

Fairhills Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspector Anne Drinkwater

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Type of setting Childcare - Non-Domestic

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Introduction

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Description of the setting

Fairhills Playgroup is a community group run by a committee. It re-registered in 2010 after a premises move. It operates from a single story community hall in the Irlam area of Manchester. Children have access to a large playroom and enclosed outdoor play area. It is open each weekday from 9.10am to 12.10pm and from 12.45pm to 2.45pm during term time only.

The Playgroup is registered on the Early Years Register. A maximum of 32 children may attend the setting at any one time. There are currently 62 children aged from two to five years on roll, some in part-time places. The setting has procedures in place to support children with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and who speak English as an additional language.

A manager and four members of staff are employed to work with the children, four of whom hold an early years qualification to at least NVQ level 3. The setting receives support from the local authority.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

All children are valued as individuals and the staff team promote their learning and development requirements competently. Children are well cared for and benefit from a stimulating and secure environment. The management and staff team evaluate the provision effectively and have a clear understanding of how to make continuous improvements. The partnerships with parents and others delivering the Early Years Foundation Stage requirements are still in their infancy but are given high priority. The playgroup has developed highly successful partnerships with professional agencies to ensure the needs of all children are met and additional support is provided.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- involve parents in the ongoing observation and assessment process, including consulting them about their children's developmental starting points.
- further develop opportunities to share relevant information with other providers of the Early Years Foundation Stage about children's learning and development to promote effective continuity and progression
- improve the daily routine to allow children more frequent access to the outdoor environment.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Management and staff have a good understanding of how to protect children and make this their first priority. Staff have a clear understanding of the procedures to follow and how to refer any concerns. Rigorous vetting procedures and ongoing suitability checks ensure that all adults are assessed as to their suitability to work with children. Regular fire drills and effective risk assessments are conducted within the premises, to eliminate identified risks to all attending the playgroup.

Staff are motivated towards their own professional development and are providing good quality care and education for the children. The staff team have established good working relationships and are all committed towards the ongoing improvements of the playgroup. The staff work closely together to enhance their practice and to identify weaknesses, either through their past inspections or support visits from the local authority workers. All the actions and recommendations set at the last inspection have been fully addressed. All required documentation is in place and implemented well to promote children's health and safety. High quality resources are accessible, encouraging all children to engage in activities that are inclusive and promote all areas of learning. However, the well resourced outdoor play area is not always accessible to the children. Staff have a thorough understanding of each child's learning and welfare needs and value them as unique individuals. Staff support children in developing a strong understanding of diversity through the celebration of different cultural festivals and events around the world.

The experienced playgroup staff have established effective links with professional agencies to support children with any additional needs. In addition, parents receive regular information of daily events through displays and are encouraged to record any home events in their child's diary. Parents are well informed about their children's development and have regular opportunities to discuss progress during daily contact or formal, pre-arranged meetings, however they and other settings the children attend are not fully involved in observing or planning for their children's learning and development needs. That said, parents are very pleased with the care of their children and are able to talk to staff at any time about any concerns.

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

Staff have a secure understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage and use an effective key person system to support children to make good progress. Children are happy and confident in their environment and are familiar with the routines. The experienced staff make learning and development their key focus and adapt their approach to suit different ages and needs. Photographs of the children engaged in various activities are used to illustrate the many learning opportunities offered to the children. The play room is organised to allow children easy access to resources promoting self-help skills and independence.

Children are inquisitive thinkers who actively participate and comment on events around them. For example, during a group activity outdoors, they realised the wind was blowing the paper laid down for a painting activity, they waited until the wind died down before commencing the activity. Staff have adopted the 'Every child is a talker' system to engage children in developing their language and communication skills. This, in addition to the many opportunities offered throughout the session, has created confident, talkative children who vocalise their feelings well. Children have many opportunities to develop their writing through play and older children are beginning to form letters. Regular opportunities for number recognition mean that most children can count to 10 and recognise a variety of different shapes. Children develop good problem solving skills through the planned activities and the independent access they have to a range of puzzles, shapes and games. Children have daily use of technology using electronic devices such as the computer and electronic toys. They enjoy playing with the sand and paint on a regular basis. Children on occasion enjoy playing outdoors, developing their physical skills as they ride wheeled toys, or practise their catching skills. They play in the sand in the all weather sand shelter, plant bulbs and are aware of their environment.

Staff plan through a system that covers the six areas of learning and incorporates a wide range of different toys, equipment and activities for each session. They effectively use regular observation to plan, and planning comprises of a good balance of adult led and child initiated activities. The playgroup effectively promotes children's individual learning patterns, interests and activities. Children learn good hygiene practices as they wash their hands before meals, after using the toilet and after outdoor play. They help themselves to fresh drinking water or milk and enjoy fresh fruit snacks, cheese and crackers; commenting to visitors how nice they are. Staff regularly praise and encourage children's efforts and achievements, developing their self-esteem and confidence. Children have a good understanding of how to promote their own safety. They behave very well, cooperate, show each other respect and follow instructions.

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	3

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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