

# St Michael's Playgroup

Church House, Mount Pleasant, LOUTH, Lincolnshire, LN11 9DR

<b>Inspection date</b>	06/12/2012
Previous inspection date	17/06/2009

<b>The quality and standards of the early years provision</b>	<b>This inspection:</b>	2
	Previous inspection:	3
How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend		2
The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children		2
The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision		2

## The quality and standards of the early years provision

### This provision is good

- Children make good progress in their learning and development because staff know the children well and ensure they are actively involved in things they enjoy.
- Children are very confident and make decisions about how they wish to spend their time. They have a strong voice in the setting.
- Children are secure because they have a familiar routine every day so they know when and what to expect, they have formed strong relationships with all the staff.
- Staff have good knowledge of how young children learn and organise the setting well so that it is a stimulating environment that is interesting to children.

### It is not yet outstanding because

- Reflective practice does not include parents sufficiently because staff are not proactive enough in seeking their views when considering the strengths and weaknesses of the setting. This means that parents are not fully included in helping to drive improvements in the playgroup through ideas and suggestions they may have.

## 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 children in the playroom and garden.
- The inspector had a tour of the premises.
- The inspector completed a joint observation with the manager and discussed this.
- The inspector sampled policies, procedures and other documentation and looked at children's 'Learning Journals'.

## Inspector

Anne Barnsley

## Full Report

### Information about the setting

St. Michael's Playgroup opened in 1986 and is registered on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. It operates from one main room within St. Michael's Church House, which is located near the centre of the market town of Louth, Lincolnshire. There is an enclosed outdoor play area. The playgroup serves the immediate locality as well as surrounding villages. It is managed and run by a committee.

The playgroup employs five members of childcare staff. Of these, four hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3 and the manager has Early Years Professional Status. The playgroup opens Monday to Friday during term time. Sessions are from 9am until 12 noon and from 12.30pm until 3pm with a voluntary lunch club from 12 noon to 12.30pm. Children attend for a variety of sessions. There are currently 32 children attending who are within the early years age range. The playgroup provides funded early education for three- and four-year-old children. It supports a number of children who speak English as an additional language and children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. The playgroup receives support from the local authority.

### **What the setting needs to do to improve further**

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

- improve reflective practice by actively seeking parents' views and suggestions about how they feel improvements can be made to enhance the quality of learning and care their children receive.

### **Inspection judgements**

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

Children are excited when they arrive at the playgroup. Parents and children are warmly greeted by the staff so that they feel welcome. Children rush in happy and eagerly seek out friends and start to play. The staff are well organised and set out a planned activity for children each morning so that children have choice about what they want to do. Many children go straight to the planned activity, which is making Christmas cards and paper chains. Children are very creative and use their own ideas about how they want to decorate their cards. They draw and colour, which develops their early writing skills as well as their artistic ideas, and they cut and stick, which develops their physical skills by using scissors carefully and placing glue with precision. Children particularly like making the paper chains so staff have repeated this activity from earlier in the week because it is so popular with the children. One little child enjoys it so much that the manager gave them lots of strips to take home with the child and they made more at home with their mummy. The child has made many really long chains and decided to decorate the tent with one. Some of the child's other chains have been used upstairs to decorate the dance studio for other children. Staff fully recognise children's efforts as achievements and let children know that they have done something special. This promotes children's feelings of self-esteem and makes them want to try again and expand on what they have previously done. For example, this same little child developed their previous, plain chains, by

carefully cutting out triangle shapes and sticking them on each chain to make jewels. This was their own idea and shows the progress the child is making with their creative skills.

Staff make precise observations of children's achievements and raise next steps in their learning, which they plan around to ensure that each child is appropriately supported and challenged. They are very observant of children and recognise the learning that is taking place and how this can be extended for each child through things they like doing. Staff have good skills and expertise and quite naturally cover all areas of learning and development through whatever the child is doing.

Children enjoy playing outdoors and do so in all types of weather as they have free-flow access to the garden. They show that they understand their own needs as they get their 'wellies' and coats to wear as it is cold and has been snowing. In the garden children develop their physical skills as they ride on bikes and scooters and learn how to balance, steer and pedal. They make marks in the snow with the tyres and enjoy going round and round to make these bigger. They talk about the grass begin crunchy under their feet and the ground being cold, demonstrating their awareness of their changes in the environment and their ability to make comparisons. Children use scrapers for making more marks in the snow. One little child was intent on showing the member of staff how the snow has collected in between the roofing boards on the playhouse. The child used their scraper to carefully remove all snow while the member of staff chatted to the child about what was taking place. Outside children also enjoy their growing garden where they learn to take care of living things and how things grow from seeds or small plants. They use tyres and planks well to construct with and pipes that they balance at angles to pour water, sand or balls down. These activities and play help children to develop early mathematical concepts about quantities, space, measure and movement.

Children communicate very well with staff and with each other as they play. All children make good progress with their listening, understanding and speaking skills. One child introduces themselves to the inspector by name and asks her what her name is. The child talks to her as the child plays on the computer and explains to her which different bins the rubbish must go in. The child uses the mouse with precision to click and put glass bottles into the correct bin and laughs when they crash to the bottom of the bin. This attracts the attention of other children who all come to watch and offer their suggestions. Another little child uses the computer to listen to nursery rhymes. The child asks the member of staff to help them find the correct programme and then he uses it independently to choose the songs he wants to listen to. The child stands up and places their ear in various positions to try to find out where the sound is coming from, which shows that children are curious about how things work. At the end of the session children gather round in a circle on the floor to listen to a story. Some sit next to each other and a couple of younger children sit snuggled up on staff's laps. All children become very excited when they see that the story is clearly one of their favourites about bears. They anticipate the next place they are going to visit, such as the woods, the snow, and the river and act out what takes place. When they come to the cave one little child shouts out 'There are stalactites and stalagmites in cave'. This shows a very good command of vocabulary and the ability to use words correctly in context. The same child shouts goodbye to the inspector when she is leaving and says 'Don't forget to take your computer with you'. This shows concern for others and how well the child had noticed what was taking place around him.

