

# Fowlmere Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

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**Unique reference number** 221791  
**Inspection date** 29/09/2011  
**Inspector** Susan Parker

**Setting address** Fowlmere URC Chapel Hall, Chapel Lane, Fowlmere,  
ROYSTON, Hertfordshire, SG8 7SA  
**Telephone number** 07890 674743  
**Email** fowlmereplaygroup@hotmail.co.uk  
**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**

Fowlmere Playgroup opened in 1977 and operates from the chapel hall in Fowlmere, Hertfordshire. It is managed as a registered charity by a committee of parents. The playgroup is registered on the Early Years Register and both the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register.

A maximum of 20 children may attend the playgroup at any one time. The playgroup is open each weekday except Wednesdays from 9am to 12 noon during school term times. The Friday session is for older children preparing for school. Children have an enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 15 children aged from two and a half to under five years on roll, most of whom receive funding for early years education. Children mainly come from the local area. The playgroup supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and who speak English as an additional language. The playgroup currently employs four members of staff, three of whom hold appropriate early years qualifications.

## **The overall effectiveness of the early years provision**

Overall the quality of the provision is satisfactory.

Children's welfare needs are adequately promoted because the provider has taken appropriate steps to ensure that all requirements are met. Staff have an adequate understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage and organisation of the sessions generally deliver adequate individualised learning opportunities for children. Evolving self-evaluation means issues have significantly improved.

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

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

- develop further systems to monitor and evaluate the quality of the provision to reflect current practice
- provide more opportunities for children to develop independent personal care skills.

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

Children's safety and welfare are adequately promoted. Risk assessments and daily checks ensure that hazards are minimised and children can explore in safety. Suitable checks are carried out to ensure that all staff are suitable to work with children. Any unchecked persons are supervised at all times. Most members of staff hold first aid certificates, which ensures that any accidents are dealt with appropriately.

Systems for self-evaluation are not fully effective for quality assuring and reflecting on the strengths and weaknesses of current practice in order to improve outcomes for children. All members of staff regularly exchange views and ideas through daily discussions and staff meetings. They seek feedback on their strengths and weaknesses from children, parents and carers. This is done through children reflecting on their day in group sessions. Parents are involved through communication books, invitations to join the committee, notices and newsletters. Staff are supported in attending further training and gaining qualifications. This helps create a positive learning environment where children make steady progress. The staff are developing effective links with other settings the children attend in order to support children's individual learning.

Resources and equipment are generally of good quality and adequately used to promote children's learning and development. Suitable policies and procedures are in place and shared with parents. There has been a restructure of staff and management, which has improved the leadership and management of the setting and has a positive impact on the children attending.

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

Children are making satisfactory progress in all areas of learning and are adequately supported in achieving because staff have a sound understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage. Children display developmentally appropriate skills and attitudes towards learning as a direct result of the steady input from the staff team. They adequately observe and assess children as they play, using this information to inform activity planning. Staff generally respond to children's developmental needs, and adaptations to planned activities are carried out. Children's individual assessment records show they are making steady progress towards the early learning goals. The environment is attractive and accessible, enabling children to make independent choices and select some of their own resources. This adequately promotes children's confidence and self-motivation.

Children can generally free flow between the indoor and outdoor learning environment. They display their feelings of safety as they confidently move from one area of play to another. They display an understanding of safety issues and behaviour is generally good. Children are rewarded with praise from staff, which further promotes their self-esteem. They have sound relationships with the staff, whose consistent approach to behaviour management enables children to feel secure and develop their understanding of appropriate behaviour. They show care and concern for each other, sharing resources, listening and taking turns in discussions. Sound assessment by each child's key worker allows any strengths or weakness to be identified, and adaptations to curriculum planning are made. Children display sound skills for the future as they share ideas and work together. For example, three children play together on the 'cycle bus', stopping at the traffic light when prompted to by staff. Children build cogs and cubes with construction kits, using mathematical terms in conversation with each other. The calm atmosphere helps the newest and youngest children to settle quickly, and as a

result they display contentment and adopt the playgroup routines.

Children's independence is generally promoted through giving them the choice of when to have their snack. This enables them to have sufficient time to explore their play without much interruption. Some personal independence skills, such as washing their hands and going to the toilet, are encouraged and children are supported in learning to do this for themselves. However, skills such as wiping their own nose and putting on shoes are sometimes overlooked.

Children have sufficient opportunities to develop early reading and writing skills. They regularly make marks in everyday play and see familiar words around the room. Use of electronic toys, torches, magnifying glasses and keyboards develop children's understanding of the wider world. They have reasonable access to a suitable outdoor area, which is used effectively. Children can choose to play indoors and outside with most of the resources. They display competent skills when riding the bikes and using the magnifying glass to look closely at an ant. These sound activities result in a welcoming playgroup where children make steady progress towards the early learning goals.

## 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>	3
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	3

### 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>	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	3
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	3
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	3
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	3

### 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>	3
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	3
The extent to which children feel safe	3
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	3
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	3
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	3

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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