

Stanwix Playgroup

Playgroup and Out of School Hut, Church Road, Stanwix, Carlisle, Cumbria, CA3 9DJ

Inspection date

06/06/2013

Previous inspection date

17/03/2011

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This inspection:

2

Previous inspection:

2

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 are supported extremely well in a fully inclusive environment that is very well resourced. They have access to a wide range of exciting and stimulating experiences and opportunities.
- Children are happy, confident and secure within the setting because key persons have developed strong relationships with the children and their families.
- The continuity of care and learning for children is particularly strong, because parents and carers are made to feel very welcome in the setting and are kept fully informed and involved in their children's progress.
- The management of the setting is very effective and excellent communication with outside agencies means that children are fully supported in preparation for their next stage in learning.

It is not yet outstanding because

- Children are not always given enough opportunity to solve problems and explore their thinking when participating in activities. As a result, learning opportunities are not always fully utilised.
- There is scope to enhance the learning environment indoors by introducing more number labels to support children with number recognition in all areas.

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 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 and practitioners as they played and took part in activities.
- The inspector talked with children, parents and carers, managers and practitioners, taking their views into account.
- The inspector viewed a variety of documentation, including relevant policies and procedures, staff files and children's learning journals.
- The inspector took part in a joint observation between the manager, practitioners and children.

Inspector
Janice Caryl

Full Report

Information about the setting

Stanwix playgroup was registered in 1985 and is on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. It is situated in purpose-built premises in the Stanwix area of Carlisle, and is managed by a voluntary management committee. The playgroup serves the local area and is accessible to all children. It operates from one main playroom and there is a fully enclosed area available for outdoor play.

The playgroup employs nine members of childcare staff. Of these, six hold appropriate early years qualifications at level three, including one with Early Years Professional Status.

The playgroup opens Monday to Friday, term-time only. Sessions are from 8.30am until 3.30pm. Children attend for a variety of sessions. There are currently 50 children attending who are in the early years age group. The playgroup provides funded early education for two-, 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 is a member of the Pre-School Learning Alliance.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- develop further opportunities to support children's concentration skills and help them to remain focused on their activities by organising smaller, targeted groups during activities, such as baking
- enhance the indoor environment by introducing more number labels and signs. Children therefore benefit through an overall environment that is rich in number and print.

Inspection judgements

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

Practitioners have a sound understanding of the seven areas of learning and development, meaning activities and opportunities for children are wide and extensive. Children make very good progress in relation to their starting points, because initial information collected from parents is documented and used to help assess children's learning. Continuous observations are thoroughly assessed by each key person and help to inform planning,

which is purposeful and developmentally appropriate, for individual and groups of children. As a result, in the main, children are actively enthused and remain motivated in exploring their environment, which meets their needs and interests. Assessments on children are completed regularly, meaning any concerns are identified early, and appropriate intervention is sought in a timely fashion. This ensures that any gaps in children's learning are identified, with suitable support put in place as is necessary.

Practitioners are committed to providing children with stimulating experiences so that they enjoy and achieve well. Children benefit from a very good balance of child-initiated and adult focused activities. Communication and language skills are well supported in the setting as managers and practitioners listen attentively to children, respond appropriately, and introduce new vocabulary, supporting children in developing their speech sounds. Children learn to recognise their name as they independently use name cards to indicate whether they have had their snack. Practitioners support children in experimenting with cardboard tubes and cars as they make tunnels and talk about where the vehicles have gone. Although most practitioners promote children's thinking and problem solving skills much of the time, on this occasion they are not always fully extended to help them expand on their ideas. As a result, some learning opportunities are missed to promote problem solving. The environment, inside and outside, is well-organised, creative and imaginative as children explore and recreate experiences that enhance their knowledge and understanding. For example, they excitedly play in the pirate den, finding great delight in looking over the wall using the periscope. Words and phrases are displayed in different languages, supporting children and families who have English as a second language. Mathematics is promoted well in all areas through number games, measuring and counting activities and programmable toys. However, although the outdoor environment is rich in number labels, there is scope to enhance the indoor environment with more numbers. Children learn how to build structures safely by working together and experimenting with the blocks and planks. They learn about growth and development as they water the tomato plants and enjoy tasting the lettuce leaves. They show great pleasure and satisfaction as they turn the water tap on to fill the buckets and the warm interaction from practitioners help the children grow in confidence as they ask for support and guidance. The programme of activities and guided support in all areas of learning means that children are developing the key skills needed for their next steps in learning, for example, school.

Managers and key persons are fully committed to working with parents and carers to ensure they remain fully involved in the care and learning of their children. Parents are invited to read and contribute to a home/link diary, and share stories and experiences with groups of children. They are fully informed about their children's progress and supported in developing children's skills at home. This ensures that children benefit through continuity of care and learning, and families feel valued and respected.

