

Catsfield Under Fives Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspector

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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

Catsfield Under Fives Group is a committee run provision which opened in 1994. It operates from two rooms in a village hall in Catsfield although there are some sessions when only one room is available and so the number of children who may attend is limited to adhere to space requirements. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area. The group is registered on the Early Years Register and both the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. A maximum of 24 children under eight years may attend at any one time when the group has access to the larger room and eight children when they only have access to the smaller room. There are currently 21 children from two years to the end of the early years age group. The group is able to support children with special education needs and/or disabilities and children who speak English as an additional language.

The group opens five days a week during school term times. Sessions are from 9am to 12.30pm each weekday with additional afternoon sessions until 3pm on Wednesdays and Fridays.

There are five staff employed to work with the children, four of whom hold appropriate early years qualifications. The number of staff present each session depends on the number of children attending. The group receives funding for the provision of free early education.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is satisfactory.

The group has recently been subject to a significant re-organisation and, as a result, there are some areas of the practice which are still to be developed to fully reflect the level of service which the committee and staff team aspire to provide. The areas for improvement have been identified by the group through a process of effective self-evaluation. Staff have successfully minimised the disruption to the children, supporting them to make good progress in their learning and development and respecting their individuality. Friendly relationships are maintained with parents, carers and other professionals but systems have yet to be put in place to effectively share information about children's development. The arrangements in place to promote children's safety are generally appropriate.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- improve the arrangements to report on children's progress and achievements to parents throughout the EYFS and offer greater encouragement for them to

- become involved in the setting of future goals
- establish a process to engage with other early years practitioners involved in delivering the early years foundation stage to the children attending to ensure effective continuity and progression
- develop further the systems in place to monitor children progress and plan for their individual next steps in order to ensure identify and narrow any gaps in the achievement of individual children or the group as a whole
- extend the risk assessments to reflect the areas available for use by the children and the number of staff present.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Appropriate procedures are in place to protect children. Staff are fully vetted and photographs are kept on file the adults authorised to collect each child. One member of staff takes lead responsibility for child protection and has attended training to support her in this role. Risk assessments have been undertaken and the required written records are maintained. However, these tend to be generic and do not fully reflect all of the practices in place.

Children have access to toys and resources which are well maintained and appropriate for their ages and stages of development. The indoor space available to the group varies throughout the week and this impacts on the amount of activities that can be provided. However, the outdoor area is always available and is very well used by the children. On the days when there are only eight children attending there may only be two members of staff present. This poses different challenges when supervising the outdoor play area and these are not reflected in the written risk assessments.

The group has experienced staffing difficulties recently having recruited a new manager who, at the last minute, was unable to take up the post. Following the promotion of the deputy to the role of manager and the recruitment of a new member of staff to take up the deputy position, there is now a stable staff team in place. The considerable amount of time and effort involved in sorting out these issues has resulted in some disruption to the level of service; however, staff have largely been very successful in their aim to ensure that this did not impact on the quality of interaction with the children.

The committee and management team work effectively together and are committed to identifying and prioritising areas for improvement. Systems and working practices are currently being reviewed and as still in a period of transition, the group has yet to establish clear working practices in some areas of the provision. Some children attend more than one setting and staff make contact to determine which provision will take responsibility for completing the records to be passed to the reception teacher when the child transfers to school. However, there is currently no arrangement in place to share information with these other providers on a regular basis in order to coordinate care and ensure consistency. Similarly, whilst parents receive very friendly greetings and are provided with regular updates about the day to day life of the group, they are not fully informed

about the specific progress their child is making. As a result they are not generally involved in setting future development goals and are not sufficiently encouraged to contribute observations from home.

Interaction with the children is extremely warm, caring and positive. Staff are well trained in child development and are skilled at providing a range of enjoyable activities and experiences which promote children's all round development. The systems for assessing children's progress and planning for their individual next steps are currently being reviewed and are not yet fully effective. As a result staff are not supported to easily identify any gaps in the achievements of individual children or the group as a whole. Children are respected as individuals and their personalities are well understood. Additional resources, such as dual language books, are provided in order to ensure that children's ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds are reflected. In addition, appropriate procedures are in place to support children with special educational needs and/or disabilities as well as those who speak English as an additional language.

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

Children show a strong sense of security within the group and approach staff readily for attention. They are well supported to learn how to keep themselves safe, for example they understand why it is important to wear hats and lotion on sunny days. They listen well to the instructions of staff and enjoy a good level of encouragement to develop their independence. Children also learn about the importance of following healthy lifestyles. They enjoy nutritious mid-morning snacks which include a variety of different fruits and have constant access to water. Those who stay for lunch bring in healthy lunch boxes and enjoy very social meal times with their friends.

Children are developing good personal care routines, helping to clean the tables and routinely washing their hands before sitting down to eat. They also enjoy very regular opportunities to take part in exercise. They make good use of the outdoor play area to run around, use ride on toys and also to play games that encourage specific skills such as balancing.

Children make good progress in all areas of their learning despite the room for improvement identified in the systems for planning and assessment. They are extremely happy as they play and learn in the child-centred environment. They chat confidently, joke with their friends and negotiate well as they make up charming role play games, for example taking turns to be the horse. Children thoroughly enjoy listening the books read by staff. They sit enthralled as the story unfolds and confidently make predictions and suggestions in response to the staff skilful questioning. They also have plenty of opportunities for mark making and are learning to correctly use pencils and other items such as sticky tape, scissors rulers and rubbers. Many children also enjoy drawing and happily describe their pictures, for example a child explains that he is playing in the grass and a representation of his smiling face amid a sea of green grass is clearly evident. Good opportunities

also exist for children to practice their problem solving and numeracy skills. They count confidently, recognise different shapes, practice measuring and also enjoy mixing different paint colours.

The support and encouragement that children receive to share, take turns and behave well helps to prepare them to interact confidently with people who will later become their neighbours and colleagues. They are also helped to prepare for their transitions to school by having plenty of opportunities to make choices and decisions as well as by gaining more practical skills such as using computers and other ICT equipment.

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?	3
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	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	3
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding	3
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	2
The effectiveness of partnerships	3
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	3
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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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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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