

# Little Pickles Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

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101817

**Inspection date**

28/11/2011

**Inspector**

Carol Cox

**Setting address**

Little Pickles Playgroup, Bradfords Lane, Newent,  
Gloucestershire, GL18 1QT

**Telephone number**

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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*.

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## Description of the setting

Little Pickles Playgroup is managed by a committee made up of parents of children at the group and members of the local community. It opened in 1999 and is located in the grounds of Glebe Infant and Picklenash Junior School in Newent, Gloucestershire. The group uses a playroom, integral toilets and an enclosed outdoor play area.

Little Pickles is registered on the Early Years Register to care for a maximum of 24 children aged from two years at any one time. The playgroup is open during school terms on Monday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday from 9am to 3pm and from 9am to 12 noon on Tuesdays. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The playgroup also offers a Tuesday afternoon drop-in session for parents, toddlers and babies.

There are currently 38 children aged from two years nine months to under five years on roll. Children aged three and four years receive funding for free early education. Children come from the town or from the surrounding area. Staff have experience of caring for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Six staff work with the children. Of these, two have teaching status, one has a degree in early years studies and two have appropriate early years qualifications. The playgroup has close associations with the adjacent Newent Early Years Centre and local schools.

## The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children make good progress in all areas of learning and development. Staff use their knowledge of how children learn to plan a well-balanced range of activities overall, to promote learning in all areas. Through effective working relationships with parents and other settings children's individual care, learning and development needs are met very effectively. The staff group have completed a self-evaluation which identifies areas for development and actions taken. Thus good capacity for continuous improvement is demonstrated.

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

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

- develop further the system to record observations of children's achievements to identify next steps in learning for individual children and use when planning future learning experiences .

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

Arrangements for safeguarding children are effective as staff have a good working knowledge of child protection issues. They are confident of the procedure to follow should they have unresolved concerns about a child. Staff are vigilant in ensuring that adults who do not have a Criminal Records Bureau check are never left unsupervised with children. There are robust systems in place to identify all those adults authorised by parents to collect children. At registration parents give clear written information about their children's individual safeguarding and care needs. This means that individual care plans may be drawn up to meet any specific health, dietary or medical needs. Parents are highly valued as partners and key persons work closely with them to share information about children's progress. Good partnerships are established with professionals such as speech and language therapists. This means that children's specific needs are met very well.

Children learn about diversity and value differences. They celebrate festivals from their own cultures and those of others in a meaningful way. For example, children have recently learned about Diwali; this was directly linked to their topic of light and dark which also included fireworks night. Children's home languages are highly valued and included in the setting. Children learn to make choices when selecting toys and materials to progress their games and activities. Resources are very well stored with clear written and pictorial labels meaning that children can easily find what they need. The outdoor play area is very well equipped with large ride-on toys, sand pits and digging areas. The playgroup staff and committee have recently developed this area with the help of parents. For example, a parent helped to build the new digging area. Children love learning in their outdoor classroom and benefit from being outside in the fresh air.

There are robust recruitment procedures in place to ensure the staff are suitably qualified and checked. The manager works with the committee to support staff through an appraisal system. This helps identify the training needs of individual staff and the playgroup. Careful records are maintained of all staff training and staff are very well qualified. The playgroup staff make on-going evaluations of their provision and detail actions taken. For example, after considering the organisation of key person groups it was decided to decrease the overall number of children attending and increase the number of key groups. This means that children are more effectively supported. All policies and procedures have been reviewed with regard to the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. The playgroup staff are committed to continually improving their provision to achieve best outcomes for children.

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

Children are enthusiastic and busy learners. They enjoy adult-led key group activities and learn through their own play supported by sensitive staff. Key persons maintain detailed learning journals which record children's achievements and identify activities to support their progress. Staff have not yet fully developed the use of the learning journals to identify each child's individual next steps in learning. However, children generally make good progress and thrive on the opportunities for exploration and experimentation. For example, in their playhouse they have made a dark cave where they use torches to make light patterns. Children use a wide variety of implements and media to make marks and they paint and write freely. Children are beginning to link sounds and letters and most recognise their own name in writing. Skilful staff use good interactions with children to develop learning. For example, when completing a jigsaw a child and adult chat about favourite foods and remember past events. The adult shows how well she knows the child by naming her favourite sandwich fillings, which pleases the child immensely. Children use technology when taking photographs or expertly manipulating the mouse to play games on the computer. They celebrate festivals and link with the local community. Children demonstrate a good knowledge of their town when discussing exactly where they saw Father Christmas when he visited the previous year.

Children learn about healthy lifestyles and making decisions. They begin to recognise when they are hungry or thirsty and choose what they want to eat. Children decide when they need to take coats on or off in response to the changing temperature. They develop good independence skills and take themselves off to the toilet where they are prompted to wash their hands from a photo story above the basins. Staff help children learn about keeping themselves safe through everyday activities. They practise regular fire drills and remember not to throw sand when digging. Generally children behave very well and have a good understanding of how their behaviour may affect others. They enjoy well organised routines and are secure within the playgroup. Children take great pride in seeing their work carefully displayed and contribute to the day by helping to clear away cups after snacks. Children build strong relationships with each other and members of staff. They enjoy sharing their play and bask in the positive responses from adults. Through the well balanced programme of activities and good quality interactions, children develop the skills that will support their future learning.

## 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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