

Blackbirds Playgroup Grassmere

St. Marys Centre, Grassmere Close, BOGNOR REGIS, West Sussex, PO22 7NU

Inspection date	16/05/2013
Previous inspection date	23/02/2009

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		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

- The provider has high levels of qualified staff working in the setting who responsibly promote children's learning through regularly planned activities and daily routines.
- The provider follows clearly focused systems of self-evaluation, which continue to drive improvements and benefit the organisation and safety of children attending.
- The provider has developed staff roles and responsibilities and included fully organised staff appraisals systems. This has enhanced staff performance and their professional development in meeting the needs of children.
- The continuity of staff and the supportive partnerships with parents and wider families clearly increase children's sense of belonging and encourage them to settle and build relationships.

It is not yet outstanding because

- The evaluation process does not clearly seek information from parents and carers to encourage their involvement in plans for future improvements.
- There is less opportunity for older or more capable children to extend their early writing skills spontaneously, as resources are not instantly available to promote this during outdoor play.

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
- scheduled more frequently where Ofsted identifies a need to do so, for example where provision was previously judged 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 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
- scheduled at the completion of an investigation into failure to comply with the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Inspection activities

- The inspector arrived and explained the inspection process.
- The inspector viewed the premises and observed the staff and children during activities and routines.
- The inspector jointly observed an activity with the manager and gained evidence through discussion with children and staff.
- The inspector provided feedback and gave the inspection judgements.

Inspector

Christine Clint

Full Report

Information about the setting

Blackbirds Playgroup Grassmere registered in 2008 and operates in St Mary's Community Centre in Felpham, West Sussex. It is one of two playgroups provided locally by the owner/manager. Children have sole use of the hall and a fully enclosed garden during the hours of operation. The playgroup is open from 9 am to 12 pm on weekdays during term time only. On Monday, Wednesday and Friday the playgroup offers afternoon sessions from 12pm to 3pm. The playgroup is registered on the Early Years Register and there are currently 30 children on roll. The playgroup provides funded educational places for children of two-, three- and four-years-old. Four staff work with the children at every session, all staff are qualified in childcare and education. The playgroup supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Staff also support children learning English as an additional language.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- strengthen opportunities for older children to enhance their literacy skills by including writing materials during outdoor play
- extend the systems used to evaluate the provision by including the views of parents and carers.

Inspection judgements

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

Staff plan and provide activities daily to meet children's individual learning needs. They show strong levels of attention and focus on children's chosen play and this encourages children to become interested and take part in the planned activities. For example, children are eager to play with the shaving foam and they readily respond to staff questions about the smell, the feel and the texture. This increases children's communication skills and their understanding of descriptive words. Staff encourage children to use their fingers and make shapes and patterns. Children practise writing the first letter of their name and repeat the letter sounds after staff. In this way, children learn to pronounce the first letters of each other's names and this widens their understanding of literacy. Staff know that children enjoy changing their drawings instantly and repeating a shape. They also know that this reassures children because there are no expectations to achieve. Children can make their own decisions and wipe the table clean whenever they

choose. Staff encourage children to gain confidence by using cars and trucks to make tracks in the shaving foam. This works well when children show a reluctance to use their hands. Staff experiment further by putting shaving foam on the trucks to entice and develop children's confidence, although they reassure individual children by placing a towel for them to wipe any foam from their hands.

Children are keen to play outside and this includes spontaneous cafe play and making pretend cups of tea. Staff expertly encourage children's thinking through appropriate questioning which increases their language skills. Although older and more capable children do not have the opportunity to make records or use paper and pencils outside, to extend their early literacy and writing skills. Staff competently engage children and gain their attention at group time. Children show a keen interest in singing and they know the words to many of the songs they choose at group time. They also choose stories and staff often read to children individually, especially if children need reassurance. Older children follow their favourite role-play by reciting the playgroup routines and reading to each other from pictures. This confirms children's growing confidence levels, their skills listening and remembering stories.

Staff have a clear awareness of all areas of learning related to the age and stage of development of the children attending. They understand each child's characteristics and chosen way of learning. For example, they recognise when some children can automatically understand the computer and know how to touch the screen. They recognise older children who display higher confidence and show well-developed skills of communication. Staff are equally aware of newly attending children who need more attention to settle and often need support throughout the session

There are effective systems to measure children's level of development through observations and regular assessments. These include details of children's next planned steps in learning. Staff identify key children from their group at specific times and plan activities accordingly, in this way all children benefit from the planned learning opportunities. There are new systems in place to assist the provider and the manager in assessing all children's progress across all areas of learning. This review process enables the provider to track individual levels of learning to measure all children's achievements and narrow any gaps in learning levels.

