

Preston Park Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	130762
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Inspector	Christopher MacKinnon

Setting address	St Marys Church Hall, 5 Surrenden Road, BRIGHTON, East Sussex, BN1 6PA
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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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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

Preston Park Playgroup is a well established pre-school setting, located at St Mary's Church hall in Brighton and Hove. Children use a large main hall and also have access to a safe and secure outdoor play area. The setting is open five days a week during term time, from 09.15am to 12.15pm.

The setting is registered on the early years register and on the voluntary and compulsory parts of the childcare register. Children aged between 2 and 8 years may attend, with no more than 24 in the early years age group. There are currently 35 children on roll, and the setting receives nursery education funding for children aged three to four years. The setting supports children with educational needs and/or disabilities, and also children who speak English as an additional language. There is a staff team of five and all have either teaching or early years qualifications.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is outstanding.

The playgroup is a well established and successfully organised. Staff are highly confident practitioners and provide excellent support for individual children's development. A highly stimulating and well prepared play environment, offers children plenty of space for free flow play, and successful engagement with staff. The setting uses well planned play themes, and the promotion of children's learning is exemplary. The playgroup maintains close and supportive partnerships with parents, and makes highly effective use of self-evaluation to promote improvement.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To further improve the high quality early years provision the registered person should consider:

- consider the further development of play and learning opportunities in the outdoor area

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The playgroup's leadership and management is highly effective and staff use their considerable experience and training to present an excellent early years play programme. The high quality of the planned activities ensures children experience a wide range of learning opportunities, and the staff key persons provide a high level of individual guidance. The staff are highly consistent in their organisation of

safeguarding, with clearly presented policies and procedures in place to ensure children's safety and security is maintained.

A range of well organised internal appraisal systems, and successful engagement with the local quality assurance scheme, ensures ongoing development; and provides highly consistent support for staff practice. Staff make excellent use of a range of methods to assess the effectiveness of the activities. For example, the weekly play and activity plans are continually revised to provide a wide range of opportunities for learning. Key staff undertake focused learning session with small groups; to ensure children's interests are followed, and learning extended across all the six areas. Staff meet frequently to discuss the setting's ongoing themes and practice, and a detailed self-evaluation document also provides effective support for improvement.

The playgroup's organisation of the play environment is excellent, with a large hall well prepared to offer a wide selection of stimulating play areas. Several extensive role play set-ups are provided, and children have many opportunities for inventive and expressive child led play. The setting's presentation of play resources, is also highly supportive of learning, with a range of table top close focus activities, mixed with many good opportunities to build with bricks; or lay out large train and roadway tracks. Children have many excellent opportunities to learn words and develop literacy, with books well included to promote learning and further inquiry. For example, at the dinosaur play table, books on dinosaurs are featured; with opportunities also for mark making and writing. Children have access to a purpose built outdoor play area, where they have a wide range of learning experiences; that includes water play activities, running and active games, and tactile and sensory play opportunities. The setting continues to plan and develop its range of outdoor learning, and this is an area where further development may be considered.

A highly successful key person system ensures the setting provides a consistent focus on promoting individual children's achievement. For example, key staff have a set period each week when they gather information and plan their children's ways forward for learning. Children who attend with specific development needs are closely supported, and key staff work closely with parents to ensure children make progress. The setting is also highly consistent in its support for children's understanding of diversity. Children enjoy a range of planned festivals, and have access to well planned play themes and materials that supports their awareness of people's differences. Such as a the recent inclusion of Australian aboriginal art and music as a world awareness project.

The playgroup has close links with other carers, and maintains excellent partnerships to promote children's continued learning. Particularly good care is taken when children make the transition to school, and detailed information on individual children's progress is continually made available to parents; through their key workers. Parents are also encouraged to promote their children's learning at home, with guidance from staff on the setting's current play themes and learning projects. Home interest sheets and questionnaires are also well used to promote parental engagement with the children's play programme.

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

The playgroup's use of planning to promote children's learning and range of play experiences, is excellent and highly consistent. The setting takes care to introduce many highly stimulating themes, such as using famous paintings to inspire learning about shapes and colours. Every half term a new theme is presented, and the range of resources and play environment is well adapted to link in with the projects. Several additional learning themes also feature in the planning, that are taken from children's own interests, such as learning about dinosaurs, or writing your own name. The setting's current theme is baby animals, for Spring term; and children successfully explore different forms of 'textured' materials to make the animals for a large visual display.

Staff show excellent skill with teaching, and successfully promote and extend children's learning. For example, by exploring numbers while making shape based puzzles, and counting candles on a role-play cake. Children have many excellent one-to-one teaching sessions with staff, that provide strongly focused learning across all the six areas of learning. These include close guidance with letter forming, and help with problem solving during assembly and art craft activities. Staff key persons are also highly successful in their application of observation assessment, and take well detailed notes to identify and promote children's next steps in their learning. Individual children's progress through the learning stages is also effectively monitored every half term, and parents and key staff together use children's individual profiles to follow to maintain achievement.

Staff consistently use their knowledge of individual children, to help children feel safe and secure at the setting. Individual key workers work closely with parents and families, and the promotion of children's personal and social development is a strong and consistent element within the play programme. Staff encourage positive relationships, particularly during circle time; and during small group focused learning sessions. Children also cooperate well, during their child initiated play. For example, inviting each other for tea in the play house, and sharing their play ideas. The promotion of children's health and physical development is also highly featured, with healthy snacks and food learning projects provided. Children benefit greatly from being able to run and use bikes and push rides, in the setting's indoor physical play space. Children also have active games and expressive play in the setting's well planned outdoor area.

The development of children's future skills is successfully assured, through the high quality of the planned activities and teaching. Children's communication and language is consistently developed through the use of phonics, to encourage letter sounds. Children also develop good and confident writing skills, and have excellent support for their speech. Problem solving is extensively included, with a separate area for building and assembly projects provided; where children make towers and large structures with staff. Many opportunities for creative development are provided through role play, and children greatly enjoy combining dressing up, with pretend shopping and cooking. During the activities a wide range of materials are

explored creatively, and used to make constructions. For example, using large soft play shapes to make rockets and planes to sit in. Many of the setting's excellent play projects support children's developing knowledge of the world. And a particularly good example is the recent use of earth, wind and fire as themes to help children successfully explore all the elements of the world around 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?	1
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	1

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	1
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	1
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	1
The effectiveness of safeguarding	1
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	1
The effectiveness of partnerships	1
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	1
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Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	1
The extent to which children feel safe	1
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	1
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	1

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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

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

Met