

The Village Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

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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

The Village Playgroup registered in 1993. It is managed by a voluntary committee, which includes parents. It operates from St Mary's Welcome Centre in Walthamstow, within the London Borough of Waltham Forest. Children have access to two play rooms, associated facilities and an outdoor play area.

The playgroup operates during term time and children attend on either a part-time or full-time basis. On Mondays and Fridays, it is open from 9.15am to 3pm; on Tuesdays and Wednesdays, from 9.30am to 12pm; the playgroup does not operate on Thursdays. The playgroup is registered on the Early Years Register and the voluntary and compulsory parts of the Childcare Register. A maximum of 36 children under eight years may attend at any one time. There are currently 36 children on roll. The playgroup is in receipt of funding for the provision of free early education to children aged three and four years. It supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and who are learning English as an additional language.

Including the manager, there are six full-time members of staff and with the exception of one all hold an appropriate childcare qualification. Parents are regular volunteers at the setting.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children are well cared for in a safe, secure and welcoming setting. Partnerships with parents and other carers are well established, helping promote consistency in children's care and learning. Staff have a good knowledge of the Early Years Foundation Stage. Children actively participate in a wide range of activities that generally meet their individual developmental needs. All required policies, procedures and documentation are well implemented, which contributes to the welfare and safety of the children. Systems to monitor and evaluate the quality of the provision are effective in maintaining continuous improvement.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- extend on the range of activities offered in the outdoor environment in addition to the physical play offered, to be reflective of the other areas of learning
- organise accessibility to additional play resources to allow children to initiate their own learning and make additional choices and decisions in their play.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children's safety is well promoted. Staff have a good understanding of safeguarding issues and are clear on their responsibilities. Suitability checks are carried out on all staff, including regular volunteers. Effective systems are in place for checking any visitors and recording their arrival and departure times. Written risk assessments identify any potential hazards and contribute to keeping children safe. Staff are aware of how to promote children's safety on outings and specific activities they participate in. All required documentation is in place, for example, children's attendance records and details of medication administered to children.

Staff have designated roles and responsibilities, in addition to their role of key worker. Staff deployment is organised very well and children receive good levels of adult supervision and engagement. Staff make good use of the available space and provide children with a wide range of quality resources. However, current storage of additional resources is restrictive. It does not allow children to make independent additional choices, initiate new learning or extend on their activities. Children learn about the diverse community through a good range of toys, resources and planned celebrations. There are good systems in place for children learning English as an additional language and for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. For example, staff collect words in children's home languages, communicate using their own bilingual skills and work with other professional agencies to support children's individual progress.

The partnership with parents is good. Parental representation on the committee is strong and they assist during sessions on a rota basis. Key workers discuss children's progress informally with parents each day and formally each term. Parents attend coffee sessions, participate in fund raising events and receive regular newsletters. Parents are positive about the care their children receive. They praise the range of learning offered, the professional but friendly approach of staff, how they are made welcome and the wide range of skills children develop in preparation for school. Effective links with other agencies, such as local schools, support children's smooth transition when leaving the setting. For example, teachers from some of the local schools visit the setting to meet the children.

Good methods are in place to monitor and evaluate the quality of the provision. Self-evaluation is used effectively, along with parental questionnaires and local authority feedback. Staff attend training to improve their skills and knowledge of early years practice. Previous recommendations have been acted on, promoting children's welfare and learning outcomes. These steps improve outcomes for children and demonstrate a sound commitment to continuous improvement.

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

Children are well cared for in an environment that is accessible, inclusive and welcoming. There is a good range of adult-led and free play from the resources set out. The indoor environment is well organised and provides children with learning experiences in all six areas of learning. However, when children are outdoors for a long period they only have access to a range of large physical play resources. Planning does not include children's access to resources in other areas of learning. Planning is detailed and takes into account children's individual development and the learning outcomes. Systems for observation and assessment are effective and are used to monitor progress. Good use is made of the key worker system to help children settle and promote self-esteem.

Children develop confidence with their early writing skills. They freely access a range of equipment to practise writing and free drawing. Children interpret a range of ideas while building large and creative models with construction materials. They use different sized bottles during water play, allowing them to explore early maths by learning different capacities. Children are confident in recognising colours, shapes and counting confidently beyond 10. The home corner is popular, with children making a range of foods and operating props as they take on roles. The use of the computers enables children to develop early skills in operating information and communication technology. In addition, children learn to operate the compact disc player and camera. Children enjoy the responsibility of caring for plants they have grown in the garden, they water the flower beds and monitor the growth of herbs in pots. They take walks in the local community, for example, to the local market and book library. Children learn to take risks under staff supervision, such as wheeling their scooter down the ramp in the garden and squealing with joy as they do so. Children participate in activities that promote their health, such as 'mini Olympics', where they participate in an obstacle course. Children show good levels of confidence while using the climbing frame or balancing on large logs in the garden. Children explore a range of medium and using their own ideas and imaginations create pictures, for example, different fabrics to make a collage.

Children benefit from a healthy diet. They freely choose from a variety of fresh fruits, dried fruits, breads and drinks of water or milk. Snack times are social occasions, with children talking to their friends and staff about the foods they have chosen. Parents providing lunchboxes are advised by staff about healthy foods. Behaviour is good. Children are appropriately supported by staff to understand the need to help tidy-up, share and take turns. Children learn about safety from the reminders staff provide; for example, not running indoors and the dangers of waving a branch in someone's face.

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	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