

Chelmondiston Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspector Hazel Meadows

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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

Chelmondiston Playgroup has been registered since 1992. It operates from purpose-built premises adjacent to Chelmondiston Primary School, in the village of Chelmondiston, Suffolk. It is managed by a voluntary management committee made up of parents of some of the children who attend the pre-school. There is level access to the premises and an accessible toilet is available. Children have access to two enclosed outdoor play areas.

The pre-school is registered by Ofsted on the Early Years Register. A maximum of 24 children, may attend the pre-school at any one time, none of whom may be under two years. There are currently 28 children on roll. Children come from the local and surrounding area and attend for a variety of sessions. The setting supports children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and children who speak English as an additional language. The group is open Monday to Friday during term time only. On Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays session times are from 9am until 12 noon and 12.15pm until 3.15pm. A lunch club is also offered from 12 noon to 1pm. On Tuesdays the session runs from 9am until 12 noon and on Thursdays from 9am until 12 noon plus lunch club until 1pm.

The group employs five members of staff plus pool staff. The playleader is trained to level 3, one member of staff is trained to level 6 and the majority of the other staff are trained to level 3. The group is a member of the Pre-school Learning Alliance and receives support from local authority advisory staff.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is satisfactory.

Children are happy and settle well at this welcoming pre-school. They enjoy a broad variety of play and learning experiences and are making good progress through the Early Years Foundation Stage. Inclusive practice is well promoted to meet children's individual needs. Positive and trusting partnerships are established with parents and others to aid continuity of care. Most documentation and procedures are in place to promote children's welfare. Regular liaison with local authority advisors and some self-evaluation promotes a satisfactory level of improvement and development.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- obtain information from parents about who has parental responsibility for a child in advance of the child being admitted to the provision (Safeguarding and promoting children's welfare) 10/01/2012
- ensure fresh drinking water is available to children at 13/12/2011

all times. (Safeguarding and promoting children's welfare).

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

- ensure self-evaluation effectively identifies areas for improvement, and that these are promptly rectified
- carry out regular evacuation drills and record details in a fire log book of any problems encountered to enhance children's safety in the event of an emergency
- review the risk assessment to ensure it covers anything a child may come into contact with
- review planning to ensure that there is a clear link between observation and assessment which is used to effectively inform planning for individual children's progression, and ensure learning journeys are maintained in a consistent format
- improve induction training procedures for new staff and carry out regular staff appraisals to identify training and development needs.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

All staff have attended safeguarding children training and have Criminal Records Bureau clearance. The group has a recently reviewed written policy plus local safeguarding contact details to refer to if they have concerns about a child. Staff are watchful of the children and attentive to their safety. Basic risk assessments are undertaken for the premises, however, potential hazards are not always addressed, for example, large fungus growing in the rear outdoor area. The emergency evacuation procedure is occasionally practised and recorded. However, it is not undertaken with sufficient regularity to ensure it operates effectively or to familiarise children with the procedure.

The group has a positive attitude towards diversity, which is reflected in some of the books and resources. A wealth of good quality resources are mostly used well to support children's learning and development. Most required information and parental consents are obtained about each child, however, detail regarding parental responsibility is not requested. Written policies have recently been reviewed and updated and are readily available to parents.

Staff establish trusting partnerships with parents and two-way communication is encouraged. Comments received from parents during the inspection are very positive. They find staff friendly and approachable and state that their children are happy and settled. They receive regular verbal feedback about their child and most have seen their child's development record. Parents are kept well informed of general information through discussions with the staff, notice boards and newsletters. Many parents become actively involved in the pre-school and several take on roles within the management committee. The dedicated committee has actively supported and sustained the group by undertaking practical duties and

encouraging and implementing improvements. The playgroup has established good links with the local school and mutual visits are encouraged to aid smooth transitions for the children.

Experienced staff work cooperatively together to support children and aid the smooth running of each session. All required training is up to date and staff undertake additional courses, such as special educational needs training. Staff reflect upon practice through ongoing discussion and weekly team meetings. An Ofsted self-evaluation form highlights strengths and also identifies areas requiring improvement, some of which have been addressed. Playleaders have received considerable support, visits and information from local authority advisory staff during the past year to improve practice. Areas for improvement have been clearly identified and recorded. Some action has been taken, however, not all of the aspects raised have been implemented to improve the outcomes for children. Induction procedures for new staff are very limited and staff appraisals have not been undertaken to support ongoing staff development.

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

Children are happy at the group and freely explore the activities available. Staff prepare the room prior to the children's arrival in the morning and many resources are also stored at low level, enabling children to make their own selections and choices. Children form positive relationships with staff, who are warm and attentive to them. Staff have a calm and consistent approach, offering children clear explanations and reasonable boundaries, and children's behaviour is generally good. Positive behaviour is acknowledged and praised, and children learn how to keep themselves safe through reminders from staff. Staff value and respect children's individuality. They work closely with parents, liaising with other childcare or health professionals if required, to ensure children with any additional needs receive appropriate support at an early stage. Children and parents who speak English as an additional language are encouraged to share aspects of their culture and language with the group.

Staff introduce a variety of broad themes to widen children's learning experiences. The themes are very flexible to incorporate and follow any interests and ideas from the children. They establish children's capabilities and starting points through discussion with parents, a basic child profile form and through their own observations. Children's progress is recorded in well presented learning journeys. Most are well maintained with regular observations supported by photographs. However, the content of each is not consistent, for example, not all have a parents' comment section or development summary. Observations are linked to the areas of learning and mostly used effectively to identify a child's next steps, which are discussed at the weekly team meetings. Planning primarily consists of the activities and resources for each week. The links between observation, assessment and planning for individual children are not always evident or clearly traceable.

Children have some opportunities to begin to recognise their names as they self-register and endeavour to find their names at snack time. They explore a broad

variety of media and textures, such as play dough, rice and paint. Their imaginative play is well supported and encouraged by a good variety of props in the home area, where children play cooperatively for extended periods. They have some opportunities to use technology as they use the computer and CD player, enthusiastically dancing to the music. Problem solving and manipulative skills are encouraged as they complete puzzles of varying degrees of difficulty and learn how to thread large beads onto strings. Children concentrate for considerable periods at activities which engage them. For example, a young child enjoys exploring the play dough and competently uses scissors to cut it into small pieces.

Children begin to learn how plants grow and develop as they plant flowers, fruit and vegetables in the outdoor area. They are eventually able to sample some of their produce, such as potatoes and tomatoes, at snack times and help to make soup. They delight in making Christmas cakes, weighing out and mixing the ingredients. Children are encouraged to use all their senses in this activity, and discussion about the ingredients and the process of mixing and cooking extends children's learning.

Children are learning good hygiene practice through regular routines, pictures and reminders. Children wash their hands prior to eating, without the need for prompting from staff, reminding one another to use soap. They learn to make healthy choices as they are offered nutritious foods, such as fruit, vegetables and cheese at snack time, aided by a photo menu. During snack, children sometimes have opportunities to increase their skills and independence by selecting their own plate and cup and pouring out their own drink of milk or water. However, fresh drinking water is not always readily available to children throughout the session to ensure they are well hydrated. Children have regular opportunities for fresh air and exercise and are offered periods of outdoor play. They develop skills and competence with ride-on toys, balancing on equipment and batting and kicking balls. Children are able to rest or sleep according to their needs in the large cosy area.

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	2
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	2
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	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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