

St John's Playgroup

St John's Church Hall, Bilton Lane, HARROGATE, North Yorkshire, HG1 3DP

Inspection date	16/04/2013
Previous inspection date	10/09/2009

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	3
	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		2
The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision		3

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This provision is satisfactory

- All children progress and develop well as staff clearly understand how children learn. They interact competently with each child throughout activities to extend their individual learning and understanding.
- New children settle well into their first experiences at this welcoming playgroup as staff support their confidence, self-esteem and help them feel secure.
- Children are well protected as staff fully understand their roles and responsibilities in safeguarding children's welfare. They minimise any potential hazards to children well, so that children's safety is maintained at all times.

It is not yet good because

- Information about children's development is not consistently shared with the other early years settings they attend. This results in learning experiences that are not always precisely matched to each child's needs.
- There is room to improve the opportunities for parents to engage in their child's learning and share what their child achieves at home, so that a complete picture about children can be gained.
- Self-evaluation does not successfully take into account the views of the committee, parents or children. This means that the provision lacks effective support in clearly identifying the strengths and priorities for all areas for development to constantly improve the quality of the provision and children's care.

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.

The provision is also registered on the compulsory part 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 main play room and the outside learning environment.
- The inspector had meetings with the manager of the provision and the chairperson of the playgroup committee.
- The inspector looked at children's assessment records, planning documentation, evidence of suitability of practitioners working within the setting, the provider's self-evaluation form and a range of other documentation.

Inspector

Linda Filewood

Full Report

Information about the setting

St John's Playgroup was registered in 1992. It is registered on the Early Years Register and the compulsory part of the Childcare Register. The provision operates from one room with associated facilities in a church hall in Bilton, on the outskirts of Harrogate, North Yorkshire. There is a fully enclosed area available for outdoor play. The provision is run by a management committee and serves the local community.

The playgroup employs six members of childcare staff. Of these, five hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3. It operates term-time only, five mornings per week, from 9.15am to 11.45am. Two afternoon sessions are also held on Tuesday and Thursday, from 12.30pm to 3pm. There is also a Friday morning session for pre-school children. Children attend for a variety of sessions. There are currently 39 children attending who are in the early years age group. The provision provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- improve methods for sharing information with parents to enable them to be more actively involved in their children's learning and development by, for example, asking them to regularly contribute to their child's learning journey; encouraging parents to share additional details of what their child achieves at home
- improve the partnerships with other early years providers children attend, so that there is a regular two-way flow of information about children's learning and development that promotes consistency, continuity and a shared approach to supporting children's progress.

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

- develop rigorous and effective self-evaluation, which includes the views of committee members, parents and children, to inform priorities for change and ensure that all gaps in the provision are identified, in order to drive improvement.

Inspection judgements

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

Staff effectively plan activities and experiences using their clear knowledge about individual children and how they learn. As a result, all children, including those who are young and new to the setting, engage well in play that sustains their interest. Observations and assessments of children give staff sound information about what each child knows and can do within the setting, so that appropriate next steps in learning can be planned. However, the partnerships with parents and other providers involved in children's learning and development are not strong enough to have a positive impact on children's overall achievements. As a result, opportunities to work together to help each child makes the best possible progress, are overlooked. For example, parents do not always share details of what their child learns at home, and staff do not work collaboratively about a child's progress with the other settings the child attends. Consequently, staff cannot gain a full picture of all of children's achievements, and this prevents them from making sure that plans to extend children's learning further are sharply focused and fully effective.

Some aspects of practice are strong. For example, children learn to concentrate and become confident in their abilities and the environment, and staff support children generally well. They join in to extend children's play, and use well planned adult-led activities to ensure children are interested and become active learners. For example, older children work well together in deciding the length of sticky tape that they need to join pieces of paper together. Staff introduce mathematical language into the creative activity and support independence when they try to replace the used role of tape for a new one.

Children show a good sense of belonging and pride when they bring items from home to share. For example, an older child brings straws cut to different lengths; they line them up according to length, tape them together competently and demonstrate how they make a noise when blown. Staff understand to give new children time to become confident in their new surroundings. They sit quietly with them when their parent leaves, talk to them as they play together and then supervise closely, without intervening, as the child starts to explore other areas. All children benefit from opportunities to play outside each day. Staff encourage children to talk about what they feel and what they are doing, to help develop their communication skills. Children are able to explain that they are making porridge with a mix of sawdust shavings and water and it feels cold but it will be warmer when the sun comes out. Staff use unplanned opportunities well to extend children's learning. For example, when a butterfly lands on the steps outside they talk about the shapes on the wings that match, ask the children about the colours they see and where the butterfly has come from. Children competently photograph it and their enjoyment is further enhanced during story time, by using a book about a hungry caterpillar.

