

Hop, Skip and Jump Cotswold

Seven Springs, Cheltenham, Gloucestershire, GL53 9NG

Inspection date

10/11/2012

Previous inspection date

11/04/2011

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This inspection:

4

Previous inspection:

2

How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend 3

The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children 4

The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision 4

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This provision is inadequate

- Recruitment and vetting procedures lack rigour and insufficient numbers of qualified staff care for the children, posing a risk to their welfare.
- The leadership and management team fail to monitor the provision effectively to ensure legal requirements are met and any gaps in the quality of children's care are identified and addressed.
- Systems for coaching, mentoring and training staff do not take place to monitor performance and foster a culture of mutual support and encouragement.
- Safeguarding arrangements are poor; access to suitable child protection training for the designated person and all staff is weak.
- Policies and procedures lack detail, do not reflect current legislation and are not available to parents, limiting the information they receive about the centre. A complaints record is not in place or available to Ofsted on request.
- Interaction and questioning during adult-guided activities is ineffective and use of hand signs and pictorial timetables is inconsistent to aid children's communication and participation.
- Not all children are made aware of the emergency procedure to fully enable their understanding of keeping themselves safe.

It has the following strengths

- Staff follow children's lead during play, enabling them to making choices and decisions for themselves.
- The stimulating outdoor play areas, soft play area and sensory rooms provide valuable opportunities for children to explore and develop their large physical skills.

Information about this inspection

Inspections of registered early years provision are scheduled:

- at least once in every inspection cycle. The current cycle ends on 31 July 2016
- more frequently where Ofsted identifies a need to do so, for example where provision was previously judged as inadequate
- brought forward in the inspection cycle where Ofsted has received information that suggests the provision may not be meeting the legal requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage; or where assessment of the provision identifies a need for early inspection
- prioritised for inspection where we have received information that the provision is not meeting the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage and which suggests children may not be safe
- at the completion of an investigation into failure to comply with the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage.

The provision is also registered on the voluntary and compulsory parts of the Childcare Register. This report includes a judgment about compliance with the requirements of that register.

Inspection activities

- The inspector observed activities in the large log cabin and outdoor areas.
- The inspector took account of discussions with some staff and held discussions with the manager.
- The inspector and manager undertook a joint observation of an adult-led activity.
- The inspector examined documentation including children's records, staff's suitability records, policies and procedures and reviewed the centre's website.
- The inspector talked with the Compliance, Investigation and Enforcement team at Ofsted.

Inspector

Jenny Read

Full Report

Information about the setting

Hop, Skip and Jump Cotswold opened in 1982 and is funded and managed by Hop, Skip and Jump Foundation. The centre is located in the rural area of Seven Springs to the south east of Cheltenham. It operates from two log cabins and a separate parents room. The largest cabin has an open-plan art room and hall with soft play area, a kitchen, office and changing and toilet facilities. The smaller cabin has two sensory rooms, a relaxation room and a dedicated room for older children. There is an enclosed adventure play area and playing fields for outdoor activities. The centre supports children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEN) from around Gloucestershire. Transport in the centre's mini-bus can be arranged to enable access to services, school and the centre. The centre is open to families and other groups on a pre-booked basis and currently charities CLIC Sargeant and Scope share use of the centre. The centre is nominated as one of the local authorities provisions for SEN respite day care.

The centre is open all year round, including bank holidays and offers a holiday play scheme, after school club and respite care on a Saturday. During term times, the centre is open Monday to Thursday between 9.30am and 7pm; and on Fridays from 9am to 5pm. The after school club operates Monday to Thursday between 3pm and 6pm and the holiday play scheme, Monday to Saturday from 10am to 5pm. The Saturday club is open between 10am and 5pm.

The centre is registered on the Early Years Register and both the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. There are currently 134 children on roll between the ages of four and 19 years; of these, three children are in the early years age group. The centre employs a team of 20 staff, including the manager, working on a full and part-time basis. The manager holds a Post Graduate Certificate of Education in Further Education, Specialist Pathway of Childcare and Education. One staff member has a degree in Primary education and one holds a relevant early years qualification at level 3. Two staff, including the deputy are currently working towards a level 2 qualification in childcare.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

We will issue a Welfare Requirements Notice requiring the provider to:

- ensure that practitioners have appropriate qualifications, training and skills; this refers to at least half of all staff holding at least a full and relevant level 2 qualification

To meet the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage the provider must:

- ensure systems for recruiting suitable staff and vetting processes are robust
- keep a written record of any complaints, and their outcome and ensure this is available to Ofsted on request
- develop the educational programme for communication and language by guiding children's development through warm, positive interaction and purposeful questioning

To further improve the quality of the early years provision the provider should:

- improve every child's understanding of keeping themselves safe through regular practices of the emergency procedure.

