

Rye Pre-School Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	EY221699
Inspection date	25/05/2011
Inspector	Liz Caluori
Setting address	Ferry Road, Rye, East Sussex, TN31 7DN
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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

Rye Pre-school Playgroup opened in 1969. It operates from a two storey purpose built building with disabled access. There are two enclosed outdoor play areas.

The playgroup is registered on the Early Years Register and may care for a maximum of 54 children from two years to the end of the early years age group at any one time although there are rarely more than 35 children present at any one time. There are currently 80 children aged on roll attending on either a full or part time basis and the group receives funding for the provision of free early education. The group is able to support children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and children who speak English as an additional language.

The playgroup opens five days a week for 51 weeks of the year from 8am until 5pm. There are 12 staff employed to work with the children, including two who provide cover at lunch time and during the holidays, and of these nine hold appropriate childcare qualifications.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children have great fun in the safe, friendly, child-centred playgroup environment. They make good progress in all areas of their development, despite some limitations to the recording systems in place to monitor their progress. The individual needs of all children are well recognised and appropriate procedures are in place to care for those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Good relationships are fostered with parents and carers although their views are not sought on all aspects of the service. Children also benefit from the good partnership working that takes place with other professionals this supports the manager and staff team to provide care which is coordinated and consistent.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- investigate ways in which to enable children greater freedom to move around the playgroup building in order to allow them to choose from all of the activities on offer
- develop further the systems to support staff to monitor children's progress and identify gaps in achievement
- extend the process for self evaluation to cover all areas of the provision and to include the views of parents, carers and children.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children's safety is given high priority in the pre-school. Risk assessments are undertaken to identify potential hazards and staff recognise how to adapt the environment and level of support and supervision offered in order to meet the needs of individual children. Staff also carry out daily visual safety checks of the premises and outdoor area. Robust recruitment procedures are in place and one member of staff is trained to take responsibility for child protection. Staff with first aid qualifications are present at all times and good records are maintained of accidents which occur in the playgroup and also of any injuries the children sustain outside of the setting. Appropriate procedures are also in place to promote children's good health and to care for them in case of sickness.

Children's individual personalities and care needs are well understood and respected. The make good progress in their learning and development as a result of the impressive range of activities on offer and the high level of attention they receive. Staff undertake sensitive observations on all children and recording systems are in place to monitor their progress. However, there are some inconsistencies in the way in which these records are maintained. As a result, records do not fully support staff in their aim to identify the gaps in individual children's progress or to identify and narrow any achievement gaps across the whole group.

Children are cared for in two group rooms, one of which is on the ground floor and leads directly out to the garden areas and the other is on the first floor and can be accessed via a staircase or a lift. Children are generally grouped by age and spend time in each of the two rooms throughout the day to ensure that they have access to all of the resources and opportunities to go outside. There is a strong focus on promoting children's independence and they move safely and sensibly around the building. However, this is not fully reflected in the use of space as there are times when the swapping of rooms means that children who were enjoying playing in the garden are brought to the first floor room to allow the other children to play downstairs. The group have yet to explore the possibility of allowing periods of free-flow throughout the building to enable children greater choice in the activities they wish to take part in.

Leadership responsibilities within the group are shared between the named manager and the two room supervisors. These key staff work effectively together and, supported by a cohesive staff team, provide a safe, caring and very child centred environment. A good deal of reflection and discussion takes place between staff in order to identify and address areas for improvement, for example the organisation of the book areas area currently being reviewed to make them more appealing to the children. In addition, the group are also seeking to improve the range of ICT equipment available to the children. However, this largely relies on the observations of staff as there is no system in place to routinely evaluate all aspects of the provision or to canvass the view of parents, carers or children.

Parents and carers receive a very friendly greeting as they arrive to deliver and

collect their child. They attend regular consultations to discuss their child's progress and are provided with a good range of written information including all policies and procedures and regular newsletters. Good working relationships are also maintained with a range of professionals from outside agencies such as social services and the local authority early years advisory team. In addition, there are clear arrangements in place to exchange information with other early years providers involved in caring for the children attending. As a result the care of all children including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities or English as an additional language is consistent and coordinated.

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

Children are generally extremely happy and relaxed in the playgroup and are making good progress in all areas of their development. Those who have only just started attending are given good support to settle and respond well to the sensitive, caring interaction of staff. Children benefit from the regular opportunities they receive to explore and investigate their environment, both indoors and outside, and are becoming very independent in their learning. Children take part in many conversations and use language very effectively to share stories and to ask questions. An example of this includes a discussion between a member of staff and a child which related to the staff members recent holiday to America. The child listened with interest to the details of the holiday and the land marks visited and asked many charming questions such as whether the sight seeing bus had a gear stick. Their communication, language and literacy skills are further developed through listening to stories read by staff, learning to recognise the letters in their own name and mark making with a range of different writing materials.

There is a clear sense of fun in the playgroup with humour being used very effectively by staff to engage children's interest in activities, for example purposely referring to a dog in a story as a cat and being loudly and enthusiastically corrected by the group. Children are making similarly good progress in their problem solving, reasoning and numeracy. They build towers, assemble train tracks, weigh, measure and count with great confidence. Good encouragement is also provided to promote children's creative development. They engage in role play game with their friends and also explore the broad range of resources on offer to creative individual and very expressive art work.

Children are well prepared for their transitions into school and for their later life. They are sociable, independent and enjoy a varied selection of activities and experiences which extend their general knowledge. They use IT equipment and have opportunities to develop a range of practical skills such as planting. These experiences very successfully promote children's general knowledge for example when asked to name something that is yellow a child suggests pollen. Children also learn about the local community and the natural world, discussing the different colours of autumn leaves, looking for bugs and also feeding the ducks in the local river.

Children demonstrate a very strong sense of security in the playgroup and approach staff readily for support and attention. They are very well aware of the boundaries in place to ensure their safety, for example they do not go into the kitchen area without adult supervision. They behave safely and sensibly as they move around the building and listen well to any instructions or advice given by staff. This helps them to develop the confidence to try new things in a safe, supportive environment.

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	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

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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