

Devizes Pre-school

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number 146049
Inspection date 08/05/2012
Inspector Christine Huard

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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*.

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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

Devizes Pre-school Playgroup opened in 1968, and has been on the present site since 1998. It is registered on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. It operates from a mobile classroom, within the grounds of Southbroom Infants School in Devizes. The pre-school serves the local area of Devizes and surrounding villages, and is committee-run. The group is registered to care for 28 children aged two to five years of age. There are currently 52 children on roll, most of whom are in receipt of government funding for free early years education. Children attend a variety of sessions. The pre-school makes provision for children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. The group opens five days a week term time only, from 9am to 3pm. There are 15 members of staff who work a variety of sessions with the children, nine of whom work regularly with the children and all of whom hold relevant Early Years qualifications. These range from National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) level 6 (EYP), to NVQ level 2. The group receives support from the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership and a number of agencies including speech and language therapy, portage and the area special educational needs co-ordinator.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Devizes pre-school playgroup is a good setting that makes effective provision for the children who attend. Children's learning and development are good because there is a wide range of stimulating activities made available for them, although some opportunities for promoting early writing skills are missed. The manager works closely and effectively with her team to ensure that the needs of all children are met. The playgroup has good partnerships with parents and carers and the host school. The manager and staff regularly monitor and evaluate most aspects of their practice in order to make improvements to the provision. All recommendations from the last inspection have been fully addressed, and as a result, the playgroup demonstrates a good capacity for further improvement.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- regularly revise and update all policies, such as that for the curriculum, to reflect current practice
- make greater and more enticing provision for children to develop their early writing and mark-making skills both inside and outdoors

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Safeguarding arrangements are outstanding. The playgroup implements exceptionally robust measures to ensure that the children are kept safe and secure. At the time of the inspection safeguarding procedures were very comprehensive. All procedures for ensuring that staff are suitable to work with children are fully in place and all staff have first-aid and child-protection training. The quality of written risk assessments is very high. The inside and outdoor areas and equipment are thoroughly assessed for risks on a daily basis. The kitchen area is secure and inaccessible to children and staff are highly vigilant to ensure all surfaces and resources are scrupulously clean. The setting is well run by a skilled and experienced manager and an accomplished and committed team. Well established, effective self-evaluation procedures ensure that the whole team has a good understanding of the strengths and areas for further development to drive on-going improvement of provision. Ambition is embedded well. While most statutory policies are fully in place, some, for instance those relating to the curriculum, have yet to be fully updated and revised. Children have good opportunities to learn about cultural diversity, and equal opportunities and diversity are promoted well. Discrimination of any sort is not tolerated. The setting has a good range of resources, which are used well by staff, and cover all areas of learning. All the recommendations from the last inspection have been successfully addressed. Fire drills are regular and well-documented and all the children understand what to do in the event of an emergency. All relevant policies regarding children's welfare are in place and detailed records are kept of any accidents or injuries and are shared with parents and carers. Children have plenty of opportunities to develop independence and make choices for themselves. Partnerships with parents and carers are strong and they have opportunities to contribute to their children's assessment records. Parents and carers are involved very well in their children's learning and development and the manager is very receptive to their ideas and suggestions. For example, parents and carers have access to a prominent suggestions box and are able to contribute to children's 'Learning Journeys' and reports on progress. They receive regular newsletters and a wide range of information about activities taking place. Parents and carers are active in raising funds to support the playgroup and are extremely happy with the provision for their children. As one said, 'My child is only upset when he has to stay at home'. They receive regular feedback about their children and staff make themselves available to speak with them at any time. There are more formal opportunities to discuss their child's progress and next steps in learning and development at regular intervals. The pre-school has a very close partnership with the nearby children's centre and the manager is on the advisory board. It also has good relationships with the host school. These links are very effective in helping to address any concerns about particular children and in making the transition to school a smooth one.

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

Children settle quickly and happily as soon as they arrive in the morning. They rapidly become absorbed in a wide variety of activities which enable them to develop and learn effectively. They are sociable and inquisitive, asking questions freely, and their personal and social skills, confidence and self-esteem are developing well. Children learn how to share and are beginning to work together. They are motivated and cooperate willingly with other children and adults. The playgroup's good commitment to equality and diversity can be seen in the way that all children are provided for, irrespective of background or need. The accommodation is roomy and enables children to have access to a wide range of learning experiences. Planned themes relate well to the children's own needs and interests. Recently, 'Living Eggs' has provided much excitement and enthusiasm and been used to good effect to increase children's knowledge and understanding of living things. They have learned to count confidently to five and can match numbers to objects. They understand about life cycles. They have kept diaries and learned a range of songs and rhymes ? often developing their own pictures and illustrations to go with these. Good attention is paid to ensuring that the needs and interests of all children are met. Staff take every opportunity to discuss with the children what they are doing and to increase their vocabulary by encouraging children to describe what they are doing and why. Two little boys were having great fun playing with and measuring out pasta shapes, listening to the sounds made when they crushed it. 'I'm crunching it', one said. However, while the rooms are zoned and provision is made across all the Early Learning Goals, the area for mark-making and developing early writing skills is very low key and not particularly inviting for the children. The outside area has been completely re-developed since the last inspection and is now a fun and exciting place to be. There is a range of bikes and other wheeled toys to enable children to develop their coordination. Children really enjoy using the apparatus and other activities provided. However, opportunities are missed to further promote their early writing skills. For example, in the play house where the boys were playing at being builders there were no mobile phones, clipboards and writing implements which would help to develop their communication, language and literacy skills further. Planning shows good coverage of all areas of learning and specific activities planned for the week, based on the children's interests and needs. Regular observations and assessments are made of children's progress and these are recorded in their 'Learning Journeys'. These are useful records of children's achievements and enhanced by photographs and samples of children's work. Next steps in learning are clearly identified and show clearly what the child needs to do to reach the next stage in learning and development. Snack times are sociable occasions. Children enjoy a wide range of healthy snacks which the 'special helpers' choose each day from a given range. Children have plenty of exercise and fresh air in the outdoor environment, which they access freely. All activities are well planned to ensure children understand the need to stay safe. They all fully understand the importance of playing safely together and moving around the premises sensibly. Behaviour is good and children understand the Golden Rules well. These are reinforced well by the adults. There is plenty of positive reinforcement, use of signing, and action songs to ensure children are fully included. Children enjoy taking responsibilities, such as helping to

tidy up and get out the drinks and snacks. The opportunity to choose their own activities means they learn to take responsibility for their own learning and make good progress towards achieving the necessary skills for the future.

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	1
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	2
The effectiveness of partnerships	2
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	2

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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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