Inspection judgements**How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend**

Children are busy and overall enjoy their time at the centre. Staff set out a range of toys and activities for the children to access when they want. Most staff are flexible and follow the children's lead, responding to their interests and the choices they make. Children confidently make decisions about their play and make good use of free-flowing indoor and outdoor play. As a result, some children enjoy spending long periods outside. They have fun learning to pedal the large go-kart in straight lines and with lots of support negotiate obstacles and corners. Children develop strength and agility as they navigate around the adventure playground and soft play, climbing, sliding and coping with the different challenges they bring.

Some staff occasionally suggest new ideas or carefully introduce different resources to give children different options and experiences. They have fun running the trains continually around the track that adults set up. In response to children's concentration and enjoyment, staff ask children if they would like to make the track bigger. This encourages their imaginary play and enables them to recreate their play on a bigger scale. Some useful questioning and modelling of language is starting to encourage children to talk about their play with the trains. They create imaginary scenes and use objects to represent other things to act out a storyline. For example, they explain the trains are helping them to move house by carrying the boxes and furniture. Some staff are attentive to children's individual needs. They sensitively help children learn some problem solving skills as they try to find a way to reach the train as it moves around the track on the large table.

Adult-led activity planning is weak and has little purpose or focus. The group is large with most children participating. Children miss valuable learning opportunities during a pizza making activity, because adults prepare the bread and wide range of toppings themselves. Little discussion takes place about how to make their pizza or to talk about and name the

different toppings to encourage new language. Staff supervise the activity carefully but rarely uses purposeful questioning or interaction to sufficiently challenge the children's engagement and learning. As a result, older children are loud and rush through the pizza making then immediately leave the table. This distracts the younger children who quickly lose interest limiting the learning taking place.

Occasional access to the dark sensory room, white sensory room and use of the sensory garden gives children an opportunity to communicate and express how they feel. Occasional use of hand signs, picture clue cards and visual timetables help encourage children's communication skills and inclusion. Children settle well and enjoy their time at the centre because staff tailor settling in arrangements to their individual needs. Children are beginning to understand and learn about some of their own and other cultures. Suitable activities and tailored discussions appropriate to children's understanding help them begin to recognise and respect people's similarities and differences. For example, children use pumpkins to make lanterns at Halloween and decorate paper lanterns and tea lights for the Diwali festival of light.

The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children

Staff help children to learn to be independent and begin to manage their own personal care needs appropriately. With support and sensitive reminders, children wash their hands before mealtimes and find their lunch boxes. Mealtimes are relaxed and socialable with staff eating with the children, engaging them in conversation and modelling appropriate table manners. Children in the after-school club enjoy wholesome, nutritious meals cooked by staff. Children benefit from daily exercise and opportunities to explore the stimulating outdoor play areas. They pedal the large go-karts and challenge their physical skills on the adventure playground. Staff supervise children's safety appropriately when using the large equipment and playing with their older friends. However, children do not learn safe action to take in an emergency because not all children practise the escape plan. Children's safety is put at risk because processes to recruit suitable staff are inadequate.

Children build some nice relationships and seek out their friends to play with or sit next to at lunchtime. Although a rotational key person system is in place, some children form close attachments with their nominated key person for the day. They smile in response to frequent praise and encouragement from staff and volunteers, helping to promote their confidence and self-esteem. This is beginning to encourage children to co-operate and follow some instructions willingly, such as helping to pack the train track away. Children feel safe to express their needs to staff, exclaiming 'I want to do this' when staff ask if they want to play with something else. Children are starting to play co-operatively with their friends with support. Staff model skills in negotiating and provide consistent messages about right and wrong. This is helping the children begin to develop the skills they will need to sustain lasting relationships. When a child wants to have one of the trains his friend had been playing with, staff give clear explanations and guidance. They calmly state that when their friend comes back they will need to give the train back as they were only borrowing it. This gives the children time to process the information and

help prepare them for what happens next.

The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision

The inviting indoor and outdoor spaces provide children with wonderful opportunities to explore and investigate the natural environment. The stimulating sensory rooms, daily access to soft play and large play equipment and the adventure play areas develop children's skills and independent play well. However, the leadership and management team do not have adequate knowledge of the safeguarding and welfare requirements. As a result, safeguarding arrangements are weak and poorly monitored, putting children's safety and welfare at risk. The named deputy does not have a relevant level 3 qualification to take charge in the absence of the manager and there are insufficient numbers of qualified staff. This significantly limits the potential of the centre to deliver best possible outcomes for children. Recruitment and vetting procedures lack rigour. As a result, management do not carry out interviews, and checks on staff are not completed to ensure their suitability to work with children.

