

Sandford & District Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspector

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Setting address

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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

Sandford and District playgroup is run by a parents' committee. It opened in 1971 and operates from Sandford village hall. Children have access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area. It is situated in the rural village of Sandford, on the outskirts of Crediton. The playgroup is open Tuesday to Thursday from 9 am to 1 pm, term time only.

The playgroup is registered on the Early Years Register. A maximum of 26 children may attend the playgroup at any one time. There are currently 37 children aged from two to under five years on roll. The playgroup is in receipt of funding for the provision of free early education to children aged three and four years. There are three regular members of staff, plus one other. Of these, the play leader holds a level 3 early years qualification and one member of staff holds a level 2. Two staff are working towards a level 2 qualification. The playgroup receives support from the local authority and has very strong links with the local primary school.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is satisfactory.

The staff work well with parents and other providers delivering the Early Years Foundation Stage. This enables them to effectively provide continuity of care and meet most children's individual needs. Older and more able children are appropriately challenged to promote their development. Although planning and assessment is not as effective for the youngest children, the good deployment of resources supports all children in making at least satisfactory progress. However, some children are not confident in getting adult support for their personal hygiene. Good procedures help to ensure children remain safe on and off the premises, and they gain a good awareness of keeping themselves safe. The ongoing use of self-evaluation and a commitment to improving outcomes for children, helps to identify most priorities for development, and some good improvements have been made. However, not all previous recommendations have been fully met and one policy is not up to date.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- develop the assessment system in order to consistently identify each child's next steps, so the learning journey for all children takes a personal path
- improve children's awareness of good hygiene procedures with regard to seeking adult support to meet their needs when required
- update the complaints policy to provide the correct contact details for Ofsted.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Good procedures help to safeguard children. The premises are kept secure and a member of staff monitors the arrival and collection of children. Parents sign their children in and out, and staff also keep a register, so an accurate record of children and staff attendance is maintained. All staff have attended child protection training and an extensive policy provides further guidance. Well-organised staff files provide evidence that good checks have been carried out to help ensure suitable personnel are employed. Good risk assessments and daily checks ensure appropriate action is taken to minimise risks to children, while promoting their development. Good information is recorded to safeguard children's welfare and is stored appropriately to maintain confidentiality.

Self-evaluation is appropriately used as a working document, identifying strengths and some areas for improvement. A new play leader has been employed since the last inspection. She has been pro-active in addressing the recommendations for improvement and finding solutions to any obstacles. For example, mobile trolleys have been purchased to enable the children greater independence in selecting creative and mark-making resources. Children are involved in setting up the activities and photographs are used for children to make further requests. An outside area has been developed, which provides space for outside activities and gardening. Children also have good access to the school's facilities, including an allotment. Good deployment of staff ensures children are supervised and supported. For example, the manager leads a small group activity with a student, a parent helper supports children with their snack and two staff interact with the remaining children, where required.

Parents are now actively encouraged to be involved in the planning and their child's learning, and make suggestions, such as planting and growing seeds. Parents' meetings are used to feedback and exchange information on their child's development. The setting now use the Pre-School Learning Alliance policies and procedures, which were recently reviewed. However, the complaints policy has incorrect contact details for Ofsted. The good partnership with parents and other providers support staff in meeting children's individual needs. This has been enhanced by the introduction of 'This is Me' forms, which also provide staff with good information to help children settle. They make regular observations of the children's achievements and their particular interests. A new assessment system has been introduced, which tracks children's progress towards the early learning goals. However, these are inconsistently maintained and do not provide evidence of the youngest children's personal learning journeys or next steps. This means staff are less effective in supporting them.

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

Children settle very quickly to their chosen activities. On arrival they put their personal belongings in their named tray, which helps provide a sense of belonging and recognition of their name. Whole group circle time is used as an opportunity to welcome each other and listen to each other's views. Visual prompts supports children of all abilities in understanding expectations, such as good listening. Older and more able children count how many children are present and say if there are more girls or more boys. Good access to a range of resources enables all children to initiate their own learning. For example, one child carefully walks across the hall on stilts, others engage in telling stories with puppets, while another is supported by a student in using the computer to spot the differences in a picture. Older and more able children have opportunities for small group activities to challenge their development. For example, they play a game in which they recognise their own name, when asked how they know it is their name they sound out the letters.

Children learn about their own environment and the natural world, through enjoying walks with the reception class children from the school. They collect natural resources and enjoy exercising. A photographic book of the event helps them recall their experiences and enjoyment. They recently celebrated Chinese New Year and use some resources which promote positive images of people's differences. Children are confident to sing to the whole group and generally play well together. Staff quickly intervene when arguments break out and encourage children to be kind.

Children generally develop a satisfactory awareness of healthy practices. For example, children engage in activities about healthy eating and dental hygiene. They select from a good range of nutritional snacks and pour themselves drinks of milk or water. Older and more able children wash their hands before snack, using soap and paper towels. However, younger and less able children do not always seek adult support to meet their hygiene needs. For example, some children use the potties, which are not emptied and some do not wash their hands or only dip the tips of their fingers under the tap. Children gain a good awareness of keeping themselves safe through daily routines and activities. For example, on walks they learn which berries are edible and which are not. They understand the rules for using the climbing frame and regularly practise the emergency evacuation procedures.

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?	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	2
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding	2
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	3
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	3
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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	2
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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