

Andover Mencap Playscheme

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspector

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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).

Children only attend this setting before and/or after the school day and/or during the school holidays. The judgements in this report reflect the quality of early years provision offered to children during those periods.

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

Andover and District Mencap was established over 40 years ago and registered in 2011. It is a local Charity supporting adults and children with learning disabilities and their families and carers. It operates from purpose built premises called the Wellington Centre, based near Andover town centre. The children have use of a variety of rooms in the centre including a large sensory room and enclosed outdoor area. Children attending the centre come from Andover and the surrounding areas. The setting is registered to care for no more than 50 children under eight years at any one time; of these, 25 may be in the early years age range. There are currently two children in this age group attending the after school club and eight children attending the playscheme. The setting is registered on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. The setting offers a range of clubs including an after school club which operates term time only from 3.30pm until 6pm and a playscheme which operates on some Saturdays each month and during the school holidays on Tuesday and Thursday from 10am until 4pm. Children over the age of five years also attend the clubs. The setting employs 50 staff who work across the different clubs and, of these, 25 have relevant early years qualifications. The playscheme and after school club have dedicated managers and regular staff who attend each session.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is satisfactory.

Management and staff develop positive relationships with parents to help them identify and meet children's unique needs. However, partnerships with schools and other agencies are inconsistent and do not fully support this process. Generally, staff support children appropriately, however, the environment is not very comfortable or effectively resourced to encourage children's play, learning and creativity. Overall, children are safe and secure, although management do not conduct fire drills regularly to ensure they work in practice. The setting identifies some areas for further development, although has not fully developed self-evaluation systems to help with this process. They demonstrate a sound capacity overall to maintain continuous improvement.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- develop the use of reflective practice and self-evaluation to identify strengths and priorities for development that will improve outcomes for children
- conduct regular evacuation drills and record details in a fire log book of any problems encountered and how they were resolved
- develop arrangements for working in partnership and creating a two-way

flow of information with other settings and professionals from other agencies in order to develop continuity in meeting children's individual needs

- plan and resource a challenging environment, indoors and outdoors, that encourages children's play, creativity and learning, and create an indoor environment that is inviting and comfortable for all children.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Arrangements for safeguarding children are suitable. Management implement appropriate procedures to keep children safe and protect them from harm. Staff have a clear understanding of child protection issues and know what to do if they have concerns about a child in their care. Suitable recruitment and vetting procedures are in place. Clear induction and ongoing training makes sure staff understand their roles and responsibilities and keeps them up-to-date. This includes evacuation procedures to ensure staff know what to do in the event of a fire. However, the fire drill is not practised regularly in each of the clubs to ensure it works effectively in practice and staff are clear about their duties. The premises are safe and effective security means that children are unable to leave unaccompanied. There are clear arrangements for keeping children safe when transporting them from school and taking them on outings.

Staff are enthusiastic and children benefit from the high adult-child ratio. There are some arrangements for liaising with other agencies and schools children attend, however, this is usually at each child's annual review. This means staff do not always have up to date information throughout the year to help them fully support children's individual needs and well-being. Instead, they rely on information gathered from parents to help them develop a consistent approach to managing children's care and learning. Staff regularly exchange information with parents. They spend time talking to parents at the end of the day or use a communication diary to share information about what children have been doing, their meals and routines. Staff develop positive relationships with parents. Parents comment on how much they appreciate the service provided and how happy their children are. They receive basic information about how the setting operates.

Management seek the views of parents to help them develop the service provided. They encourage the professional development of staff through systems of appraisal and ongoing training. Staff also identify areas for further improvement, such as developing a role-play area and labelling boxes with pictures so that children can see what is inside. However, there is not a robust system for reflecting on all areas of practice in order to improve outcomes for children.

The playscheme, after-school and Saturday clubs are in new premises. The premises are clean and well cared for. There is an excellent sensory room, which inspires and excites children's interest. However, the main activity room is not visually inspiring or organised effectively to encourage children's play or engagement. For example, there are adult-sized tables and chairs, no displays and no soft furnishings or a carpet for relaxed floor play. There is an outdoor play area, although it is not always used. Planning and use of available resources are

inconsistent. However, staff are vigilant in ensuring all children have the support they need to explore the resources available and make steady progress. The setting promotes equality and diversity adequately. Some resources and activities help children embrace difference in the world around them.

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

Children enjoy different activities according to the scheme they are attending. They mix with children of different ages and differing needs. The Saturday club plans a variety of activities on the premises. The playscheme usually organises daily outings in the holidays. Children arrive at the centre and when staff have collated all of their records they depart in minibuses. Children visit local places of interest, such as the farm, the park and soft play centres. Staff take photographs and keep records of these visits to share with parents and record children's experiences and achievements. The after-school club operates daily during term times. Children usually arrive in the minibus and staff carefully check they have the supplies they need to meet their individual health requirements. Some resources are set out on the tables and staff find out what children want to play with. The cars and car mat is popular. Children enjoy rolling the cars on the floor and looking at the wheels. Staff check if they would like a drink and show them pictures of what is available today. They interact positively with children using a combination of signs and clear speech which children understand. For example, that they need to take turns when building the bricks together. Staff introduce simple numbers as they count how high the tower is and name the colours of the bricks.

Children are generally encouraged to make their own choices about what they want to do. Boxes with books, puzzles, cars and construction are on the tables. Staff explain that resources are rotated. Creative materials are generally available. Children also go in the garden, although this is not set up daily. Staff support children effectively when they are playing with the resources. However, it is not easy for children to see what is available because staff do not always present them effectively. The sensory room, on the other hand, is inspirational. Children begin to make connections as they repeatedly press a button, spin wheels and turn lights on and off. They bounce around on the soft play surface and explore the ball pool. Staff help children to investigate the equipment, to notice as things change and express themselves freely.

Children make steady progress. Staff gather information about their individual health, behaviour and learning needs. Staff follow behaviour management strategies and this helps children understand what is expected. Staff observe what children can do and record their achievements and interests in the relevant area of learning. However, each club has their own system even though some children attend after-school and in the holidays. There are different staff working at each club which means it is more difficult to achieve continuity if different records are used. When raised with staff they respond positively and recognise this as an area they can easily improve.

Staff make sure children's health and safety needs are appropriately met. Staff and children follow good hygiene practices. Staff take account of children's need for privacy when changing and using the toilet. Staff adhere to the medication policy and individual dietary requirements. At the after-school club children enjoy freshly prepared meals, such as chicken casserole and jelly for dessert. Children use their bodies in different ways when playing in the sensory room, although do not always have opportunities for fresh air and exercise outdoors. Children become aware of how to keep themselves safe because they follow the clear routines encouraged by staff.

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	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

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
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Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	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
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The provider confirms that the requirements of the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are:	Met
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