

The Reddings Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	101891
Inspection date	01/07/2011
Inspector	Zahida Hatia

Setting address	The Reddings & District Association Centre, North Road West, The Reddings,, Cheltenham, GL51 6RF
Telephone number	01452 857607
Email	
Type of setting	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.

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
W: 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).

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

The Reddings Playgroup opened in 1975 and is managed by a committee of parents. It is situated on the edge of the residential area on the outskirts of Cheltenham. The group operates from the Reddings and District Community Centre, which is sometimes used by other local organisations at the same time. The facilities include a large hall, a small hall, a kitchen, toilets, (including one with disabled access), and an enclosed outside play area. The building is fitted with a 'loop' facility for persons with hearing difficulties. The playgroup is registered on the Early Years Register to care for a maximum of 32 children that may attend the group at any one time. Children aged three and four years are funded for free early education. The playgroup is open each weekday during term-time between 9.30am and 12 noon; with the session on Tuesdays operating for pre-school aged children only. Lunchtime sessions take place on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday from 12 noon until 2.30pm. Children come mainly from the local area and there are currently 44 children on roll. The playgroup employs five permanent members of staff; of these, the manager is qualified to early years professional status, and four are qualified to NVQ levels 3 or 4. The setting also employs four relief staff; of these, three hold qualifications up to level 5, and one is working towards a qualification. The playgroup currently supports children with special educational needs.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is satisfactory.

Staff have a sound knowledge of children's individual needs and suitably promote their welfare. Although policies and procedures are mostly effective, risk assessment records do not fully meet the legal requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. Children have free access to a range of learning opportunities in the inclusive and welcoming environment provided. As a result, they are well engaged in activities which enable children to make sound progress in their learning. Systems for observation and assessment are being developed. Staff have positive relationships with parents and information, such as children's care needs, are shared with them. Children's learning and development records are being developed; however, links with other settings involved with children's learning are not yet fully established. Although systems which enable the provision to identify their strengths and weaknesses are developing, staff are taking positive steps to demonstrate ongoing ambition and their capacity to maintain continuous improvement.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- ensure all reasonable steps are taken to identify hazards to children are kept to a minimum, with particular regard to the outdoor boundary fence (Suitability and safety of premises and equipment)

01/08/2011

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

- develop observation and assessments records to clearly link to the early learning goals and consistently record children's next steps
- develop systems for parents and other relevant providers to review children's progress and contribute to their learning and development records
- make full use of self-evaluation tools to further consider how best to maintain and make ongoing improvements.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Staff have a sound understanding of safeguarding; they are fully aware of the signs and symptoms of abuse and the required steps to take should they have any concerns. They are also familiar with procedures to follow should an allegation be made against a member of staff. Clear recruitment procedures ensure all staff hold the appropriate checks to demonstrate they are suitable to work with children. The rooms used by the playgroup within the community centre are secure. A buzzer system is in place to prevent intruders entering. Staff are suitably trained in first aid and they regularly update their training, helping to keep children safe. Risk assessments are conducted on a regular basis and include most areas within the playgroup. However, the boundary fence surrounding the outdoor play area is unsafe because it includes barbed wire. This hazard has not been identified in the risk assessment. Therefore, the suitability of the premises does not fully meet the legal requirements, as this flaw potentially impacts on children's safety.

Staff have formed close relationships with parents, who receive detailed information about all aspects of the playgroup in the parent packs and through regular newsletters. The playgroup also operates an open door policy to make families feel welcome. Parents are complimentary about the staff and the committee and have access to copies of the policies and procedures. Staff ensure that parents are kept updated with regard to their child's time at the playgroup through daily verbal feedback. However, parents are not fully involved in contributing to their children's learning and development records. Links with other providers who deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage where children attend more than one setting are not yet fully established.

The manager and staff have a positive attitude towards caring for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and demonstrate a sound understanding of how to promote inclusion for all children. For example, staff show a sensitive approach towards gathering information from parents to ensure that all children are included and are supported according to their individual needs. The

manager and staff are enthusiastic and very keen to improve the care and education they provide. Recommendations raised at the previous inspection have been addressed. For example, observation and planning systems ensure children's individual learning needs are being met; and daily routines such as circle time, snack times and hand washing are organised to meet their needs.

The manager and committee recognise and value the skills of all staff. Systems are in place to support staff in their professional development and to identify any training needs they may have. The playgroup has started to use a formal system of self-evaluation as a means of identifying the playgroup's strengths and weaknesses. However, this system is not securely in place to support the playgroup in identifying areas for further improvement. The playgroup promotes equality and diversity in a way which is meaningful to the children. Staff ensure children become aware of the diversity within their own community and of the wider world. For example, the playgroup regularly plans activities which enable children to explore different cultural festivals and celebrations. Children are able to help themselves to the wide range of resources available and enjoy their play. The main play room is spacious and well organised, allowing plenty of free movement.

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

The playgroup has a welcoming atmosphere, with friendly and approachable staff, who work well together and are enthusiastic and motivated. Children settle quickly into their activities, happily playing with their friends and demonstrating their self-confidence as they ask staff for support when necessary. Staff have a sound knowledge and understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage learning and development requirements and use this knowledge to provide an interesting learning environment for the children they care for. Staff are beginning to plan, observe and assess the children. However, observations do not clearly link to the early learning goals and children's next steps in learning are not consistently recorded. Staff know the children and plan activities to meet their needs and interests. They ask children appropriate questions during their play to encourage communication and dialogue and to consolidate children's knowledge and understanding.

All children freely access the outdoor area, choosing from a range of activities such as playing in the sand, making marks with various materials, painting or playing with modelling dough. These activities help to increase children's overall development. Older children decide how they want their role play area to evolve. For example, children dress up in different costumes and outfits and invite younger children to take part in their pretend play.

Children attempt to write their names on their pictures and drawings, as well as selecting their name cards at lunchtime. Books are available both indoors and outdoors. Younger children snuggle up to staff as they look at the pictures. Older children sit in the garden area under the sun canopy looking at books or happily

listening to stories read by staff. They engage in conversations with each other and with staff talking about their favourite toys, activities or holidays. Children are developing skills for the future regarding their communication, language and literacy. For example, they regularly use electronic toys competently to develop their future skills in information and communication technology.

Children behave well and staff implement behaviour management strategies consistently so that children are aware of boundaries. They are very familiar with the routines of the playgroup and all children help to tidy up. Children are given praise for their achievements and emerging independence skills. For example, older children wash their hands with little supervision and wait patiently at the snack table to select what they would like to eat. Parents provide packed lunches which are stored appropriately. The playgroup offers children healthy snacks throughout the day. Children's health is also well promoted as they engage in regular physical exercise. For example, they freely access the outdoor play area to use the different resources and equipment. They confidently ride bikes, run around and happily push the dolls pushchairs around. Other children enjoy sitting on the grassed area playing with small world toys; or playing with the sand and water, or simply basking in the sun. Children are aware of the harmful effects of the sun on their bodies and know about protecting themselves from burning by using sun cream.

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	3

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	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

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	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	3
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