Children in this playgroup are making good progress with their learning and development. They are doing so because they express themselves well and staff are skilled at picking up on what each child enjoys and progressing them in ways that suit each child best.

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

Children are confident, self-motivated and acquire good skills ready for school. The manager and staff consider the layout of the playgroup carefully, to enable children to become independent learners. The safe and accessible storage of toys ensure all children have equal access to resources indoors and outdoors, while good supervision and risk assessments help to safeguard them as they move freely around the setting. Staff set up the rooms as 'zones of learning' with well-selected resources to inspire and challenge children's thinking and creativity. Consequently, children want to have a go and learn through investigation and exploration.

Children develop strong relationships with staff and learn from their peers, as this is a small playgroup where everyone knows each other well. The highly effective key person and family group system supports children's confidence and feeling of belonging. This is because staff are very attentive and include children very well and value their ideas. For example, the children helped to design the outdoor area by making a big floor plan and adding their ideas to this. Some children wanted to grow cucumbers, others herbs and plants. They positioned their choices on the plan, including banana trees. This was a very good learning experience for children as it not only promoted their self-esteem, but gave the staff the opportunity to talk to them about where things grow, such as banana trees, developing their understanding of the world. Children show they understand healthy eating as they choose things to grow that are good for them. They eat healthy snacks in the playgroup and make their own decision about when they want to do this. In this way they are developing an understanding of their own needs and self-care as they consider when they feel hungry. Children who only stay for the morning session can stay for the lunch club, and many choose to do this. This helps children learn how to eat as a social group and prepares them well for when they move on to school.

Children behave very well and understand expectations through consistent behaviour management and simple rules that are realistic. For example, children know to not walk around with scissors in their hands, to use furniture appropriately and to not run in the playroom, as it might cause an accident. Children are very cooperative and help tidy up their toys when asked and listen well to what staff are telling them. They are polite and play very well together, sorting out any small disagreements they may have or listening well when staff help them with this. This contributes well to when they move on to school as they successfully develop skills they need for more formal learning.

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

The playgroup is organised and managed well. The manager and newly established committee have reviewed all policies, procedures and information that they provide to parents. They have made many improvements to the setting, some by successfully meeting the recommendations and action that were raised at the previous inspection, and others through reflection. These improvements have had a positive impact on children, for example, erecting a fence to make a more clearly defined outdoor play area has resolved behavioural issues for some children. New resources, such as a sand pit and bird table have been provided to enrich outdoor learning. Staff have all completed further training to develop their knowledge of how to promote children's communication more effectively. This has been very positive as staff know fully recognise the importance of not asking children too many questions at once and allowing them time to consider, process and structure responses. They have also completed 'Peer' training, which increases their existing knowledge of how to promote effective partnerships with parents.

The management and staff team drive improvements well and have put a lot of work into ensuring the smooth running of the setting by establishing an effective committee. They have worked well together as a team and the improvements they have made are very noticeable and have a positive impact on the children's learning and development. Although, parents' views about how ongoing improvements can be made are not yet routinely sought. Therefore, they are not fully involved in all aspects of the setting.

All staff have a comprehensive understanding of safeguarding and their duty to protect children. Child protection and first aid training are mandatory for all staff and all policies and procedures are regularly reviewed through weekly staff meetings to ensure that knowledge is constantly refreshed. New staff participate in induction so that they know what is expected of them from the start and all staff are checked for their suitability to work with children. They serve a probationary period to ensure they fulfil their role to the standard required.

Parents are provided with good quality information when their child first starts at the playgroup so that they know how this is organised to keep their child safe and protected. The manager ensures that they understand how learning is promoted and has good information available to them about ways in which they can continue this at home. For example, the staff have made two very attractive friezes on the wall with photographs showing the different ways in which children make marks and symbols. This contributes to their early literacy skills, particularly during outdoor play with brooms, sand and cars, to name but a few. A second frieze shows parents ideas of things that take place at home naturally and how these can be used as learning experiences. Parents have continuous access to their child's 'Learning Journeys' and many contribute to these with observations they have made at home. This provides staff with a consistent means of tracking children's interests and progress through their whole-life experiences.

Positive partnerships with other settings, especially schools, are also firmly in place. The

manager is a member of the local cluster groups and meets with schools and other providers regularly. Schools visit the playgroup to meet the children who are moving up into reception and staff complete an assessment form for the reception teacher so that children have continuity with their learning when they first start. The school provides the playgroup with a transition book which helps children to become familiar with what it is going to be like moving on. In turn, children in the playgroup complete an 'All about Me' book with things that have meaning to them so that they can give this to the reception teacher. Both the playgroup and the school make very good use of 'Louis' the persona puppet to help children settle by having a familiar character they can relate to. By the time children are ready to move on they are well prepared for their transition to school.

### The Childcare Register

The requirements for the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are	<b>Met</b>
The requirements for the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are	<b>Met</b>

### 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	509653
<b>Local authority</b>	Lincolnshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	819417
<b>Type of provision</b>	
<b>Registration category</b>	Childcare - Non-Domestic
<b>Age range of children</b>	0 - 17
<b>Total number of places</b>	18
<b>Number of children on roll</b>	32
<b>Name of provider</b>	St Michael's Playgroup
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	17/06/2009
<b>Telephone number</b>	07904 441359

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## Type of provision

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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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