

# Littlemore Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

---

<b>Unique reference number</b>	134012
<b>Inspection date</b>	07/07/2011
<b>Inspector</b>	Janice Leo
<b>Setting address</b>	Sunflower Room, Littlemore Community Centre, Giles Road, OXFORD, OX4 4NL
<b>Telephone number</b>	01865396449
<b>Email</b>	
<b>Type of setting</b>	Childcare on non-domestic premises

---

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

T: 0300 123 1231  
Textphone: 0161 618 8524  
E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
W: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

© Crown copyright 2011

## 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.

Please see our website for more information about each childcare provider. We publish inspection reports, conditions of registration and details of complaints we receive where we or the provider take action to meet the requirements of registration.

## Description of the setting

Littlemore Playgroup was registered in 1992 and has been in existence for over 40 years. It is run by a committee of parents and operates from one large room in a community centre building in Littlemore on the edge of Oxford. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area. Children come from the Littlemore, Rose Hill and Cowley areas.

The playgroup is registered on the Early Years Register and both the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. A maximum of 20 children may attend the playgroup at any one time and all may be in the early years age group. There are currently 22 children on roll who attend for a variety of sessions. All of the children are in the early years age group and receive funding for early education. The playgroup currently supports a small number of children with learning difficulties and with English as an additional language.

The playgroup is open each weekday from 09.00am until 12.00noon during school term time. It employs four members of staff and of these, two hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 2 or above and one is working towards a qualification. The playgroup receives support from the local authority.

## The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is satisfactory.

The quality of service is variable. Staff work tirelessly to improve facilities and they provide a stimulating choice of equipment to inspire children to play. They focus on helping children overcome recognised difficulties but currently provide insufficient support to actively assist progress for the more able children. Procedures for monitoring areas for improvement are developing, and whilst the staff recognise weaknesses in practice these have not yet been addressed. As a result, staff struggle at times to limit the impact of difficult behaviour and the requirement for all children to have a key person is not met. Child Protection procedures are followed rigidly to keep children safe but risk assessments are not well used to support daily practice. Children follow and understand good practice regarding a healthy lifestyle but interaction is weak, hampering development of children's future skills. The setting has well established links with parents and carers to create a partnership of care and ease the transition into school and general information is shared about children's progress.

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

To meet the specific requirements of the EYFS, the registered person must:

- assign a key person to each child to improve their

14/07/2011

level of support and help them receive a consistently enjoyable and challenging experience that meets their needs (Organisation).

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

- ensure staff have the necessary skills to manage challenging behaviour without a detrimental impact on the other children
- improve interaction with all children to actively promote learning and development in each area and extend children's interests.

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

Staff have a secure knowledge of child protection procedures and take appropriate steps to minimise risks. They work effectively with other agencies, following regulations and policies to protect children from unsuitable adults. The staff oversee safe play and remind children of how to play safely and sensibly to avoid accidents. They complete a mix of detailed and basic risk assessments to help protect children from harm but do not use the risk assessment as an ongoing aid to safe practice.

The staff actively encourage children to make choices and become independent, providing free play for the majority of the day. All children settle quickly and occupy themselves well but some are a little too boisterous and require increased supervision at the expense of the quieter and more able children. The staff strive to address gaps in achievement and they work well with outside agencies to support vulnerable children and overcome obstacles that prevent learning. However, this results in little support for the more confident children who, whilst never appearing unhappy, take control of their day and play without adult input. They undoubtedly keep themselves well occupied and demonstrate both confidence and high self-esteem but they have few increased challenges to help them achieve further.

The resources are well laid out for independent access and children make good use of them to develop their own games. The children have free flow to the outdoor area to benefit from fresh air and exercise and they choose when to eat their early morning snack according to their needs. The children follow good practice regarding hygiene and are learning about healthy eating by growing crops in the newly created garden and making healthy choices at the main group snack time later in the session.

The staff are very committed to improving facilities in order to increase learning opportunities and the group is very well equipped with a stimulating and appropriate range of equipment. The staff introduce this according to children's interests and make sure there are opportunities to cover all areas of learning each day. However, despite having very clear plans for improvement and recognising the need to monitor daily practice, staff currently have no system in place to

measure the effectiveness of what they do. As a result, weaknesses in promoting equality, behaviour management and interaction to aid learning go unrecognised and reduce the value of the setting somewhat.

Parents and carers value the service highly and find the staff very approachable. They welcome feedback about the day through children's individual record books and, additional information supplied through verbal feedback and basic progress records. Parent's ideas for development are welcome and opportunities exist for them to share aspects of their home culture and see the group in operation. Robust policies are in place to meet legal requirements and support an effective service but recent staff changes have resulted in a key person role becoming vacant and some children having no one person identified to support them.

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

Most children arrive happily and choose what to do and where to play. They occupy themselves extremely well, demonstrating that they feel safe and security within the setting. Some confidently join their peers to, for example, gather in the play house and pretend to be a family, or take up a place at the water table where they laugh with friends as they squirt water across the ground. They chat together confidently and usually quite clearly to share their ideas, suggesting what others might do to increase the fun. Some copy their friends and begin aiming water at a friend who runs about at speed, trying to avoid a soaking. The children learn from each other, discovering how to squeeze bottles and tubes to fire water across the playground, practising their aim as they gain control over their movements. Behaviour shows signs of being a little too boisterous and staff step in to calm the boys down, remaining close by to supervise and preserve harmony. Some opportunities to develop the game and link learning are lost, and the children disperse to find a new interest.

Those with specific developmental needs receive a high level of attention to help narrow the gaps and aid their progress. All do well in relation to their starting points but the loss of an experienced member of staff has resulted in some children having little input to help their continued progress. However, all focus well and play happily in a safe environment with access to a wide range of equipment that they may not have access to at home. This automatically means that the children benefit from the provision and their progress is steady.

The staff provide short story sessions to develop a love of books and children break into small groups to encourage discussions at an appropriate level. Interaction during free play is patchy which limits progress in all areas of learning. The children learn to respect resources and show signs of understanding the needs of others. Some link confidently with their peers to play together on equal terms, while others hold back, watching games from a distance while wondering whether to join in. The staff miss opportunities to invite children to join activities and consequently some spend considerable time alone, missing the chance to develop

their social skills and exchange ideas with friends.

The children use bicycles and scooters to speed round the garden and build obstacle courses with wooden planks to develop understanding of shape, space and measure. Some paint pictures or create a collage to take home at the end of the day, while others use the computer to progress through activity programs which help them gain control over the mouse and understanding of modern technology.

The staff observe what children do and make brief notes to inform planning. They use activities that interest the children when preparing planning and use children's profiles to identify the level of challenge needed to continue progress. However, the observations lack detail and information is updated on an infrequent basis and therefore not always up-to-date to help staff plan children's next steps.

## 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>	3
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	3

### 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>	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
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	3
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
--	---

### Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

<b>Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	3
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	3
The extent to which children feel safe	3
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	3
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	3

Any complaints about the inspection or report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)



## **Annex B: the Childcare Register**

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

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