

Lancaster Road Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number

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Inspection date

16/02/2011

Inspector

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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

Lancaster Road Playgroup opened in 1969 and registered in 1992. It operates from a church hall in Enfield. Access to the building is at ground level. Children have the use of a large hall and a secure outdoor play area. The playgroup is open during term time from 9.15am until 12.15pm on Mondays, from 8.45am until 11.45am and 12.30pm until 3.30pm on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays, and from 8.45am until 11.45pm on Fridays.

The playgroup is registered on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. A maximum of 30 children in the early years age group may attend the setting at any one time. Currently there are 68 children on roll and 11 staff working with the children. All but one member of staff hold relevant early years qualifications. The playgroup supports children with special educational needs and/or difficulties and those who speak English as an additional language.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

The playgroup offers a welcoming and inclusive provision for children where they engage happily in a wide variety of play activities. Staff promote children's learning effectively through play and prioritise their well-being. There is an excellent working partnership with parents and this contributes to children's needs being fully met. Staff are encouraged to reflect on their practice and to highlight areas that require further improvement.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- ensure that all aspects of the environment that need regular checking are included in the risk assessment records
- extend the observations of children's progress across all areas of learning in order to meet their needs more effectively through planned indoor and outdoor activities.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The setting's documentation is well organised and the policies are regularly reviewed in order to keep them clear and up to date. There are good procedures in place to ensure that children are safeguarded at playgroup. Staff are confident in their knowledge and understanding of child protection procedures. They are well

qualified in first aid and maintain children's health records appropriately. Risk assessments are carried out on the premises, activities and outings, although staff do not yet ensure that every aspect of the environment that needs regular checking is included in the records.

The playgroup's two supervisors promote a culture of reflective practice amongst staff and use self-evaluation effectively to work continually towards improving the outcomes for all children. They are keen to explore new ideas and regularly seek advice from other professionals. They access relevant training courses and ensure that all mandatory training is updated as necessary. Since the previous inspection the premises have been greatly improved through the provision of a refurbished toilet block and a redesigned garden area. The supervisors set relevant targets for the future, for example, extending the range of resources and reviewing documentation, such as risk assessments.

Staff liaise closely with parents and carers, giving children an excellent start to the playgroup through their effective settling in procedures. They offer home visits to families and have devised a questionnaire for new parents, enabling them to provide specific and relevant information about their children's care and learning needs. Parents are invited to share and contribute to their children's profile books so that they become involved in their children's learning. Staff work alongside other professionals to ensure that children with special educational needs receive extra support and consistency of care.

Staff are particularly attentive to children's individual needs and consequently children quickly develop a sense of belonging. Children benefit from the high adult to child ratios and feel valued as individuals. Staff make very good use of the play space available by setting out a wide selection of toys, games and books to attract children. All toys and equipment are kept in excellent condition and are suitable for children of differing abilities. Children particularly enjoy the outdoor garden area which offers alternative play and learning experiences in a safe environment. However, children are not always given plenty of time to access outdoor play activities throughout the whole year.

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

Children show much interest in the activities on offer and often become engrossed in their exploration. For example, they especially enjoy the wide range of creative materials, role play equipment and computer games. Staff offer very good support as they follow up children's interests and interact to enhance their learning experiences. Children are eager to try out new activities and respond with enthusiasm to adults. They are encouraged to be active learners, acquiring new skills through investigation and discovery. Children's self-esteem is boosted as staff follow their lead, building their confidence. Consequently children have high levels of personal independence and develop good relationships within the setting.

Staff use an effective system of observational assessment to monitor children's

progress towards the early learning goals and to plan to meet their individual learning needs. They create attractive profile books containing a selection of annotated photographs and focused observations linked to children's next steps of learning. By planning focus activities staff are able to extend children in different learning areas, for example, in language, number and computer skills. However, they do not yet use a sufficiently diverse range of next steps to ensure that children are extended in all areas of learning.

Children enjoy the relaxed atmosphere in the setting and confidently make their own choices within the play environment. Their behaviour is excellent. They are attentive to staff and, at snack times, are very polite. Staff take time to listen to children and to respond appropriately. They affirm and support children in their choices, reminding them to share fairly and take turns. Children learn about different cultures as they use resources that reflect diversity. Children with special educational needs are extremely well supported as all staff are aware of their needs and provide extra attention whenever possible. They make excellent use of visual resources, enabling children to choose by pointing at a picture and learning the associated label.

Children feel safe and secure at playgroup as there are safety measures in place which help to maintain a safe environment. Children are well supervised at all times and especially at the beginning and end of each session. They have opportunities to talk about keeping themselves safe in different situations and enjoy interactive small group activities, such as story times. Children have fun as they play outdoors, developing their physical skills through activities such as riding, climbing and aiming balls. Their manipulative skills are particularly good and they take great care in creative activities. Children are encouraged to adopt healthy lifestyles, such as good hygiene practices and a healthy diet. They delight in the many pet animals in the setting as they learn about respect for living things and how to care for them.

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	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	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	2
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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Annex B: the Childcare Register

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