

New Start Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspector

Marina Anna Howarth

Setting address

Liversedge Children's Centre, Highbank First and Nursery
School, Eighth Avenue, LIVERSEDGE, West Yorkshire,
WF15 8LD

Telephone number

01132522848

Email

shona.beaton@pre-school.org.uk

Type of setting

Childcare - Non-Domestic

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Introduction

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Description of the setting

New Start Playgroup is one of many provisions run by the Pre-School Learning Alliance. It opened in 2011 and operates from rooms within Liversedge Children Centre, situated in the grounds of Highbank First and Nursery School, in a residential area of Liversedge. Children have access to an enclosed outdoor play area.

The playgroup is open between 12pm and 3.15pm, Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday, term time only. The playgroup is registered by Ofsted on the Early Years Register. A maximum of 16 children may attend the playgroup at any one time and there are currently 10 children on roll.

There are two members of staff employed to care for the children including the manager. The manager holds an early years degree and the second member of staff, who is the deputy, holds a level 3 qualification in early years.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children thrive in an inclusive playgroup where they are valued as unique individuals. A safe and stimulating environment is provided, in which a good balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities promote children's progress towards the early learning goals. However, resources, such as information and communication technology, are limited. Children are confident, safe and secure and enjoy their time at the playgroup. A secure partnership with parents ensures information about children's care and learning is informally shared. All staff are committed to bring about sustainable improvements and effective systems for self-evaluation results in positive outcomes for children.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- provide more opportunities to enable children to find out about and identify the uses of everyday technology and to enable them to use information and communication technology and programmable toys to support their learning.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children are protected because there are effective systems in place for the recruitment, selection and induction of staff. Arrangements for safeguarding are robust, regularly reviewed, carefully managed and understood by staff, who have all attended safeguarding training. Children's welfare is further promoted through effective, robust risk assessments conducted throughout the building and for

individual outings. These are conducted daily, monthly and reviewed on a regular basis.

The playgroup has a highly positive relationship with parents and carers and relationships are well-established, ensuring each child's needs are met effectively. Staff are continually striving to develop systems to involve parents more in their children's learning, in a variety of ways. For example, parents are provided with information relating to the activities and themes that are covered in the playgroup. This enables them to participate in activities at home with their children. Some children bring items of interest into the setting, such as conkers when they explore the theme of autumn. Close liaison with the local school and further ongoing developments with other schools in the community, helps to develop the transition process, promoting a positive experience for the children. Developing communication systems with external agencies, such as the local library, speech therapists and physiotherapists, enables children to become familiar with their local community and receive consistency of care and support, where required.

The playgroup's self-evaluation demonstrates a very good understanding of the strengths of the early years provision. All staff are proactive in identifying clear targets for improvement, such as developing systems to record children's home experiences. High priority is given to staff training and development. Courses, such as safeguarding, observation and assessment arrangements, enhance their skills in specific subjects. Staff have recently reviewed their approach to planning and assessment procedures and are beginning to highlight children's interests in weekly plans. Regular consultation with children and parents enables staff to plan meaningful activities, which interest and stimulate the children. Positive steps are taken to ensure that all the children are valued and fully included at the playgroup through close liaison with parents and the provision of resources and activities that reflect diversity.

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

Children participate in a wide and balanced range of activities and experiences designed to stimulate their interest and challenge their learning. The staff have implemented effective planning systems which allow children to make good progress in their learning and development. Observations of the children are conducted on a regular basis and the information is used to plan meaningful activities for the children, taking into consideration their interests and age and stage of development. Children's individual learning is effectively supported because staff know them very well. The well organised environment provides access to a wide range of good quality toys and resources. Low-level, clearly labelled units, allow children to make independent choices and become confident learners. Although the room is sectioned into designated areas, children confidently move around the environment taking resources from one area to another to extend their play.

A variety of creative opportunities enable children to express themselves through painting, mark-making and constructing things. They enjoy spreading glue onto

their hands and squelching it between their fingers exclaiming 'this is sticky.' They create patterns in lentils and create chalk drawings on the floor outside. They discover the concept of clean and dirty as they wash the bikes using sponges and water. They describe the flour as being soft as they run their hands through it and then giggle when they put flour prints on their nose. Children enjoy being outside where they ride bikes and negotiate space. They develop skills of balance as they walk across the stepping blocks. They are discovering life cycles as they explore and create insect habitats and grow flowers and herbs. They enjoy making sounds by pulling bells and rattling wind chimes and accessing a wide variety of musical instruments.

The staff play and interact with children to effectively encourage their communication and thinking. This ensures they are challenged at a level appropriate to their individual understanding. They ask questions relating to the activity, such as 'what colour is that?' and encourage children to explain what they are doing. Children clearly enjoy communicating their interests to the staff and seek them out to show them their creations or talk about their experiences. There is a good balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities. Children play alongside their peer groups with their chosen activity, happily conversing and using their imagination. For example, they play with the water, filling containers and pouring the water into other vessels. They then carry the water over to the sand tray and mix it together with the sand excitedly exclaiming 'look what we've done, do you want to feel this?' They use spoons and various utensils, such as whisks and pots with flour and explain that they are making 'chocolate cakes with pink icing.'

Children behave well as staff act as positive role models. They say 'please' and 'thank-you' without prompts and take pride in their environment as they help to tidy away. They are becoming aware of their own safety as they participate in regular fire evacuation procedures and refrain from running in the playroom. They share toys and take an active interest in what everyone else is doing. They discover that print has meaning as they access a wide variety of books and describe what's happening by looking at illustrations. They are able to identify their name as they confidently find their name card when they arrive. They learn how to count in sequence as staff sing number rhymes and encourage them to count frequently. They develop an understanding of diversity through participating in the celebration of different festivals and accessing resources, such as books, small world figures, dressing up clothes and puzzles that reflect positive images of gender, culture and disability. They develop knowledge and skills that help them make sense of the world around them, such as using binoculars and magnifying glasses to explore their environment. However, opportunities to enable them to find out about using everyday technology, such as information and communication technology and accessing programmable toys, is limited.

Staff are very caring and sensitive towards children's needs. For example, when children become upset, staff ensure that individual care and attention is provided. Due to their extensive knowledge of children, staff are able to reassure them quickly, thus, creating a calm atmosphere. Healthy lifestyles are fully promoted. A daily opportunity for outdoor play provides fresh air and exercise. Children are well protected from illness and infection because high standards of hygiene are maintained and staff follow clear procedures when caring for sick or injured

children. Children are developing a good awareness of personal hygiene as they follow consistent hand washing routines. They are offered a variety of healthy snacks which is further supported through staff offering explanations as to what foods are healthy for them.

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	3
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	3
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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