

# The Crickets Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Unique reference number</b>	113761
<b>Inspection date</b>	28/02/2011
<b>Inspector</b>	Chris Mackinnon

<b>Setting address</b>	St Johns Pavillion, Park Road, Burgess Hill, West Sussex, RH15 8HG
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<b>Email</b>	
<b>Type of setting</b>	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**

Crickets Playgroup opened in 1994 and operates from a sports pavilion in St John's Park, Burgess Hill, West Sussex. Children access the main room and also use an enclosed outdoor area. The group opens five days a week during school term times. Sessions are from 09.15am to 12.15pm, with two afternoon sessions per week from 12.15pm to 2.45pm.

The setting is registered on the Early Years, and the compulsory part of the childcare register. A maximum of 24 children may attend within the early years age group. There are currently 28 children on roll, and the setting receives nursery education funding for children aged three years and older. The setting is able to care for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and also children with English as an additional language. There is a staff team of five, and most have early years qualifications, with two staff currently training.

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

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

The playgroup is well organised and staff provide consistent support for individual children's development. Children have access to a prepared play environment, where they engage well with staff, and make confident progress with their learning. The setting's range of play themes and planned activities is a notable feature, and staff provide effective support for children's social development. The playgroup works closely with parents, and is currently revising its system of assessment.

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

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

- introduce more opportunities for staff to identify and plan children's next steps in learning

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

The playgroup is a long established childcare setting, and has well organised leadership and management. An effectively planned programme of play and learning is provided, and the staff team provide a high level of individual guidance, to successfully promote children's achievement. A range of development initiatives are currently being followed by the senior staff, to revise the recording of children's progress, and widen the scope of staff training. The staff are well organised in their management of safeguarding, with a clear range of policies and

written guidance in place to ensure children are kept safe and secure.

A recent quality assurance exercise undertaken within the setting, has contributed positively to the setting's presentation of play resources. Children are consistently encouraged to explore the play environment, and have frequent opportunities to adapt and combine play materials through themed role play. Children have opportunities to look at books and develop mark-making, and make visual displays involving the seasons. Assembly and science based play resources are also effectively included. For example, children have a lot of fun with magnetic puzzles and greatly enjoy using optical and sensory items. Children also have access to an adjacent outdoor play area, where they have a range of learning experiences; that includes water play, ball games and learning balance with obstacle courses.

A consistent focus is shown by the staff team in promoting individual children's achievement. Children who attend with specific development needs are well guided by key staff, who work in close partnership with parents, and outside agencies. The setting is also consistent in its support for children's understanding of diversity, and children enjoy a range of planned festivals, and have access to play materials that supports their awareness of people's differences.

The nursery school has established good links with other carers and play settings. Parents are encouraged to work closely with staff, and are helped to support their children's development. For example, parents are asked to attend meetings to identify their children's progress with learning. A regular newsletter is available, and frequent opportunities are provided for parents to learn about the setting's planned play themes; so they can contribute to the play programme. Staff make excellent use of a range of methods to assess the effectiveness of the activities. The weekly play and activity plans are continually revised to provide better opportunities for learning, and to follow the children's interests. Staff meet frequently to discuss the setting's ongoing development plans, and a detailed self-evaluation document is also used to promote further improvement.

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

The setting's consistent planning for learning, is a effective and well considered aspect off the play programme; and staff make good use of regular learning themes. For example, the recent world book week has inspired a range of linked activities, designed to promote children's awareness of books, learning letters and mark making. The setting produced detailed plans for each week, that include specific support for role play, and the organisation of resources to successfully explore all the six areas of learning, within the early years curriculum. The quality of teaching within the staff team is also consistent, with the trained and more experienced practitioners providing good close support for others, who are developing their practice. All staff take time to provide good one-to-one learning opportunities for children, and staff are able to question the children, and effectively promote their thinking; during many of the activities provided.

The assessment of children's achievement is well organised within the setting. Children are periodically observed, and dated notes are made that build to a fuller picture in children's individual learning journals. Key person staff then match these observations with learning stages, to see what progress is being made. A formal termly review of each child's progress is also made, and shared with parents. The setting is currently revising the assessment system, and although staff take an overview of the children's longer term development, the closer identification of their next steps in learning is inconsistent; and is noted as an area for improvement.

Care is taken by staff to ensure children feel safe and happy at the setting. New children are given time to settle and key staff are assigned to provide close care and support. A strong and consistent element within the play programme is the successful promotion of children's personal and social development. Staff encourage good relationships at circle times, and staff work well with children in smaller groups, to support sharing and turn taking. Good consideration is also given to understanding about feelings and promoting children's awareness of others. For example, a request snack time is provided, where children are encouraged to help with food serving, and are able to listen and talk with others. Children's physical development is also consistently supported, and children benefit from many opportunities to be active indoors, with music and movement sessions; and children enjoy daily access to the setting's outdoor play area.

The well planned activities provide many opportunities for children to develop their skills for future learning. Communication and use of language is effectively fostered by exploring words and sounds, and children make letters out of playdough. A well organised weekly book-box is also introduced to children each session, to promote their interests and their experience of the printed word. Challenging problem solving activities are provided. For example, a well chosen selection of jigsaw puzzles are presented, that offer a range of difficulty; and staff successfully promote children's concentration with these. Children are helped by staff to use the new digital cameras available with the setting, and children enjoy seeing the results on the computer. Children's creative development is well supported, with many good opportunities for role play, and inventing small world scenarios with a large dolls house. Children are also creative with a large train track system, and children greatly enjoy using building bricks, to make towers. Circle time is well used by staff to develop the children's knowledge and understanding of the world. For example, children learn about the days of the week, and words for different types of weather; and are encouraged to say what they did during their half term break.

## 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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## **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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