

Elfin Nursery Pre-School group

Cold Pool Lane, Up Hatherley, Cheltenham, Gloucestershire, GL51 6JA

Inspection date	25/02/2013
Previous inspection date	25/11/2011

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	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		1
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 are happy and safe within the playgroup because of the strong bonds that they form with the staff who care for them.
- Staff provide a stimulating variety of activities that enable children to become confident, independent learners, preparing them well for school.
- The manager has strong systems of self evaluation in place to review the playgroup's practice and ensure good outcomes for children.
- Staff have a good understanding of children's developmental and learning needs. Effective observation and assessment systems help children make good progress overall.

It is not yet outstanding because

- The playgroup does not fully share weekly planning with parents to enable them to consistently support children's continuing learning at home.
- Staff do not always use many open questions to challenge and support children's learning and development.

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.

Inspection activities

- The inspector had discussions with the manager and key persons of tracked children during the inspection.
- The inspector spoke to parents and carers about their views of the setting.
- The inspector completed a joint observation with the manager in the indoor learning environment.
- The inspector sampled children's information, planning and assessment records, as well as policies and procedures.
- The inspector observed activities within the indoor environment.

Inspector

Sue Bennett

Full Report

Information about the setting

The Elfin Nursery Pre-School group registered in 1987 as a privately owned playgroup. It operates from the village hall in Up Hatherley area of Cheltenham. Children use a playroom, a quiet room and an enclosed, outside play area. The playgroup is close to local schools, a church, library and shops. The playgroup is open Monday, Wednesday and Thursday from 9.30am to 1.30pm and on Tuesday from 9.30am to 12.30pm during school terms.

The playgroup is registered on the Early Years Register. There are currently 24 children from the age of two years six months to four years on roll. The playgroup receives funding for the provision of free early education to children aged three and four years. The playgroup currently supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and children who are learning to speak English as an additional language. A total of five members of staff work with the children, including the owner. The playgroup employs five staff members to work directly with the children; all of whom hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 2 and 3.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- further extend partnerships with parents by sharing weekly planning so that they can support children's home learning and enhance opportunities for them to contribute more to children's home achievements
- develop staff use of open-ended questioning skills, such as what, how and why, to challenge and extend children's thinking and learning experiences.

Inspection judgements

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

The playgroup staff have a good understanding of the educational programmes. They provide exciting activities, which motivate children to learn. However, while internal planning systems are good, parents do not always get to see the coming week's activities. They are not fully able to share their children's learning and promote it most accurately at home. Key persons understand children's individual learning needs and styles well and use effective observation and assessment systems to determine children's developmental stages. They regularly share summary assessments and learning diaries with parents so that, overall they are aware of children's progress and future learning targets. Consequently, children make good overall progress from their individual starting points.

Staff provide good quality resources both for inside and outdoor areas. Staff provide children with stimulating opportunities to play and explore, as they run cars down lengths of tubing. They enjoy investigating as learners and discover that cars move more easily on smooth surfaces than on carpeted areas. Children happily share their discoveries with their friends, telling them 'if you push the car hard it will go faster and further.' This encourages

others to experiment and become active learners. Staff support children's language development effectively. They use descriptive words, which children repeat in their play, such as 'twisting' and 'twirling' during a musical activity. Children enjoy singing, remembering the lyrics well and understand that some words rhyme in songs. Staff support children's mathematical understanding well, as they describe a circular movement being like 'stirring a pudding'. Children recognise key shapes and numbers to 10. They use these skills in their routines, such as counting friends at registration. In the water tray, children enjoy experimenting with size and capacity as they move water from container to container. Staff show interest and engage well in children's discoveries. However they do not always use open-ended questions, such as 'what', 'how' and 'why' to challenge children's thinking further. Staff support children's co-ordination development. They help younger children as they try to use scissors to cut out pictures. In the painting and writing areas, children enjoy using brushes to paint shapes and letters and crayons and pencils to pretend to make lists. They are learning how to write for a specific purpose. Children have good opportunities for physical play on the indoor slide and use moveable toys in the outdoor area. They enjoy creative activities, such as scrunching tissue paper to resemble blossom on trees, exploring textures and the world around them. Children enjoy being independent and concentrate well on their chosen tasks. These skills help prepare them well for their move to school.

