

Ingrave Village Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspection date	21/10/2011
Inspector	Karen Finney
Setting address	St Nicholas Church Hall, Ingrave, BRENTWOOD, Essex, CM13 3RB
Telephone number	01277 227 930
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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

Ingrave Village Playgroup is a privately owned and managed setting which registered in 2002. It operates from St Nicholas Church Hall in Ingrave, Brentwood. The playgroup is open five days a week during term time only. It offers care on an hourly basis Monday to Friday at various times between 9.05am and 3.35pm. Lunch club is offered on Tuesday to Friday of each week. The playgroup is registered on the Early Years Register and on both the voluntary and compulsory parts of the Childcare Register. A maximum of 24 children may attend the setting at any one time. There are currently 33 children on roll aged from two to four years. Of these, 24 receive funding for early education.

The setting currently employs 10 members of staff, of these eight hold appropriate early years qualifications mainly at level 3. Two members of staff are working towards a relevant qualification. Ingrave Village Playgroup was awarded the 'Investors in People' award in 2006.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

The manager and staff provide children with a welcoming and inclusive environment. Staff sustain high quality interaction with children to support overall good progress in their learning and development. Partnerships with parents and carers are outstanding and this enhances children's enjoyment and confidence in the setting. The manager's expertise contributes substantially to staff knowledge and the setting's good capacity to improve. However, systems should be developed to ensure all stakeholders are clear about actions required to secure setting improvement still further.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- review the educational programme to ensure that there is an appropriate balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities delivered through planned purposeful play.
- secure ambitious and continuous improvement by ensuring that all stakeholders are clear about priorities and actions for improvement and by establishing a more formal staff appraisal system

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children are safeguarded and well protected in the setting because staff are appropriately vetted and trained. There is a clear policy in place to ensure that all staff know what to do and who to contact in case of concerns. Daily safety checks

ensure that children can move freely, but safely, inside and outside the building. Very good care is taken to ensure children are escorted safely beyond the setting, for example to visit the library bus.

There is good use of space and resources inside and outside the building to ensure a range of stimulating play opportunities for children. Staff have good knowledge of the way in which young children learn and provide plenty of opportunities for children to actively pursue their own interests. Very good use is made of photographs to promote children's confidence and speech and language skills.

The manager of the setting has a strong commitment to ongoing training and development and has achieved Early Years Professional Status. She uses a range of monitoring systems, for example the Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale, to evaluate children's progress and the quality of provision in the setting. She has a clear vision for what needs to be done to develop practice. However, there is no clearly presented plan of action to ensure improvements are understood and driven by all stakeholders. The current staff appraisal system does not ensure that professional development is clearly linked to setting priorities.

The setting demonstrates exemplary practice in its engagement with parents and carers to support children's learning and development. Parents speak highly of the arrangements for induction to the setting and for transition to the local school. Staff observe children in the setting and at home to ensure that children's needs and interests are catered for from the start. This is developed on an ongoing basis via a home/setting diary which provides an informative and comprehensive record of children's achievements and progress at home and within the setting. There are regular review meetings and informal opportunities for parents to share information and concerns about their child's progress. The setting works hard to support children's transition into school and to engage with other settings by arranging meetings, exchanging information and involving parents at all times. These arrangements have a very positive impact on children's confidence and attitudes to learning.

Staff promote social awareness and diversity by exploring the cultural traditions of children represented in the setting. For example a discussion about the celebration of Christmas in Sweden leads to a range of activities linked to shoes. Different languages are valued by incorporating words of greeting such as 'Bonjour' and 'Au Revoir' into daily routines. Parents are invited to prepare and share special foods, such as chapattis, which broadens children's experience and makes families feel valued. Children with special educational needs are well supported through active engagement with parents and other agencies to ensure play and provision is suitable. Very good transition arrangements ensure a well-supported transfer into school.

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

Children quickly develop confidence in accessing resources and engaging with adults as a result of the strong commitment by all staff to support children's

individual needs and interests. Children eagerly engage in self-chosen play, making good progress in their learning. They communicate confidently as a result of praise, encouragement and good quality interaction with adults. For example staff comment to children about the need for giraffes to have 'long necks to reach the tall trees' and praise children who persevere with threading cotton reels. Children readily access books and turn pages in the right direction whilst commenting to themselves and each other about the story. They are encouraged to use mathematical language when extending the hose for water play to make it reach 'higher'. Children have access to a laptop and enjoy using the hand dryer supporting their understanding of early technology. There are good opportunities for creative development for example through role play, leaf printing and playing with musical instruments. Children are encouraged to explore these resources freely ensuring they have opportunities to develop unique creativity.

Staff place a high emphasis on observing and recording children's interests and using this information to support each child's learning and development. For example some children are noted to particularly enjoy creative activities so planning suggests providing creative resources to develop their skills with problem solving, reasoning and numeracy. Progress is tracked against age related expectations in the Early Years Foundation Stage so strengths and 'gaps' can be easily spotted. Occasionally the emphasis on child-initiated play is at the expense of short adult-led sessions and more structured learning to teach specific skills and knowledge.

Children feel safe and secure as individual needs and interests are clearly valued. Staff use sensitive support, humour and distraction to engage children who have recently started in the group and this helps children to quickly gain confidence with adults and other members of the group. Children enjoy a healthy snack of dried and fresh fruit at snack time. They are encouraged to wash their hands and utensils independently supporting the development of self-care skills. Children have daily opportunities for playing outside in the fresh air and occasionally go further afield to collect pears from the allotment or to gather autumn leaves.

Children are developing a very positive attitude to learning as a result of the strong commitment by staff to supporting their personal needs and interests. This also ensures that conflict is rare and even the youngest children co-operate with each other and adults to set up and tidy away resources. This provides them with a positive respect for each other and adults and supports their social development for the future.

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	1

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 compulsory part of the Childcare Register are: Met

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