

Menheniot Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	102924
Inspection date	04/07/2011
Inspector	Julie Wright

Setting address	The Old School, Menheniot, Liskeard, Cornwall, PL14 3QS
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Telephone number	07931 596 723
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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).

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Description of the setting

Menheniot Playgroup is a committee run group. It opened in 1985 and operates from two rooms, in the Old School House in Menheniot village, Cornwall. There is an enclosed outdoor play area behind the playgroup and an additional secluded garden, next to the premises. The playgroup is open on a Monday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday from 9.00am until 3.00pm and from 9.00am until 12 noon on a Tuesday, during term times only.

The playgroup is registered by Ofsted on the Early Years Register, to care for a maximum of 20 children aged from two years and within the early years age range, at any one time. There are currently 28 children on roll. The playgroup is in receipt of early education funding for children aged two, three and four years. There are four staff employed to work with the children, each of whom has appropriate early years qualifications.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children are happy in the playgroup and make good progress in their overall development. Staff have secure awareness of children's individual needs and promote inclusion well. They promote positive relationships with parents and relevant others in the interest of children's welfare. Clear systems to record children's progress are in place and mostly thorough. The majority of the welfare requirements are fully met and staff demonstrate a sound capacity for continuous improvement.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- develop systematic procedures to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the provision
- improve the initial information sought from parents, to clearly identify children's developmental starting point and capabilities, and encourage parents to contribute to the ongoing records of progress.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

A full range of policies and procedures are used in practice to promote children's health, safety and welfare. Staff conduct and review risk assessments on a regular basis, to minimise hazards for individual children. They help children to become aware of risks in everyday situations such as, in the outdoor environment. Staff

have up-to-date awareness of the safeguarding procedures. They inform parents of the child protection policy and responsibilities to safeguard welfare. Vetting and recruitment procedures are in place to ensure the suitability of adults caring for children. However, the provider failed to notify Ofsted of a change to the person, who is managing the early years provision. It is a legal requirement to do so. On this occasion Ofsted does not intend to take further action.

There is a consistent staff team and committee who work well together. They demonstrate a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities in the provision of day care. The premises are safe, secure and well organised to provide children with a stimulating environment. Space is used effectively for activities with individual children and groups of differing sizes. For example, children use the second hall for physical games, singing and dancing. They join staff in small groups for stories or creative play.

Resources are arranged so that children can access them easily and make independent choices. Toys and books reflect positive images of diversity so that children become aware of similarities and difference. Staff encourage children to sign key words, such as, 'drink' and 'thank you', which promotes inclusion and communication. Children's dietary requirements are known and met by staff. Snacks and drinks are provided, including healthy options, and children may bring packed lunches. Staff promote good behaviour and self-esteem, and they encourage and recognise children's achievements during the session. Consistent daily routines help children feel secure and to develop early understanding of hygiene, health and safety.

Staff compile a learning and development record for each child, which include photographs, observations, summary reports and next steps. Examples of children's creativity and emergent early literacy skills are also included. Parents take the books home to read and share with family members. They have frequent discussions with staff about children's welfare and activities, although opportunities for them to contribute to the development records are limited. Staff seek initial information from parents to help settle children in however, they do not clearly identify developmental starting points and capabilities.

Parents are actively involved in the running of the group, taking part in fund-raising and community events. They are well informed about children's activities and their views are invited by staff. Parents value the playgroup and provide positive feedback at inspection. They confirm that they have good working relationships with staff, and that their children enjoy the sessions very much. Effective transitional arrangements are in place to help children prepare for school. Staff also work well with other agencies to support individual children's development needs. They have addressed previous inspection recommendations in full and continue to attend relevant training. Staff discuss the sessions and review activities, although thorough systems for self-evaluation are not established. Since the last inspection the premises have been refurbished and outdoor play provision has increased. This contributes towards development of the playgroup and improved outcomes for children.

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

Children arrive happily and settle quickly at the playgroup. They are pleased to see their friends and familiar staff members. Children are secure and confident because they form good relationships. Primary school teachers visit the setting and playgroup staff take children on several trips to the local school. Photographic books are also used, to help children recall their visits and to prepare for moving on. Children show great excitement as they listen to a story about going to school. They put on high-visibility jackets and stay in an orderly line, as they hold onto the 'walking rope' handles.

Children behave well and understand how to walk safely near the road. They also learn about safety through regular fire drills, a visit from the fire officer and outdoor play experiences. For example, in the garden they learn that some plants attract wildlife, but that they may be harmful to children. This helps children develop a sense of responsibility in keeping safe. They show a good awareness of hygiene and safety routines and understand why they do things at certain times. For instance, they put on sunhats and have sun cream applied to protect them from the sun. Children make decisions about where to have their snacks outside and know that it is better in the shade. Staff extend children's learning during the activities for example, they encourage children to think about what happens to their milk if it becomes warm in the sun.

Children grow vegetables and flowers in the outdoor play area. They produce potatoes and enjoy eating them at snack time. Children measure sunflowers, and then make comparisons between the height of the flowers and themselves. Mathematical language is used in a wide range of activities for example, as children construct models or fill and pour from containers. They become aware of space, shape and numbers as they play. Children count and work things out such as, how many places are needed at the table. Signs, labels and pictures are displayed around the room, helping children to make choices and to recall learning. Posters, toys and books show people from different backgrounds and with differing abilities.

Children develop respect for others as they become aware of their community and the wider world. They are proud to take part in local events such as, being on the float in the carnival parade. Children learn to use books properly and particularly enjoy stories, using additional resources to tell the tale. These include puppets and soft toys to encourage interest and help children concentrate. Shared reading at home, is promoted through the provision of the playgroup's lending library. Children enjoy taking special items home and feel important about 'looking after' them.

Physical play includes sports type games, balancing, rolling hoops and 'action' songs. Children benefit from fresh air during frequent outdoor play sessions and have use of 'wet-weather' suits. Staff encourage children's interest in nature for example, on the way to the garden they stop to look at the progress of the blackberries. Children shout with excitement that they have found a 'mouse-hole'

and describe it to staff. They build dens together, using pieces of fabric constructively and imaginatively. Children play well and cooperate, taking turns and helping each other during activities. At the computer they show early understanding of information technology, using the equipment with competence. They create imaginative models reflecting their interests such as, colourful caterpillars or 'dragons'. Children also use feathers, glue, glitter and stickers to make 'magic wands' and items of their own design. At the end of the session they collect their things together and proudly take them home.

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	3

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	3
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	3
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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