified in the early years section of the report (Suitability of persons to care for, or be in regular contact with, children CR3) 23/02/2011
- take action as specified in the early years section of the report (Suitability and safety of Premises and Equipment CR5.1) 23/02/2011
- take action as specified in the early years section of the report (Records to be kept CR8) 23/02/2011
- take action as specified in the early years section of the report (Procedures for dealing with complaints) 23/02/2011