

West End Play Group

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspection date 20/04/2012
Inspector Jennifer Beckles

Setting address Village Hall, West End Lane, West End, Esher, Surrey, KT10
8LB

Telephone number 01372 469157

Email

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

West End Play Group has been operating since 1975. It is a committee run playgroup and a registered charity. It is situated in West End, a village near Esher in Surrey. A maximum of 36 children in the early years age group may attend the playgroup at any one time, with none under the age of two years. The playgroup operates five mornings a week from 9.30am to 12.45pm. Afternoon sessions take place from 1.30pm until 4pm on Mondays and Thursdays with a lunch club between 12.45pm and 1.40pm. Sessions operate during term time only. The playgroup operates from the village hall. Children have access to a large foyer which is used for messy play, the hall and toilet facilities. There is an enclosed outdoor play area. There are currently 58 children aged from two to five years on roll. The playgroup is funded to provide some free early education to children aged three and four years. Children mostly come from the local area. The playgroup supports a number of children who learn English as an additional language. The playgroup employs seven members of staff. Of these, six hold appropriate early years qualifications and one member of staff is working towards a relevant qualification. The playgroup is registered on the Early Years Register and on both parts of the Childcare Register.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is outstanding.

Children make significant gains in their learning because there are highly effective plans that provide children with a wide range of challenging and enriching experiences. These are carefully linked to children's individual needs and the early learning goals. Adults consistently place the highest priority to safeguarding all children. Partnership work with parents is extremely effective, supported by innovative communication systems. Wider partnerships generally support children's development and welfare needs well. Excellent systems to reflect on the playgroup's practice, coupled with ambitious targets for the future, sustain continuous development exceptionally well.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To further improve the high quality early years provision the registered person should consider:

- improve partnerships with all other early years settings involved with the children to promote continuity in their learning.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children's safety is of paramount importance to the staff at this playgroup. Staff follow comprehensive policies, implementing procedures meticulously. Children are closely supervised. Thorough risk assessment covers the premises, outings and anything with which a child may come into contact, so that potential hazards are minimised. Comprehensive recruitment procedures make sure that only staff who have been rigorously vetted are able to work with the children.

The playgroup staff make exceptionally effective use of the playgroup's resources and available space, such as providing a dedicated creative area equipped with a range of interesting and inspiring materials. Consequently, the main hall is conducive to learning, being thoughtfully organised and offering a broad range of high quality toys and resources, such as a well-stocked and inviting book corner.

The playgroup leadership and staff have excellent awareness of its strengths and areas for development and have set highly relevant and ambitious targets, such as development into a 'forest school', in the outdoor learning environment. It has made considerable progress from its previous inspection to improve outcomes for children; these include the provision more displays and useful labelling of the play environment to support children's learning.

Parents value the provision highly and are active participants in setting key priorities for development. For instance, they suggested a playgroup website to provide an alternative means of communication for those who do not go into the playgroup regularly. This enables all parents to keep up to date with news, including policy or procedural changes. Annual questionnaires are distributed to parents to elicit their views and many suggestions are implemented, such as offering organic milk to the children. Parents are thoroughly involved in their children's learning. They share detailed information about their children's interests and skills with staff. They are kept very well informed of their children's progress through regular parents' meetings, and the ready availability of their children's detailed development folders. These contain informative samples of annotated work, observations, and assessments. An innovative system provides daily opportunities to discuss children's progress and well-being at the end of each session. Furthermore, the manager offers email contact as an alternative means of easy communication with her.

Wider partnerships are well-established overall, making a strong contribution to children's achievement and well-being, including those with additional needs. Visits from a local dentist help children learn about caring for teeth, for example. Links with some other early years settings involved with children are not so fully established, which does not promote continuity in learning as well as possible when children move between them. The playgroup staff offer caring, nurturing support to any children with additional needs. Under the guidance of the special educational needs coordinator, they produce comprehensive individual plans to address the needs of each child in collaboration with relevant outside professionals involved in the child's care and learning, so that equality and diversity are fully

promoted.

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

Children are very happy and settled in this setting. They arrive with boundless enthusiasm and eagerly take part in a range of entirely appropriate and interesting activities. Children are familiar with the playgroup's established routines. They have warm relationships with staff, and show an extremely strong sense of security within the playgroup. This confidence allows them to explore their surroundings and to form harmonious relationships with other children. They show clear awareness of how to keep themselves safe by, for instance, readily putting on fluorescent jackets so that they can be easily seen while out on a trip. Older children remind the younger ones to 'stay in line' to keep safe when on outings.

Children make great strides in learning about healthy living. They make posters of healthy food choices and proudly bring in their own fruit snacks from home, showing the way the playgroup works with parents to encourage healthy eating. Children benefit from daily fresh air and exercise by visiting open green fields where they eagerly run, skip and jump. Use of varied apparatus and equipment in the outdoor area helps them develop other physical skills quickly. 'Wake up and shake up your body' music sessions provide further thoroughly enjoyable exercise. Children readily wash their hands at appropriate times, understanding the need to do this, as one child says 'My hands are clean now; no more germs'.

A highly skilled staff support children to make excellent progress toward the early learning goals. They know the children extremely well from undertaking regular and high quality observations of their play, and use this information to plan an excellent range of experiences, indoors and out. Commendable emphasis is placed on outdoor learning, which provides equality for all children who learn better when outside. Children observe and discuss heights of trees, colours of blossoms, and the antics of squirrels, while wandering along a woodland path. They learn about the life cycle of frogs as they happily dip nets into a pond and examine tadpoles with curiosity.

Children develop early writing skills as they use a range of tools on the writing table, such as chunky crayons, felt pens, and paper where children draw pictures and write their names independently. Children learn to recognise their names as they register their attendance with name cards in the morning. A well stocked and inviting book corner provides children with opportunities to turn the pages of their favourite story. They use their counting skills competently during their play and in daily routines. Children show skill when using a range of technology, as they operate programmable toys or use educational games on child lap tops. All such experiences provide children with valuable skills for their later lives, as they move on to school.

Staff are extremely flexible about the experiences covered in a session and readily respond to children's interests. Everyone spontaneously gathers outside, for

example, to watch the arrival of a bride in a vintage car for her wedding at the church next door. Children excitedly discuss the sound of bagpipes and marvel at the bride's dress, which stimulates further conversation and activities.

An excellent range of creative materials enables children to paint, model and produce collage work. Children engage well in the range of activities on offer and show high levels of concentration. They work exceptionally well together.

Behaviour is exemplary. Staff use praise highly effectively to encourage good behaviour. Children learn that families differ, through discussion and story telling. Parents from different cultures visit to share their different special family events, sharing traditional stories with children. Staff readily challenge any discriminatory comments so that children learn to accept and respect difference.

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?	1
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	1

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	1
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	1
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	1
The effectiveness of safeguarding	1
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	1
The effectiveness of partnerships	2
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	1

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
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Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	1
The extent to which children feel safe	1
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	1
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	1

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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