

Crowland Community Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspector

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Setting address

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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).

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

Crowland Community Playgroup opened in 1968. It is managed by a committee and operates from the Wheatsheaf Rooms in Crowland, Lincolnshire. The playgroup is open five days a week during school term times. Sessions are from 9am to 12noon each weekday and from 12noon to 3pm on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday; providing the opportunity for children to stay all day. All children have access to an enclosed outdoor play area.

A maximum of 24 children may attend the playgroup at any one time and there are currently 27 children on roll who are within the Early Years Foundation Stage. The playgroup is registered on the Early Years Register and both the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. Children come from the local area. The playgroup supports children who have English as an additional language. It employs five members of staff, four of whom hold appropriate early years qualifications.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is satisfactory.

The enthusiastic staff team work well together to create an inclusive environment where individuals are respected and valued. A commitment to improving the setting is evident and they work effectively with relevant advisory professionals to raise standards of care and education. Children's care and learning needs are met to a satisfactory degree as the setting works closely with parents and some relevant professionals. Methods for assessing and planning for children's learning are becoming more established, and as such children are better supported to extend their skills. Children make steady progress in relation to their starting points through the range of practical play activities they encounter. Children's welfare is protected through secure practices and significant improvements have been made since the last inspection.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- embed the system of assessing and planning for children's progress consistently, to ensure every child is fully supported to build on the skills they already have
- extend the two-way flow of information with parents and other settings to ensure all have the opportunity to work together to support children to reach their full potential, such as sharing next their steps
- consider further improvements in organisation to ensure every child receives an enjoyable learning and development experience, with regard to lunch time transition, and increase opportunities for children to make choices from the variety of resources stored elsewhere.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children's safety and welfare is well maintained in the setting. Staff fully understand their responsibilities to safeguard children and capably describe procedures for working with relevant agencies to protect children from harm or neglect. Staff are vigilant of children's safety, supervising them well and helping them to consider safe practices for themselves. Risk assessments are completed for the provision and outings to reduce the likelihood of accidents. Robust recruitment procedures are in place and checks are completed for staff and committee members to ensure their suitability to be around children. All required records, including those relating to the care of the children, are well maintained and shared appropriately, with parents providing continuity in children's care.

A welcoming environment is created and staff build positive relationships with children and parents. Parents receive a good range of information when their children first attend, keeping them well informed about how the setting operates. Systems for communicating with parents and other settings the children attend are improving, for example, new communication books are in place where all can record relevant information to be shared with each other, providing greater continuity in children's care. However, information about children's next steps is not yet included, which somewhat limits the opportunities for parents, staff and other settings to all work together to support children in reaching their full potential. The setting successfully works with other professionals to ensure children with special educational needs and/or disabilities are appropriately supported. The staff team are beginning to use signs, symbols and gesture in the setting to aid communication with those at an early stage of developing language skills.

The setting takes positive steps to improve standards, addressing actions raised at the last inspection. All legal requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage are now met, improving safety for children and providing a more effective learning environment. The staff team have worked hard to extend their knowledge of child development and methods of supporting children's progress through seeking and taking on board advice from relevant professionals and reading relevant documentation. As a result, new methods to observe and plan for children's progression are implemented, helping them begin to build on the skills they already have. The system is relatively new and has yet to be fully effective in ensuring that children are supported to reach their full potential. The staff team meet regularly to monitor their practices. They use methods of self-evaluation to highlight strengths and further areas for development, implement timely improvement plans and show a strong capacity to maintain continual improvement.

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

Due to a reorganisation of the layout of the room, outdoor provision and daily routines, children are confident and secure and their behaviour is good. Children refer to the setting's 'golden rules' as they are reminded not to run indoors to keep themselves and their friends safe. Indoor and outdoor spaces offer a stimulating environment where children explore and make choices from a good range of toys displayed in accessible storage units. Staff rotate toys stored elsewhere in the setting to offer variety and some children can contribute to this process. However, younger children or those with less developed communication skills are not fully included in the current method. Children benefit from being able to choose when to access the snack table or to play outside, enabling them to concentrate for longer periods at activities of their choice.

Staff demonstrate improved skills of communicating with children, asking open-ended questions and bringing in wider areas of learning to routines and children's self-chosen play. For example, younger children begin to recognise colours as they choose their plate at snack time and develop their personal independence skills as they butter their own cracker. Mathematical concepts are beginning to be introduced into children's play effectively, such as counting the buns they have made with the play dough for the bakers shop. Children begin to develop skills for the future through the range of experiences they encounter. Some show developing literacy skills as they recognise their name cards and recall favourite stories as they look at books independently. Many enjoy using the computer and skilfully operate the mouse to complete simple programmes, with staff on hand to support those less confident. Opportunities for mark making are provided indoors and outdoors, and the large chalk board outside enables children who learn better outdoors to practise writing skills. There is a suitable balance of free choice time and adult-led group activities to sustain children's interest, although a short period during the lunch time transition is less well organised, with some children losing interest as they wait on the carpet with little adult interaction or purpose.

The setting recognises the importance of promoting children's awareness of diversity throughout its work, and improvements are evident in this area. Consequently, children's knowledge and understanding of the world is generally well supported because differences are recognised and valued. Children enjoy tasting foods and create artwork for a variety of festivals and events. They show wonder as they explore exotic animals during a visit from an animal handling company and learn about people who help us when talking to visitors, such as the local crossing patrol person or the fire service. The setting recognises that some children learn better outdoors and as a result are developing the variety of activities provided outside. As well as developing physical skills, children explore aspects of nature as they plant and care for herbs and potato plants or develop their imagination when building dens in the secret garden. These increased outdoor activities also enable children to benefit from exercise and fresh air to support a healthy lifestyle. Staff are considering how they can provide further opportunities to extend individuals physical skills, such as making more use of the local park, but this has yet to have a positive impact on children. They follow good

hygiene routines, cleaning their hands before their healthy snack of fresh fruit, savoury biscuits, milk and water. Staff sit with the children at meal times to support social skills, such as using good manners and remaining at the table to eat.

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	2

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	2
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	3
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	3
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	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	2
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	2
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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