

# Beavers Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

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**Unique reference number**

144549

**Inspection date**

12/09/2011

**Inspector**

Jill Nugent

**Setting address**

Rose Lipman Community Centre, De Beavior Road,  
Hackney, London, N1 5SE

**Telephone number**

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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

Beavers Playgroup registered in 1993. It operates from a community centre on the De Beauvoir estate in the London Borough of Hackney. Children have the use of one large indoor play room and share access to a garden area for outdoor play. A hall is also available for physical activities during inclement weather. The playgroup is open from 9.30am until 2.30pm every weekday, during term time. The provision is in receipt of funding for free early years education.

The playgroup is registered on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. A maximum of 20 children in the early years age group may attend the setting at any one time. Of these, not more than 12 may be under three years old. There are currently 16 children on roll. The setting supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language. A team of five staff work with the children, including the manager and one voluntary member of staff. All staff hold relevant early years qualifications.

## The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

The playgroup provides a welcoming setting for children, where they enjoy a variety of interesting play activities. A particular strength of the playgroup is staff's inclusive approach and this contributes to children developing a real sense of community. There are good opportunities for children to learn through play as they explore in a relaxed atmosphere. Staff liaise closely with parents regarding children's care and promote children's welfare effectively. Systems to move children on in their learning have been developed, although these are not yet fully established. The playgroup manager is committed to working with staff towards the continual improvement of outcomes for all children.

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

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

- take all reasonable steps to ensure that hazards to children in the garden area are kept to a minimum (Suitable premises, environment and equipment).
- 12/10/2011

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

- develop staff's knowledge and understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage, with reference in particular to children's learning and development

- establish the system of observational assessment to enable staff to better focus and extend children's learning, according to each child's learning needs
- extend the partnership with parents and carers in order to actively encourage their involvement in their children's learning.

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

The playgroup's documentation is very well organised and provides a sound framework for staff's practice. There are effective procedures in place to promote the safeguarding of all children. The manager ensures that staff update their training in safeguarding and child protection at regular intervals. Staff know what to do if they have any concerns relating to child protection. All records relating to children's health and safety are well maintained. Staff carry out regular safety checks of the premises and these are linked to a detailed risk assessment of the indoor and outdoor play areas. Staff are vigilant concerning children's safety and supervise children carefully when using the toilet area or walking over to the garden area. However, potential hazards have arisen in the garden area during the recent summer holiday and these have not yet been minimised effectively. It is a legal requirement to take all reasonable steps to minimise hazards on the premises.

The manager encourages staff to reflect on their practice through a process of self-evaluation. She is fully aware of the strengths of the setting and those aspects requiring further improvement. She is keen to improve systems and procedures so that staff can use these effectively in promoting better outcomes for children. Since becoming manager she has reorganised the documentation and resourcing of the playgroup as well as introducing systems to support children's learning and development. She acts as a good role model in actively enthusing children to learn in both free play and group situations. Staff are attentive to children's care and support children well during free play. However, they have previously had limited training in the learning and development aspects of the Early Years Foundation Stage and this hinders their ability to implement the system of observational assessment effectively.

Staff are well deployed during the sessions, taking responsibility for group times as well as interacting with children to enhance their play. They are flexible in their approach and provide different learning experiences, encouraging children to make their own decisions. New children are given individual attention to help them settle and offered time and space to explore the activities on offer. They are made especially welcome through staff displaying photographs of each child with information about their families and what they like to do. As a result children feel valued and quickly develop a sense of belonging. The playgroup's resources are suitable for children of differing ages and abilities. They are arranged at low level so that children can make choices independently. Children have an increasing awareness of a wider world through using resources that reflect diversity. They benefit from the organisation of snack and lunch times which offer opportunities for songs and discussion, as well as eating. In this way children are encouraged to develop close relationships with others in the group.

There is an effective working partnership with parents and carers. New parents are made to feel very welcome and receive useful written information about the provision. They are actively encouraged to stay at playgroup to settle their children into the setting. Parents take turns helping out during sessions so that they get to know staff well. The weekly activity planning is on display and staff make good use of a "take home" bear to encourage parents to contribute news from home, contributing to an attractive "bear diary". However, the partnership with parents has not yet been developed to promote an active interest amongst parents in their children's learning, for example through the sharing of observation and progress records. The manager is aware of the need to work in partnership with other providers and professionals and is proactive in seeking links with local settings, such as a children's centre.

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

Children relish the opportunities to explore and investigate, making new discoveries as they encounter different learning opportunities. For example, children find out about shape, size and space as they fit together building blocks and then play with their models. They find out about capacity and sound as they fill and empty containers with a lentil mix. Staff join in with children as they play, talking with them about what they are doing or offering help. In this way children are encouraged to become active learners. They enjoy opportunities to be creative using different tools and materials. For example, they explore mark-making with pencils, brushes and paints, developing manipulative skills as they use the tools to mix colours and create patterns. The manager is particularly adept at enthusing children, for instance, she encourages them to explore sand by adding water for them to mix. She promotes the enjoyment of books through sharing stories and rhymes with children. She emphasises the importance of communication skills by providing a variety of opportunities for children to express themselves through words and actions. Children respond enthusiastically, often having fun as they take part in conversation, singing and dancing.

Children are well behaved and respond positively to staff's instructions. Adults are consistent in their approach and this helps children to develop an awareness of right and wrong. Children show increasingly high levels of self-confidence. Older children are articulate in their use of language and often initiate conversation themselves. They learn to use numbers in different ways and are beginning to learn computer skills on a newly acquired laptop. There is an effective system of observational assessment which can be used to identify children's next steps of learning to inform future planning. The manager is now using this to plan adult-led activities which focus and extend children's learning. In this way she helps children gain useful skills for the future, especially in language and literacy, for example, using phonics to develop an understanding of letters and words. However, not all staff are making good use of this system so that they work together to plan activities that focus and extend children in their learning. As a result staff do not always maximise opportunities to challenge children through interaction in free

play situations.

Children feel safe and secure in the setting as there is a range of safety measures in place to ensure that they play in a safe environment. The building and garden are secure and children move around freely with confidence. They are aware of the rules and understand the procedures that are in place to keep them safe. They approach adults confidently with requests. Staff encourage children to adopt healthy lifestyles through the provision of interesting nutritious snacks and opportunities for fresh air and exercise. Children enjoy time to be active and explore in the garden, for example, constructing models, riding small vehicles, running and climbing. These activities help them to develop their control and coordination as they negotiate space. At snack time children learn about healthy foods, such as fresh fruits. They have good access to drinking water throughout the day so that they do not become dehydrated. They enjoy finding out about the natural environment, for example, planting seeds in the garden and learning about butterflies.

## 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>	2
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	2

### 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>	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
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	2
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

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

<b>Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	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

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