Staff discuss children's developmental abilities with parents so that they have a clear understanding of children's starting points on entry. Clear arrangements are also in place to complete the required progress check for children age two and to discuss this with parents. Older children receive support to prepare them for school so that they are ready for the next stage in their development. The provision operates a morning session specifically aimed at pre-school children. During the session they learn to independently dress and undress ready for physical activities, learn to write some letters, know the sound they make and understand numbers and shape.

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

Children quickly settle into the activities at the beginning of each playgroup session and separate from their carers well. A child's key person effectively discusses children's home routines and individual needs with parents so that she is confident in meeting each child's requirements. The secure relationships with staff and developing relationships with each other helps children become confident and self-assured in the provision. Older children seek out their friends to play with, young children learn by playing alongside them and new children receive sensitive support from staff. As a result, new children make the transition between home and the setting easily and older children make smooth transitions to school.

Children's independence is well supported through daily routines and well managed group times, such as, registration, snack time and story time. These support children well in developing their self-care skills, confidence and self-esteem. Children's behaviour is good and staff strongly encourage children to say 'please' and 'thank you', especially when sharing and at snack time. Snack time offers children a good opportunity to develop their independence and older children pour their own milk from a bottle. Good social interaction in the small group with a member of staff encourages purposeful discussion. For example, staff explain why it is good to eat the skin of the apple so that they learn about healthy eating. Children learn about good-hygiene actions through their daily routines and older children demonstrate a sound understanding of how to maintain their good health. The provision implements an effective sick child policy. Parents understand the need to collect their child quickly from playgroup if staff contact them when their child is not feeling well. This help to keep other children free from infection.

Children have plenty of opportunity to cover all seven areas of learning during the session because staff very effectively organise the space within the provision. For example, to ensure children have opportunity for physical play inside as well as out, they cordon off an area of the hall so that children can safely use the large climbing frame. Staff supervise its use and make sure children know how to play safely. They give children age appropriate reminders, especially when they run across the safety mats as a child is coming down the slide. As a result, children are learning how to behave safely. They are well aware to let staff know if a toy gets broken during the session, so that it does not hurt anyone. The ample resources are well-presented to encourage children to make independent choices in their play. This supports children's confidence very well. As the provision uses only one room, children receive good supervision and the good deployment of staff continues when children choose to play outside.

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

Staff are well aware of the procedures in place to keep children safe from harm. They confidently discuss the signs and symptoms of abuse and explain the course of action they would follow if they had any concerns regarding the children's welfare. The clear policies and procedures, which underpin the safe management of the provision, are shared with

parents. This ensures they are well aware of the care their children receive. In addition, staff complete daily risk assessments of the premises in order to minimise all risks to children. This means that children are safe while attending the setting. Nappy changing routines, for those still in nappies, are good. Staff respect children's privacy but also ensure other staff are aware that nappy changing is taking place. This maintains children's good supervision at times of intimate care. The management team implements sound recruitment, vetting and induction procedures when employing new staff. This ensures that all staff are suitable to work with children. Staff are well supported in maintaining their professional development through well-targeted training. For example, the provision now provides funded early education for two-year-old children so, at present, staff are focusing their training on this age group. This ensures a constant improvement in their development, particularly with regards to heuristic play. There is a clear programme of regular appraisal and supervision meetings for staff to help identify further areas for development and support.

Staff have a good understanding of how children learn and their responsibilities in meeting the learning and development requirements. They meet regularly to assess the impact on the children's well-being and learning to ensure they provide a broad range of experiences. As a result, the manager has put a development plan in place to identify areas to improve to benefit the children. However, this is not yet a robust, well-embedded evaluation process as it does not fully include the views of committee members, parents or children. This means that the provision does not gain an in-depth focus to effectively inform priorities and ensure that all gaps in the provision are identified. Additionally, the recommendations made following the previous inspection have not yet been fully addressed. This is with particular regards to partnership arrangements to ensure continuity in children's care, learning and welfare.

Parents are pleased with the care their children receive. They praise the very friendly and approachable staff who send regular progress reports home. Parents are actively involved in the playgroup as volunteers or committee members. There are established, working partnerships with the local schools. For instance, children's future teachers visit children during the playgroup session. Children's key persons share their development records with them and this ensures that children receive early intervention, if required, to support their care and learning. However, there is no effective relationship developed with the other early years settings some children attend, such as a nursery or childminder. This hinders staff from gaining a better understanding of each child's progress so that their learning and development receives consistently good support across all carers.

The Childcare Register

The requirements for the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are

Met

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	400351
Local authority	North Yorkshire
Inspection number	911220
Type of provision	
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 8
Total number of places	24
Number of children on roll	39
Name of provider	St John's Playgroup Committee
Date of previous inspection	10/09/2009
Telephone number	01423506152

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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, 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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