The playgroup's has an open door policy to quickly establish strong links with parents and carers. A photographic diary is available for parents to look at each morning, which shows them how children have taken part in the playgroup's activities. Key persons speak to parents about children's progress and day-to-day care. However they do not always encourage parents to contribute to children's home achievements to support their development further. New children to the playgroup benefit from a pre-visit, which helps familiarise them with the setting's staff and daily routines so that they can settle well.

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

Children settle quickly and happily into the playgroup's daily routines and enjoy the warm and friendly atmosphere. Staff know children well. They use the 'All About Me' leaflet, which parents complete for children when they join the playgroup, to find out and understand children's likes and dislikes. This nurtures strong bonds between the child and their key person. Children enjoy the support of these relationships and confidently seek reassurance, such as during a musical session when they are unsure of the actions to songs. The key person smiles encouragingly and supports the child well with the activity. Staff are positive role models and work together well. They encourage children to become independent by taking on responsible roles such as monitors. This involves ringing the bell for changes in activities and tidying the coat areas. Children enjoy helping the staff and organising the resources and confidently initiate routines, such as wiping painting tables and mopping up spilled water. Children interact well with one another. In the quiet area, they share the cosy cushion and take turns to read stories. They celebrate the successes of their peers, using phrases such as 'well done' when a friend manages to fasten shoes independently. Children become aware of acceptable social behaviour because of the consistent approach from staff. Staff focus on positive praise, which supports children's

confidence and self-esteem. Children understand the need to apologise if they accidentally bump into a friend and try to help each other fasten dressing-up clothing. Consequently, children develop strong personal skills which prepare them well for their future learning.

Staff promote children's understanding of safety effectively. For example they explain the importance of taking care when waving streamers in the air and taking turns on the indoor slide. Children are independent in their self-care routines. They are becoming aware of healthy hygiene practices, such as the importance of washing hands after toileting and before eating. Staff encourage parents to provide healthy foods for children for snacks and in lunch boxes. Children have good opportunities to enjoy fresh air in the outdoor area and understand the benefits of exercise to their bodies. They know that exercise makes muscles and bones strong.

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

The manager of the playgroup has a strong understanding of her legal responsibilities and effectively fulfils the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. The playgroup has comprehensive policies and procedures that demonstrate a high regard for children's safety. These are regularly reviewed and easily accessible for parents to see. Staff use daily risk assessments to ensure that all areas are safe for children's use. Designated safeguarding persons ensure that staff receive regular training updates and have a clear understanding of procedures to take should they have any concerns about children in their care. Children are well supervised. Staff use robust systems of registration, records of accidents, medication and incidences to meet children's welfare needs. The playgroup uses thorough systems for the recruitment and vetting of new staff, to ensure that all staff are suitably qualified to work with children.

The playgroup has a strong commitment to continuous improvement and the best outcomes for children. All recommendations from the last inspection have been met. Focused self-evaluation processes enable regular review of the playgroup's provision, such as during the weekly staff meetings. Parents have good opportunities to contribute their views through regular questionnaires and through their daily contact with staff. These processes establish clear target for future development. Recent changes include introducing a self-registration system for children, and making books more easily accessible in the reading corner. The manager has a good understanding of the learning and development requirements and monitors the quality of planning and assessment consistently well. She routinely appraises and observes staff as they interact with children. This helps her identify training needs to support their professional development. This good quality practice ensures consistent, positive learning experiences for all children.

The playgroup uses strong partnerships with the local authority for further practice guidance and support. The playgroup has effective links with external agencies and specialists, such as speech and language therapists to get appropriate support for children's individual needs. Parents are overwhelmingly positive about the playgroup. They particularly praise the approachability of staff and the care that they provide for their

children. The playgroup has strong links with local primary schools, enabling a smooth transfer for older children when they leave.

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	101540
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Local authority	Gloucestershire
Inspection number	813198
Type of provision	Full-time provision
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	2 - 4
Total number of places	24
Number of children on roll	24
Name of provider	Falmai Reay
Date of previous inspection	25/11/2011
Telephone number	07711 578619

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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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