Staff fully respond to the individual needs of children attending and this includes any children who are learning English as an additional language. For example, they use dual language stories and provide books with stories about other cultures. They also include labels on items to fit the language of different families attending. This familiarises parents and children attending and promotes their understanding of English. Staff willingly liaise with other professionals to support any specific learning needs. They are keen to share information with parents and follow any guidance required to encourage children's progress.

Staff have strong levels of engagement with families attending and daily verbal exchanges keep staff and parents up to date. There are also 'sharing books' for each child attending and parents use these to record any achievements that take place at home. This enables and encourages parents to record their child's progress and the shared information

contributes to each child's learning record. Key person staff have termly meetings with parents to discuss children's level of progress and their plans for future learning. In this way, parents are fully informed about their children's ongoing development. There are planned and organised links with local schools and reception staff visit to prepare children for moving on in their learning.

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

The provider has a strong team of competent and knowledgeable staff who have worked together for many years. They show good experience and a focused knowledge of child development, which enables them to effectively support their key children. Staff clearly respond to individual children's needs throughout the session and this encourages and supports children's personal, social and emotional development. The organised daily routines help to develop children's understanding and sense of belonging and staff recognise instantly when newly attending children need additional support. Staff enable children to choose activities freely and choose to play indoors or outside. This encourages children to be independent and make decisions about their play. Children show a clear understanding of their individual responsibility for following routines. For example, when staff play the daily music for tidying the toys, all children show awareness and become involved. Staff readily praise children and have a star of the week scheme, which raises children's positive self-esteem and encourages a positive attitude towards behaviour. Children take turns to sit on a special chair next to the staff member and they have increased responsibilities and opportunities to take the lead during the session.

Children feel safe in the playgroup because they have developed good relationships with staff. They recognise and follow the daily routines and this encourages their security in knowing what happens next. For example, children learn to manage their movements using the sloped walk way carefully when the staff escort them to the toilets. They negotiate their movements safely during indoor and outdoor play, by avoiding each other when they steer the wheeled toys in the small outdoor space. Children are clearly adept at managing on the different stepped surfaces of the outdoor play area. They make pretend cups of tea and balance these on trays very effectively, understanding how to walk safely. They talk about the pretend tea being hot and they remind each other to take care. Children practise regular fire drills with staff and this increases their understanding of safety and of follow instructions. Staff include daily opportunities for children to become responsible for managing their own hygiene and for increasing their physical skills at snack time. Children wash their hands before they choose to have snacks; they pour their own milk or water and responsibly clear away their cups and plates. They eat healthily and learn to identify healthy food through discussion because staff discourage sweets and chocolate in any packed lunches and share this information on advance with parents. Overall, staff provide a wide range of resources daily for children to make independent choices and increase their skills across all areas of learning.

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

The provider and the day-to-day manager have very clear and focused attitudes towards their responsibilities for promoting children's learning and development. They have effectively improved the systems for enabling staff to plan for children's future learning, through using observations of children's achievements. This has also impacted positively on staff responsibility as key persons and increased their role in planning suitable activities. The provider has made many improvements across all areas of the provision and this includes the review of all children's levels of learning. This enables the provider and staff to clearly monitor any achievement gaps in children's progress.

The provider has fully documented systems in place for safeguarding children. There are dedicated policies and procedures, which cover all areas of safeguarding. Staff review these regularly to meet any changes in the regulations. The provider and the day-to-day manager have attended training in child protection; they share any new information with staff to ensure all staff are up-to-date with their knowledge and awareness. The provider and the manager competently know how to refer any concerns or allegations to relevant agencies. There are clear and concise details for recording any complaints from parents and the playgroup maintains and stores all records confidentially. There are full details of all employed staff and well-organised systems for checking staff suitability to work with children. All employed staff are qualified and there are training records to show when short courses have been included. The new procedures for staff appraisal and supervision show strong examples of the provider's focus on staff performance and ability as key persons. The provider is currently following a quality assurance programme to evaluate and improve areas of the provision. This has widened the involvement of staff and developed areas of shared responsibility for specific roles. The provider and staff are clearly evaluating many wider areas of their work, although this has not yet included any questionnaires for parents to enable them to have a voice in planning future improvements.

Children benefit from being cared for by a consistent staff team. There are effective systems to link with other carers through the 'sharing books'. These include parents in the first instance and equally involve any other carers who share responsibility for individual children's learning. The provider includes a wide range of information for parents which signposts them to other organisations for guidance.

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 action. 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	EY382976
Local authority	West Sussex
Inspection number	914412
Type of provision	Sessional provision
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	2 - 5
Total number of places	24
Number of children on roll	30
Name of provider	Fay Kathleen Crouch
Date of previous inspection	23/02/2009
Telephone number	07961824049

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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, which are usually the childminder's 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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