

Highview Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

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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

Highview Playgroup opened in 1992 and operates from ground floor premises situated in a small housing estate in Arnos Grove in the London Borough of Enfield. The premises consist of one large play area, an office, bathrooms and an enclosed outdoor play area. The provision is open during term time each weekday from 9.15am to 12:15pm.

The nursery is registered on the Early Years Register to care for a maximum of 16 children from two to under five years at any one time. The nursery provides funded early education for three and four-year-olds. There are currently 14 children aged from two years to under five years on roll. There are four members of permanent staff working with the children. The manager holds an early years qualification to level 3 standard and the majority of all other staff hold relevant early years qualifications.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is inadequate.

Highview playgroup has significant weaknesses in their processes to ensure that safeguarding policies and procedures are effectively implemented to protect children's welfare. Although there are sufficient opportunities for children to make sound progress in their learning and development this is overshadowed by safeguarding inconsistencies. The provision values working in partnership with parents and outside professionals where this is necessary, however, links with some agencies are not secure. There has been some progress in addressing recommendations raised at their last inspection, however, the provision has failed to ensure that specific legal requirements with regards to safeguarding, and suitable people are being met, thus current self-evaluation systems are not robust.

Overall, the early years provision requires significant improvement. The registered person is given a Notice to Improve that sets out actions to be carried out.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To comply with the requirements of the EYFS the registered person must take the following action by the specified date:

- ensure all staff have an up-to-date understanding of safeguarding children issues and are able to implement the safeguarding children policy and procedure appropriately (Safeguarding and promoting children's welfare) 01/04/2011
- ensure any child protection issues are immediately 01/04/2011

- reported to the relevant agency without delay (Safeguarding and promoting children's welfare) 01/04/2011
- carry out a full risk assessment for each type of outing and review it before embarking on each specific outing (Safeguarding and promoting children's welfare) 01/04/2011
- implement effective systems to ensure that all people working directly with children have been deemed suitable to so, this refers to the completion of all documents required to assess their suitability (Suitable people) 01/04/2011
- ensure that there is a named deputy who is able to take charge in the absence of the manager (Suitable people) 01/04/2011
- develop self-evaluation systems to continually assess all aspects of the provision and improve outcomes for children (Organisation). 01/04/2011

To improve the early years provision the registered person should:

- develop the planning and assessment methods to show how all children are making progress and ensure observations are used to influence planning
- develop ways in which parents are supported and encouraged to contribute to their children's assessment records.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The leadership and management of the provision is not currently effective in promoting essential policies and procedures that are required for the safe and efficient management of the Early Years Foundation Stage. For example, safeguarding concerns have not been properly referred to the necessary agencies; consequently, systems to keep children safe from harm are not secure. Current recruitment and vetting procedures are not robust as the manager is not secure in her knowledge of effectively processing suitability checks, thus children's welfare may be compromised. Although the provision is well staffed there is no named deputy to take charge in the absence of the manager. The staff team maintain a safe environment for children as they conduct regular risk assessments to monitor any potential hazards to children. However, these positive procedures are not followed through for the safe conduct of outings. These are all specific legal requirements in the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage that are not being met.

The staff team engage positively with children as they are well deployed and follow children's choices of play. There are appropriate key person systems in place which generally work well in meeting some aspects of children's individual care and learning needs within the provision. Staff organise an accessible environment for children where they are supported to access a broad range of resources. There is a secure focus on celebrating diversity which is evidenced within children's work and within the many experiences that are planned within the group. The staff team

value working in partnership with parents as they communicate on a daily basis with regards to children's time spent at the provision. However, systems to share children's assessments and encourage parental involvement within these are yet to be implemented. Discussions with parents' demonstrate that they are happy with the care their children receive; parents comment on the welcoming staff and on the small size of the provision which they feel enables children to receive good levels of support and attention. There are some secure partnerships with outside professionals to support children's care and learning within the provision, although links with child protection agencies are weak.

The manager demonstrates a positive attitude towards improving her own skills as she attends regular training courses to further develop her own knowledge and understanding of early years practices. She also supports her staff team in accessing courses of their choice. There have been some positive moves to address previous recommendations that were made at the last inspection. For example, risk assessments have been implemented for all aspects of the environment to promote children's safety; staff are now better deployed as they take the lead from children and allow them to make choices about their play. There has been some progress in addressing the monitoring and progression of children's learning, although these records are not consistently maintained for all children attending. Nevertheless, there has been limited progress overall in developing secure and robust systems to continually review and evaluate the practices within the provision; therefore improved outcomes for all children are insufficient.

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

The staff team demonstrate a sound knowledge and understanding of the learning and development requirements. Staff plan an appropriate range of activities and experiences that support children to make secure progress in their learning and development. Children enjoy the freedom of free-flow play opportunities as they move independently between the indoor and outdoor environments. Staff organise resources well to promote children's independence and choices. Planning and assessment systems are evolving as staff record children's interests in liaison with their parents and use this information to inform future planning. However, not all children's personal folders are well managed, which impacts on their ability to receive consistent and challenging play opportunities.

Children excitedly arrive in the morning, they immediately access their environment as they happily say goodbye to their parents. They are developing sound communication, language and literacy skills as they are encouraged to express themselves both in small groups and on a one to one basis. For example, children enjoy sharing their knowledge of the different fruits they enjoy eating at playgroup. They competently describe the kiwi fruit as being soft, brown and hairy. Staff are close at hand to support discussions and to extend children's learning through asking probing questions. Children's problem solving skills are promoted through their routines as they are encouraged to count how many children are

present. They energetically jump up and down twenty times whilst also playing the drums during free play activities. Children enjoy being physical as they run, climb and engage in creative pursuits in the garden. They are enthusiastic to engage within role play scenarios as staff support them to put on bandages and to use stethoscopes appropriately when they are playing doctors and nurses. Children are developing an understanding of the importance of caring for living things as they water their own seeds which they have planted and learn why this is important for their growth. Overall, children are developing some positive skills which help to promote adequate foundations to support their future learning.

Children's welfare and general well-being is promoted through some secure practices within the provision. For example, children are supported to develop an understanding of keeping safe as staff support them to access their environment and resources safely. Nevertheless, weaknesses in safeguarding do impact on quality outcomes for children, and on their ability to be safe and secure within this provision. It is clear from the positive interactions observed that children have developed trusting relationships with the staff team. Children are offered healthy and nutritious snacks and learn why eating these foods are important to their overall health. They are learning how to promote their own personal hygiene as they wash their hands at appropriate times during the session. Overall, children display cooperative and polite behaviour as they follow the positive role models presented by the staff team.

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?	4
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	4

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	4
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	4
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	3
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding	4
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	4
The effectiveness of partnerships	4
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	3

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	4
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Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	4
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	3
The extent to which children feel safe	4
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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