

Linton Granta Playgroup And Toddlers

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspector

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Type of setting

Childcare - Non-Domestic

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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

Linton Granta Playgroup and Toddlers is managed by a voluntary management committee. It registered in 1977 and operates in the Activity Room in the grounds of Linton Village College, Linton, Cambridgeshire. The playgroup, being on one level, is accessible to all. A maximum of 25 children may attend the playgroup at any one time. The playgroup is open five days a week from 9.30am to 12.30pm during school term times. A lunch club is offered on Monday, Wednesday and Thursday from 12.30pm to 1.30pm. All children have access to an enclosed play area.

There are currently 35 children in the Early Years Foundation Stage on roll. The setting is registered on the voluntary part of the Childcare Register. Children come from the local area. The playgroup employs nine part-time staff. Of these, seven hold appropriate early years qualifications. The setting supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. The setting is undertaking the Reflecting on Quality accreditation scheme.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children are safe and happy in the playgroup's care because staff form close relationships with them and their parents. The setting provides challenging activities so that children make good progress towards the early learning goals. They obtain useful information about children's preferences, starting points and routines when they join the setting. This ensures that children's individual needs are being met. Parents are kept well informed about what their children are doing at playgroup. The committee and staff team demonstrate strong ambition and have a firm commitment to improving and developing the provision through the accreditation process.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- continue to talk with parents about their children's progress, for example, to further involve children and parents in future planning.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children's welfare is promoted well because the established staff team are familiar with the safeguarding policies and procedures. All adults are suitably vetted before being able to work with children. All staff have completed training to ensure up-to-date practice informs children's safety. The chair of the committee reviews the risk assessments to help to reduce hazards to children. The playgroup works closely

with parents to guarantee they are fully informed about the health, safety and welfare of their children.

There are close relationships between parents and staff owing to the established team working in partnership. This is shown by the way staff and parents exchange friendly greetings and share information at the beginning and end of the session. Parents respond to the level of service they receive. They especially like the way the playgroup helps their children prepare for the change of going to school. The effective key person system means that staff are available throughout the day for parents to answer any questions or share comments. The playgroup also shares information with parents through newsletters, a website and a welcome pack. As well as informing parents about the playgroup, this promotes children's sense of belonging.

Effective deployment of staff throughout the playgroup means they work successfully as a team. The staff and management committee have a good understanding of what needs to be done to secure improvements. They are currently working through the accreditation process. Parents are involved in the process of identifying strengths and weaknesses of the playgroup, for example through questionnaires. The staff and committee strive consistently to improve the service they provide for children. Since the last inspection the playgroup have moved to a new building which has greatly enhanced the provision.

Previous recommendations around planning have been addressed. Resources and activities are organised according to children's age and stage of development to promote their independence. Staff work closely with parents and other involved professionals to meet the needs of children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. Good systems are in place to ensure their individual needs are met. Efficient documentation enables staff to gather in-depth information from parents about their children's needs and interests. There are close links with the nearby Granta school which helps to create mutual understanding of similarities and differences between both sets of children. The playgroup supports young children to understand their own and others' cultures and beliefs. They celebrate some festivals, such as Chinese New Year and children's and staff birthdays.

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

Children are very much part of a community in this friendly playgroup. They receive a warm welcome from staff when they arrive and settle easily to their play. Regular observations identify children's next steps which are recorded in their learning journeys. These are shared with parents, giving an opportunity for them to respond, on an ongoing basis. Staff promote committed attitudes to learning by praising children's efforts and encouraging them not to give up. As a result they grow in confidence and show they feel extremely safe and secure.

Children have good opportunities to learn how to lead a healthy lifestyle. The outdoor area is well used, with a broad range of activities that cover the areas of learning. Children play outside as they wish so they can enjoy fresh air all year.

They are familiar with the effects and benefits of exercise on their bodies, and what they are able to do and their limitations. They develop good physical skills in balancing, climbing and throwing, as they climb on milk crates, kick balls into goals and throw objects at a big target.

The playgroup staff see supporting children's emotional development as key to well-being and this is a strength of the setting. For example, they use a monkey puppet to help children talk about their feelings. They choose healthy snacks, such as pear, melon, three bean salad or cous cous from a pictorial menu throughout the session. Thorough systems identify those children who have food allergies so they eat safe and suitable food. Children show their understanding of personal cleanliness, by washing their hands after playing outside or when they get messy, which is a positive feature of their play.

The staff work as a team to promote learning through play. They plan according to children's interests, needs and individual abilities using initial information provided by parents. For example, a child's interest in getting married triggered a wedding theme, where children brought in photographs, wrote invitations and made playdough wedding cakes. Children gain skills in technology as they use the computer, programmable toy robots and cameras. They are able to observe plants and vegetables, for example beetroot, tomato and carrots, growing outside. Boys and girls are constantly encouraged to develop their skills in mark making through a range of activities. For example, by using chalk boards outside in the garden and making 'hotel bookings' inside. They happily join in with stories and action rhymes such as 'hop little bunnies'. They are able to talk about their own lives and take part in role play activities.

Children benefit from range of sensory experiences; they use sand, water and dough on a daily basis, exploring textures, weights and consistencies as they have fun with pouring, scooping and cutting. They enjoy digging in the mud outside and building dens. Consequently all children are making good progress towards the early learning goals in all six areas of learning.

Children's behaviour is good because the adults give clear expectations and set appropriate boundaries to which the children respond. At circle time the children sit and listen attentively under the watchful eye of the Richard and Judy puppets. Staff help children to keep themselves safe by encouraging them to take risks within a supportive environment, such as using tools to make holes in conkers. Children are involved in the wider community through visits to the local Granta school. Teachers and dentists visit the playgroup. This progresses the children's knowledge and builds relationships. All staff are committed to inclusive practice, so children are developing a respect for themselves and others.

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	2

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	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

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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Annex B: the Childcare Register

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

Met