

Leverstock Green Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	129361
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Inspector	Maura Pigram
Setting address	Village Hall, Leverstock Green, Hemel Hempstead, Hertfordshire, HP3 8QG
Telephone number	01442266270
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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

Leverstock Green Playgroup was registered in 1974. It operates from the Village Hall, Leverstock Green, Hertfordshire. The playgroup serves the local area and has strong links with the schools within the area. It is accessible to all children and there is a fully enclosed area available for outdoor play.

The playgroup opens Monday to Friday during school term times. Sessions on Monday and Friday are from 9.15am until 12.15pm. On Tuesday to Thursday sessions are from 9.15am until 1pm and an afternoon session operates from 1pm to 2.30pm. A lunch club is provided from Tuesday to Thursday. Children are able to attend for a variety of sessions. A maximum of 24 children may attend the setting at any one time. There are currently 50 children attending who are within the Early Years Foundation Stage. The playgroup is registered on the Early Years Register and on both the voluntary and compulsory parts of the Childcare Register. The setting provides funded early education for two, three and four-year-olds. The playgroup supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and children who speak English as an additional language.

The playgroup employs 10 members of childcare staff. Of these, one holds and appropriate early years qualifications at Level 2 and four at Level 3 or above. Two members of staff are working towards an early years qualification. The playgroup receives support from the local authority.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Positive steps are taken to ensure staff know each child well which enables them to meet their individual learning and development needs. The effective approach to inclusion ensures children and their families are very well-supported. There is a close partnership with parents and they share valuable information that promotes children's learning and welfare. Partnership with other professionals involved in the children's learning and development is a key strength of the provision.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- develop further the planning so that children's interests and needs are identified taking into account home languages and cultures and use observations to plan the next steps in a child's developmental progress
- review the culture of reflective practice so that it includes children's views and that of their parents or carers and use this to identify the setting's strengths and priorities for development that will improve the quality of

provision for all children.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

All staff have a good understanding of the procedures to follow if they have concerns about a child in their care. Documentation to support this is easily available and procedures, such as, the mobile phone policy ensures children are as safe as possible at all times. Clear recruitment procedures ensure that all staff working with children are suitable to do so. Robust procedures for arrival and departure ensure children are handed over safely to a known adult and every opportunity is taken to ensure children have a secure understanding of how to stay safe. Effective risk assessments for all areas ensure any identified risks to children are minimised.

The manager has a clear sense of purpose about what she wants to achieve. For example, further development of the outdoor area is continually being reviewed to benefit the children and renewal of a quality assurance scheme is planned for the future. Staff training is well-supported and many of the team are attending further training to acquire further childcare qualifications. Staff's views are valued and obtained through daily discussions and planned meetings. These contribute positively to the self-evaluation process and strengths and areas to develop are known. However, views of children and their parents are not yet fully implemented in the monitoring process. There is a high ratio of staff who are well-deployed and interact positively with children at all times. They are clear about their roles and responsibilities including key person duties. New staff members are well-supported so that can make valuable contributions to the team particularly in terms of planning and new ideas for activities. Staff work very hard to ensure the environment is interesting and accessible to all children. For example, defined play areas are set up and cleared away each day and a new system to ensure children have free flow play between the indoor and outdoor area has been introduced.

The playgroup actively promotes inclusive practice. For example, there is an extremely good partnership with outside agencies, such as, the area Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator and speech therapists to effectively support and meet children's individual needs. In addition, strong systems are in place to ensure these children's progress is effectively monitored and advice is actively sought from a range of professionals when necessary. The manager has established close links with the local school. For example, children's proposed teachers visit the setting to meet their new children. This contributes to children feeling a sense of belonging and helps to ease transition times. Parents speak well of the playgroup and they are happy to recommend the provision. Many have had older children attend and speak positively on the impact on their children's development. Parents are encouraged to be involved in their children's learning through daily discussions and by sharing their knowledge and skills.

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

Since the last inspection, the manager and her staff have effectively developed their knowledge of the Early Years Foundation Stage to help children make good progress towards the early learning goals. Individual support is provided to ensure that all children are fully included and can progress to the best of their abilities. Advice from supporting agencies is effectively used to ensure knowledge and positive strategies are effectively used to support children. Starting points and ongoing interests are well known and are used well in the settling in process and in ongoing planning. This means that children are effectively valued, settle easily and are happy in their play. Planning is flexible, linked to children's interests and all areas of learning. Assessments are regularly carried out, although, they do not always show the next steps in children's learning.

Staff and parents have worked hard on the outdoor area to ensure it is inviting and supports children's learning. As a result, children are able to have free-flow play between the outdoor and the indoor area. Effective staff deployment means that children's learning across all areas is well-supported. Children are always well occupied in purposeful tasks. For example, children love imaginative play and enjoy selling and buying sports equipment in their 'sports shop'. Children play well independently and in groups becoming active, curious and inquisitive learners. They confidently select resources, such as, toy drills and eye goggles to enable them to play 'builders'. During small group sessions, younger children delight in taking part in stories and games. Good use is made of visual resources so that they develop skills for the future, such as, listening and taking turns. Older children develop their knowledge of sounds and letters whilst practising mark making and playing spontaneous games, such as, 'I spy'. Resources are mostly easily available and support children's play and learning. However, resources to help children see their home languages within their play are not yet fully implemented. The manager is monitoring the use of mark making tools so that these are always available to children both indoors and outdoors. Children self register so that they learn how to recognise their own names and some children confidently write their own names. There are ample books available to support children's understanding that print carries meaning. Language development is effectively supported and the new interactive photograph frame contributes to this. For example, children eagerly express their thoughts as they reflect on the photographs and staff are always nearby to support this. Early mathematical and problem solving skills are supported through number songs, construction, card games, jigsaws and simple stories and games shown on the computer.

Children learn about the wider world through a range of activities, such as, art and craft and dressing up in national costumes. Parents are invited to share their experiences and family backgrounds so that children learn about other cultures. Children behave well because they are busy within their play and they know what is expected of them. They demonstrate good levels of self-esteem and warmly greet their friends. Rolling snack time is effectively managed so that children develop a good awareness of healthy eating. Dietary needs are known and

physical activities are well supported so that children develop a healthy lifestyle.

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	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	1
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	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	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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