Staff understand and implement the centre policies and procedures generally well. However, some policies lack detail, do not reflect current legislation or are not available to view, such as the mobile phone and camera policy. Nevertheless, staff do not use their mobile phones during work time and only use the centre camera to take photographs, which remains on the premises at all times. The manager holds basic safeguarding children training and takes lead responsibility for child protection. Staff demonstrate satisfactory awareness of safeguarding issues and the line management procedure to follow. However, staff are not routinely provided with training to ensure they have up-to-date knowledge to act on child welfare concerns promptly in the manager's absence. Some children practise the escape plan each term, but this is not sufficiently rigorous to ensure this takes place on different days and during different sessions. This means some children have no awareness of safe action to take in an emergency and could delay children from exiting the various buildings.

Most staff respond well to children's needs because they review children's records before they arrive. Some staff show their enthusiasm and enjoyment of working with the children and engage generally well in their play. The management team are fully aware of the inconsistencies within the staff team regarding their engagement and interaction with children. However, the demands of managements' roles mean they are not able to offer sufficient mentoring and training to extend staff's knowledge and improve children's experiences. The key person system works on a rotational basis with some staff swapping their key children after lunch. While this can help staff gain new skills, they receive little support or coaching to support the transitions and demands of the different children. Self-evaluation does not take place therefore systems to identify strengths and weaknesses within the quality of the centre and children's care are ineffective. As a result, there are significant gaps and numerous breaches of the welfare requirements that affect children's health, safety and welfare. The senior leadership team are not sufficiently robust in their monitoring of the provision to ensure requirements are met in practice. Insufficient

emphasis is given to addressing previous actions and recommendations. This demonstrates a lack of commitment to make improvements to the quality of children's care, safety and welfare.

Friendly relationships with parents encourage some sharing of information. However, parents are not provided with required information, such as policies and procedures, details about food and drink, staffing in the centre and details of their child's key person. Partnerships with most schools children attend are well established. Most teachers complete a termly communication passport for each child that includes valuable information about their progress and learning. This enables staff to support children appropriately. The manager is proactive in setting up a first meeting with professionals from local schools and relevant agencies to encourage further partnership working.

The Childcare Register

The requirements for the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are

**Not Met
(with
actions)**

The requirements for the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are

**Not Met
(with
actions)**

To meet the requirements of the Childcare Register the provider must:

- make copies of the written statements of safeguarding procedures and complaints procedures available to parents.
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What inspection judgements mean

Registered early years provision

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	Outstanding provision is highly effective in meeting the needs of all children exceptionally well. This ensures that children are very well prepared for the next stage of their learning.
Grade 2	Good	Good provision is effective in delivering provision that meets the needs of all children well. This ensures children are ready for the next stage of their learning.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	Satisfactory provision is performing less well than expectations

in one or more of the key areas. It requires improvement in order to be good.

Grade 4 Inadequate	Provision that is inadequate requires significant improvement and/or enforcement. The provision is failing to give children an acceptable standard of early years education and/or is not meeting the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. It will be inspected again within 12 months of the date of this inspection.
Met	The provision has no children on roll. The inspection judgement is that the provider continues to meet the requirements for registration.
Not Met	The provision has no children on roll. The inspection judgement is that the provider does not meet the requirements for registration.

Inspection

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under Sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006 on the quality and standards of provision that is registered on the Early Years Register. The registered person must ensure that this provision complies with the statutory framework for children's learning, development and care, known as the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Setting details

Unique reference number	101494
Local authority	Gloucestershire
Inspection number	783566
Type of provision	Full-time provision
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	4 - 8
Total number of places	60
Number of children on roll	134
Name of provider	Hop, Skip and Jump Cotswold
Date of previous inspection	11/04/2011
Telephone number	01242 870438

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Type of provision

For the purposes of this inspection the following definitions apply:

Full-time provision is that which operates for more than three hours. These are usually known as nurseries, nursery schools and pre-schools and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. They are registered on the Early Years Register and pay the higher fee for registration.

Sessional provision operates for more than two hours but does not exceed three hours in any one day. These are usually known as pre-schools, kindergartens or nursery schools and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. They are registered on the Early Years Register and pay the lower fee for registration.

Childminders care for one or more children where individual children attend for a period of more than two hours in any one day. They operate from domestic premises that are usually their own home. They are registered on the Early Years Register and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Out of school provision may be sessional or full-time provision and is delivered before or after school and/or in the summer holidays. They are registered on the Early Years Register and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. Where children receive their Early Years Foundation Stage in school these providers do not have to deliver the learning and development requirements in full but should complement the experiences children receive in school.

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