

Matlock Pre-School Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	206817
Inspection date	17/03/2011
Inspector	Justine Ellaway
Setting address	205 Smedley Street, Matlock, Derbyshire, DE4 3JD
Telephone number	01629 583639
Email	
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

Matlock Pre-school Playgroup is run by a committee. It opened in 1960 and operates from a single storey building in Matlock, Derbyshire. The pre-school is open each weekday from 8.50am to 11.50am and 12.30pm to 3.30pm term time only. All children share access to an enclosed outdoor play area.

The pre-school is registered on the Early Years Register and on both the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. A maximum of 12 children may attend the pre-school at any one time. There are currently 70 children on roll, all of whom are within the early years age range. The pre-school supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

There are six members of staff, all of whom hold appropriate early years qualifications to at least National Vocational Qualification Level 2. The setting provides funded early education for three- and four-year-olds.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is inadequate.

Some of the policies and procedures are not effectively implemented to promote children's welfare and ensure their safety. There are weaknesses in the delivery and organisation of children's learning and development that mean children do not make sufficient progress. Systems to self-evaluate are in place, but are ineffective in identifying priorities for improvement. Satisfactory partnerships with parents and carers are developed to share information about their child and meet their individual needs. Although the setting works well with other providers of the Early Years Foundation Stage, systems to support children with identified needs are not suitably established.

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:

- take all reasonable steps to ensure that hazards to children, both indoors and outdoors, are kept to a minimum (Suitable premises, environment and equipment) (also applies to both parts of the Childcare Register) 07/09/2011
- staffing arrangements must be organised to ensure safety and to meet the needs of the children (Suitable people) 07/09/2011

- ensure that there is an effective behaviour management policy which is adhered to by all members of staff so that children's behaviour is managed consistently and in a manner appropriate for their stage of development and particular individual needs (Safeguarding and promoting children's welfare) (also applies to both parts of the Childcare Register) 07/09/2011
- ensure that there is a balance of adult-led and freely-chosen or child-initiated activities, delivered through indoor and outdoor play (Organisation) 07/09/2011
- ensure that there is regard to the SEN Code of Practice (Safeguarding and promoting children's welfare) 07/09/2011

To improve the early years provision the registered person should:

- develop evaluation systems to ensure that the quality of children's learning, development and care continues to improve
- help children to understand how to behave outdoors and inside by talking about personal safety, risks and the safety of others
- support and extend all children's development and learning by being an active listener and joining in and intervening when appropriate
- review the indoor environment so that it contains resources which are appropriate and accessible for all children.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Whilst the setting has relevant written policies and procedures, staff do not always effectively implement these. As a result, children's individual welfare needs are not effectively promoted. The designated child protection officer has a suitable understanding of how to progress any concerns about child protection issues. Recruitment procedures are suitably considered to ensure that appropriate checks are undertaken on adults working at the setting. Systems to ensure staff remain suitable are also suitably developed. Written risk assessments are in place for the premises, although they are brief and do not address possible risks and hazards in sufficient detail. A significant number of accidents have taken place in the same outdoor area in recent months and insufficient attention has been given to address this. Furthermore, staff do not effectively support children to learn about their own safety and others.

There are a range of attractive toys and resources which are well displayed so that children can help themselves. Most free play areas are well laid out and resourced to support children's enjoyment and achievement. However, insufficient consideration is given to the painting area which is a favourite activity of many of the children who attend. The area severely restricts the number of children who can use this at any one time and also their creativity as a small selection of paints and brushes is the only resource. The deployment of staff does not always meet

the needs of children who attend the setting. Staff are usually placed around the setting so they are with the children. They are clear when they have a specific role such as snack to organise. However, the setting has not established an effective system to manage the flow of children between the indoors and outdoors. As a result, they are not always clear where children are and whether they have made it safely back indoors before the door is closed.

The setting has developed a positive partnership with other settings who provide the Early Years Foundation Stage. This means that consistency is provided for children's individual learning and development as useful information is shared on a regular basis. The setting develops a satisfactory relationship with parents. Parent questionnaires are undertaken and positive action taken when suggestions for improvements are made. Parents find the opportunity to formally meet with their child's keyworker useful in discussing their child's learning and development. Systems are in place to identify individual children who may have additional needs. However the coordination of support is not always effective, as insufficient consideration is given as to who should be included to ensure all staff who work with the child can contribute information to ensure there is consistency of approach.

