

# Epsom Downs Play Group

Inspection report for early years provision

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**Unique reference number**

122507

**Inspection date**

17/09/2010

**Inspector**

Ann Moss

**Setting address**

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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**

Epsom Downs Playgroup was registered in 2001. It is owned and run by a parent committee. Children are cared for in the village hall of Langley Vale and the playgroup have sole use of the building during the operational hours. There is a large hall, an entrance lobby, kitchen and toilet facilities. Children have access to an adjacent outdoor playarea. The playgroup is open five mornings a week, term time only from 9:30am to 12.30pm

Most children live in the immediate vicinity and progress to the local infant school with whom the playgroup have established good links. This helps the transition to school for the children.

The playgroup is registered on the early years register to care for a maximum of 26 children from two years to under eight years, There are currently 32 children on roll who attend for a variety of sessions. The playgroup receives support from the Surrey Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership. There are seven staff employed and five work directly with the children each session. Of these, six hold a recognised early year's qualification.

The playgroup provides support for children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and for whom English is an additional language. The playgroup is also registered on the compulsory part of the Childcare Register.

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

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

The playgroup promotes all aspects of children's welfare, learning and development effectively. Staff create a welcoming, inclusive environment where children's uniqueness is valued and respected. Strong partnerships with parent's and outside agencies ensure that all children's needs are met. The playgroup is committed to continual development and systems for self-evaluation ensure that future improvements are well targeted and implemented.

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

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

- ensure risk assessment documentation is kept up to date, in particular the outdoor area
- continue to improve the deployment of staff to ensure children are supervised at all times
- ensure effective deployment of staff to enable children to have challenging, motivating experiences across all areas of learning.

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

There are effective systems in place to safeguard children. Robust recruitment, vetting and induction procedures ensure that all staff are suitable, well qualified childcare practitioners that are fully aware of their safeguarding responsibilities. They attend child protection and paediatric first aid training, and carry out and implement thorough risk assessments, indoors and out, that enable staff to identify any potential hazards to children. However, the system in place to record daily visual checks outdoors, is less robust. Staff use clear explanation with children which ensures they are able to recognise and understand risks and keep themselves safe. For example, children are reminded to walk and hold on to the hand rail when going to the outside play area. Staff are guided in their day-to-day practice by a set of comprehensive policies and procedures which underpin the running of the playgroup. These include provision for working with children and families with identified needs. These are reviewed and updated on a regular basis. Overall, records are well maintained.

Space is well managed to promote equality of opportunity for all. Toys and resources, which are of a good quality, are maximised to create an environment that offers a wealth of learning opportunities and first hand experiences for children. However, staff does not encourage children to participate in the full range of activities on offer. Staff ratios exceed minimum requirements, however; staff deployment does not always ensure children receive good levels of supervision or to enable children to get the full benefit out of the activities. The setting makes very good use of external resource, locally and further afield, to enhance the children's experiences. Staff develop good links with local schools that children move on to. Information is regularly shared to ensure children enjoy coordinated experiences.

Systems for information sharing with parents, carers and others are extensive. For example, children who are new to the setting are supported by a key person, forming relationships with parents and sharing progress. Consultation evenings provide parent's with good information about the early years foundation stage, the importance of play and how and what their children learn and develop. This ensures that parents can contribute to their child's learning at home. Parents state that the flexible settling-in arrangements ensure that the parents and children feel welcome and included right from the start of the home preschool relationship.

The manager uses self-evaluation that is influenced by the local authority early years, staff, parents' and children views extremely well to identify strengths and areas for improvement. Regular liaison with staff, an effective action plan and commitment to staff development contribute to a common desire to drive improvement and the manager is very clear about way forward.

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

Children enjoy their time at the setting and have a sense of belonging. Most new children settle extremely quickly and are confident about leaving their parents. Those who are a little unsure are very well supported by sensitive staff until they are ready to play. Children learn to keep safe and about the benefits of a healthy lifestyle through themed activities, hygiene practice, outings and the snacks provided.

Children have a key person who gathers information about children's individual starting points, interests and abilities. The key person assesses each child through observation, assessment and evaluation of each child's progress. Information gathered in this way is not always used effectively to plan for the next steps in children's learning.

Children's creativity is very well supported through art and craft, music and role play. Children enjoy dressing up, looking at themselves in a mirror and talking about what they are wearing. 'Picnics' using resources and imitating known past experiences are popular.

Children have daily opportunities to develop competence in communicating, speaking, listening and mark making and use their skills in a variety of situations. Children play in a language rich environment with posters and picture labels clearly displayed to encourage sound and letters exploration. Children understand that words carry meaning. Children confidently interact with their friends and staff, taking turns in conversation. They confidently use language to imagine and recreate roles and experiences. For example, having a picnic. They have easy access to a well resourced book corner, fact and fiction, which children use sufficiently well. They enjoy circle time and small group story time with staff and listen with enjoyment. Children have good opportunity for making marks, cutting and drawing from easily accessible resources. Children use tools to cut, stick and design. Children proudly show off their work to others and put their work to one side ready for their parents collecting them. All children have many opportunities to develop their coordination and fine motor skills throughout the day.

Children understand about mathematical language. They have many opportunities to take part in a number of counting games, sorting shapes and patterns and some confidently counting using items or their fingers up to 10. Children understand about technology and use a laptop confidently to complete appropriate games to develop their counting and matching skills. Children have good opportunities to explore their world around them through the well resourced nature table and outside play and a wide range of activities that promote equality and diversity, such as celebrating festivals, eating food from different countries and seeing books and photographs of children's recent holiday destinations.

Staff are calm, caring and show great affection towards all children. Children understand the rules of the preschool and are very well behaved. Children learn how to share, take turns and interact with each other as they play. They are

taught to respect each other and their feelings. Children are social, happy and confident as they play. Relationships between children and staff are very good.

Children learn about the benefits of a healthy lifestyle through the themed activities, outings and the snacks provided. They are beginning to understand the benefits to following good personal self care routines. For example, children washing their hands and finger nails well before eating and after using the toilet will help to keep them healthy. They use paper hand towels which help prevent the spread of infection.

Children develop confidence and a feeling of security through the close relationships with staff. This builds their self-esteem and helps them to develop positive sense of themselves. This leads to confidence in trying new activities and developing skills for learning. Children learn to be proud of their achievements. They learn to share and play cooperatively with toys and resources.

## 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

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	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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