

# Muddy Boots Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

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**Unique reference number** 220218  
**Inspection date** 24/03/2011  
**Inspector** Fiona Robinson

**Setting address** Walgrave CP School, Kettering Road, Walgrave,  
Northampton, Northamptonshire, NN6 9PH

**Telephone number** 01604 781838

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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**

Muddy Boots Playgroup registered in 1996. It is committee run and operates from a self-contained building in the grounds of Walgrave Primary School in Northampton. The playgroup serves the local community. All children have access to a secure, enclosed outdoor play area. The playgroup also has the use of the outdoor environment of the host school.

The playgroup is open on Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays from 8.45am to 3pm. On Fridays, it is open from 9am to 12.30pm. There are daily lunchtime sessions which operate from 12 noon to 12.30pm. Children attend for a variety of the sessions on offer. A maximum of 20 children aged between two and under five years may attend at any one time. Currently there are 45 children on roll, all of whom are in the early years age group. The playgroup receives funding for early education places. It is registered by Ofsted on the Early Years Register and the voluntary and compulsory parts of the Childcare Register. The playgroup supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and those who speak English as an additional language.

There are eight members of staff who work with the children. Of these, four hold a National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) at level 3; two hold a NVQ at level 2; and one member of staff is working towards a NVQ at level 3. The playgroup receives support from a local authority advisory and is affiliated to the Pre-school Learning Alliance (PLA).

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

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children are fully included in interesting, well organised activities and achieve well. Staff take into account their individual needs and interests and are very skilled at increasing children's understanding of safety. Children's behaviour is excellent, and staff promote equality and diversity to an outstanding level. The manager and staff have a good knowledge of the playgroup's strengths and areas for improvement, such as the use of the wider outdoor area. There is a good commitment towards continued improvement.

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

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

- develop problem solving and sensory experiences in the wider outdoor area.

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

Safeguarding is outstanding because all staff have an excellent understanding of safeguarding and child protection policies and procedures. There are robust staff recruitment and vetting procedures in place and parents follow rigorous collection procedures when collecting their children. Comprehensive policies and procedures are fully implemented to ensure children are kept safe and secure at all times. Risk assessments are very thorough and carried out regularly to ensure children's safety. Staff are deployed very effectively to ensure children play safely indoors and outdoors. Fire evacuation practises are held regularly so that staff and children become familiar with the routine. Children have access to a good range of resources and equipment that are fully safe and suitable for their age.

The playgroup is led and managed well. Staff meet regularly to share planning and assessment and to discuss special topics and activities. There are good self-evaluation systems in place, which ensure that improvements have a positive impact on children's activities and experiences. Staff have a clear idea of what works well and identify areas for improvement, such as continuing to refine the systems for recording the children's experiences and achievements. Good progress has been made in addressing the recommendations from the previous inspection. In particular, activities are regularly monitored and children are set realistic and challenging targets. Staff actively promote equality and diversity extremely well. They ensure children that all are fully integrated into activities, such as the exciting day children spent learning about India, its culture and the festival of Diwali, which was led by a parent. The layout and organisation of the outdoor area has been developed; however planning shows that opportunities for children to explore and investigate their wider natural environment are not fully developed. Staff make effective use of a good range of resources to meet the needs of the children. They regularly attend training opportunities to enhance their qualifications and expertise. The manager and staff value the views of parents and take these into consideration when identifying priorities for development.

Partnerships with parents and carers are outstanding. Feedback from parents indicates that they feel staff are very pleasant and caring and that the children experience very interesting and enjoyable activities. Parents are kept very well informed of special activities and events through newsletters, informal discussions and the parents' notice board. Key staff carefully monitor the children's individual learning records, achievements and progress and share this information regularly with parents and carers. Parents are very supportive of fundraising activities, such as treasure hunts and sponsored tricycle rides. They enjoy attending special events, such as the Summer Fete, the May Dance and the Village Christmas Tree festival. The relationship with the host school is exceptional and information is shared very effectively with Foundation Stage staff. The playgroup benefits from the use of its outdoor area, which the children enjoy regularly. Staff have established highly effective links with outside agencies and are very experienced in caring for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. There are excellent links with another nearby nursery in particular and children from both settings have enjoyed visiting each other.

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

Children benefit from well planned indoor and outdoor play and achieve well in their activities. Topics, such as All About Me, Spring and Under the Sea enrich their experiences. Staff value children's views and incorporate these in their planning and choice of activities. Key staff make full use of planning and evaluations and use these effectively to plan the children's next steps in learning. As a result, they achieve well across the areas of learning.

Children are very well behaved, confident and keen to try new experiences. They share toys and resources very willingly and show great respect for others. Staff have high expectations and are excellent role models. Children build friendly, meaningful relationships with staff and one another. They quickly settle at chosen activities and show good levels of enthusiasm in their chosen play. Children are fully included in activities and festivals such as Diwali, Christmas and the Chinese New Year. They learn about other countries, lifestyles and customs, such as France and China. This helps to enrich their understanding of the wider world. There is excellent support for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and they progress well in their play.

Children develop a good understanding of keeping themselves healthy. They learn how to make healthy choices at snack time and help to prepare fruit salads. Their physical skills are developed well as they ride their bikes and pedal vehicles outdoors. They skilfully balance on apparatus and have fun as they hop and run. Children have an excellent understanding of keeping themselves and others safe. For example, they know the correct way to tidy their equipment away and they know how to use equipment safely by handling cutting implements carefully when making their own cress sandwiches. They greatly benefit from talks on safety from the fire and police services and frequently practise their road safety skills in the outdoor area.

Children make independent choices from a wide range of resources and participate in an interesting range of activities. Their creative skills are developed well as they prepare colourful collages about their chosen topic. They listen attentively to stories, such as 'Goldilocks and the Three Bears' and are keen to discuss the characters. Children enjoy practising their counting through singing songs, such as 'Five Fat Sausages'. Their creative skills are promoted well through opportunities to enjoy dressing up for role play in their 'garden centre'. They are skilful at completing simple programmes on the computer. They are keen to go on bug hunts; however, opportunities for children to explore, problem solve and investigate in the outdoor area are not fully exploited. This impacts on the development of these skills. Their communication, language and literacy skills are developed well through their work on sounds and letters and most can write their names. They enjoy practising their Irish dancing for St Patrick's Day and benefit from talks, trips and visits. Children are prepared well for future learning experiences.

## 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	1
The effectiveness of safeguarding	1
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	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

<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	1
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

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