The setting has taken steps to evaluate and reflect on practice. However, there are two separate documents which have not been pulled together and contain some different information. Furthermore, a vast amount of areas for improvement have been identified without sufficient consideration of whether they are realistic or the most relevant and which are priorities. On occasion changes or improvements are made, with no follow up to ensure they are fully effective in practice. However, the leader of the setting demonstrates the capacity to improve through her knowledge as an Early Years Professional and receptiveness to acknowledging the areas of weakness and willingness to make improvements.

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

Children are not effectively supported to make suitable progress towards the early learning goals. The recent implementation of a free flow system means that for the majority of the session children can choose whether they play indoors or outdoors. This promotes their independence and decision making. However, staff have not established how they will support children's learning in all of the areas of learning if they choose only to play outdoors. Children are usually only supported to progress in one of the six areas of learning if they play outdoors.

Staff interaction is not effective in supporting children's learning and development. Some staff mainly take on a supervisory role where they sit and watch the children at play rather than engaging with them to support their enjoyment and learning. Furthermore adult-led activities are not well planned to ensure that the learning intention is supported. For example, the resources used for an adult-led activity are unsuitable or not of sufficient number. Therefore, staff spend the majority of the time trying to sort this out instead of engaging with the children.

Although children generally behave well, staff are not always consistent or clear in how they manage children's behaviour or reinforce the expectations. As a result children are not always clear about what they should be doing at certain times or when something is not appropriate. For example, if a child takes a toy off another child, this is not discussed and the first child is allowed to continue without any consequences. This means that some children feel a sense of frustration at the unjust situation. During group sessions some children are allowed to choose not to join in, which leads to other children making the same decision. Staff recall some of the children back to the group, but again this is not consistently followed through and only some come back. As a result children do not know what is expected of them.

Systems are in place to observe children and assess their stage of development. There is some relevant information recorded and on the whole this information is suitably analysed to identify where children are at.

Some children are well settled and participate in all aspects of the session. Other children, although not upset or distressed are not encouraged to engage in all aspects of the session. For these children they are missing opportunities to develop their personal and social skills, for example, in group situations.

Children develop their imagination as they make different items with the play dough. They use tools, such as, scissors and rolling pins which develops their small muscle skills. They thoroughly enjoy painting and spend time on their art work, describing their picture with pride. Some children are developing well in their information and communication technology skills as they use the mouse to operate computer programmes. Children have access to suitable resources and activities that support their understanding of the wider world. For example, they go on walks into the local community and play with resources, such as, books which reflect people of different cultures.

Children self-register when they arrive which supports them to develop their early reading skills. They join in with singing and make attempts to join in with the words of favourite songs. They are encouraged to count and some children can match number and quantity correctly when getting the plates for snack.

Children demonstrate an understanding of being healthy. They know when to wash their hands and why they do this. For example, a child explains that by washing your hands before snack you make them nice and clean so you can eat. A child helps themselves to a drink and says they are thirsty because they have been playing outside. Children do not always demonstrate an understanding of how to play safely. On the whole they behave safely indoors, for example, walking around children who are playing on the floor. On occasion however they kneel on chairs which means that they cannot always balance and can and do tip forward. When children play outdoors on the sit and ride toys they ride really fast down the slope without any consideration of their own or others safety. This means they bump into other children who are either standing or on other sit and ride toys. They also risk their own safety as they are at risk of overbalancing or crashing into the wall. Staff do not give explanations to support children's understanding in this area and instead constantly rush forward to try to prevent these accidents from happening.

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	4
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	4
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	4
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	4
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	4

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Annex B: the Childcare Register

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

Not Met (with actions)

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

Not Met (with actions)

The registered provider does not meet the requirements of the compulsory and or voluntary part/s of the Childcare Register.

To comply with the requirements of the compulsory part of the Childcare Register, the registered person must take the following action/s by the specified date:

- take action as specified in the Early years section of the report (Suitability and safety of premises and equipment) 07/09/2011
- take action as specified in the early years section of the report (How the childcare provision is organised). 07/09/2011

To comply with the requirements of the voluntary part of the Childcare Register, the registered person must take the following action/s by the specified date:

- take action as specified in the Early years section of the report (Suitability and safety of premises and equipment) 07/09/2011
- take action as specified in the early years section of the report (How the childcare provision is organised). 07/09/2011