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

Children enter the setting enthusiastically and soon become happily engaged in the activities and opportunities on offer. They demonstrate confidence and familiarity with

their surroundings because they feel safe and secure. Practitioners deploy themselves efficiently to ensure children receive good support and that needs are well met. Children demonstrate their close attachments to key persons, as they seek them out for cuddles and comfort, while being guided in their play activities. Practitioners are vigilant, keeping children safe at all times while acknowledging their need to manage risks and make decisions. Children are given very good guidance and support in managing their behaviour, by practitioners who are swift in intervening, remain positive and provide clear explanations to support children in learning right from wrong. Children are taught about road safety through specific teaching, and as they cross the road to school. Fire-fighters provide instruction on the dangers of fire, and practitioners teach children about 'stranger danger'. Consequently, children learn how to take care of themselves and others in fun and interesting ways.

Children demonstrate a very good understanding of personal hygiene and are supported well by practitioners who give children reminders when necessary, for example, after handling raw eggs. Independence is promoted well as activities are planned to help children manage undressing and dressing in preparation for physical education at school. Snack choices are healthy, consisting of fresh fruit brought from home. Children choose when to eat their snack and where they sit and socialise, promoting choice and autonomy. Children have independent access to fresh air and exercise because the outdoor area is continually available. This means that children have a wider choice of where to play, giving them a broader range of activities to access. Children are helped to develop all their large muscle groups through outside activities, such as pedalling bikes and trucks, using the climbing wall, running, jumping and hiding. Children cut the grass growing in a pot, turn on the tap to water the plants and build with large and small construction materials to help them develop smaller manipulative skills. Children enjoy chalking on walls and flags, watching the colours run as they add water. This helps children practise using different sized writing tools while they learn about different properties and the effects of water on them.

Children are supported extremely well in transitions within the playgroup, and of those to other settings. A planned settling-in process ensures children are well prepared for entry into playgroup. For example, continuous key persons ensure stability throughout, and home/link diaries ensure communication between all settings is highly effective. Records and behaviour strategies are effectively shared between settings, to ensure clear messages that help children progress, are utilised. Children experience what it is like in a school environment because they attend there for lunches, and reception teachers from feeder schools visit children prior to children starting in the new term. Consequently, children become very familiar and comfortable with their new surroundings and their emotional well-being is fostered well.

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

Managers of the setting fully understand their roles and responsibilities with regards the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. The management committee members have designated roles to ensure the safe and efficient management of the setting and

children benefit because of its high quality. The manager is highly qualified and skilled in monitoring the programme of activities that children experience, and detailed and precise assessments clearly indicate children's progress towards the early learning goals. The manager ensures that children requiring targeted intervention receive support in quiet areas, free from distraction. As a result, children make very good progress in their learning and development and children with special educational needs are very well supported through targeted intervention.

Arrangements for safeguarding children are strong and well embedded because the environment is kept clean, safe and secure at all times. Locks and safety gates prevent children accessing areas where they cannot be easily seen, and practitioners, fully trained in safeguarding, demonstrate very good understanding of procedures to follow if they have concerns over a child. Consequently, children are helped to be kept safe from harm. Policies and procedures are clear, comprehensive and reviewed annually by members of the committee and practitioners, and are readily available for parents to read. As a result, the procedures are known and understood by all, and children benefit through a safe and efficiently managed setting. All staff are first aid trained meaning children are suitably well cared for if they have an accident, and completed risk assessments and daily checks mean everywhere is safe and suitable for children's use. Managers efficiently take into consideration safety standards when purchasing equipment, ensuring it is of a high quality and suitable for all children. Managers have a robust recruitment procedure, which ensures appointed staff are suitably well qualified and have the necessary skills to uphold their responsibilities. All management and practitioners have an enhanced disclosure issued by the Criminal Record Bureau and any students are effectively supervised at all times. As a result, children thrive in an environment that keeps them safe from harm. Managers and practitioners are supported well through regular appraisals and supervision meetings, helping to target specific areas for improvement. Practitioners are supported effectively in identifying suitable training that meets their needs. Consequently, children benefit from a highly motivated workforce with innovative ideas.

Self-evaluation is good because managers have high expectations and are very clear about their strengths and areas to develop. The self-evaluation form is completed as an ongoing process and takes into consideration the views and opinions of parents, children and staff members. Regular meetings between the management committee and practitioners ensure that the strengths and required improvements to the setting are targeted, and clear action plans documented, helping to maintain the good quality. Activities and opportunities for children are carefully planned to support children in preparation for school, following discussions between the manager and teachers about the areas in which children often need support on entry into school. The setting values the contributions from all parents and carers, developing many strategies to engage them and help them to feel welcome. For example, they are invited to open days, and social events, have access to a newly developed library where they can sit and read stories to their children and are involved in fundraising activities. The manager liaises very closely with other providers and external agencies to ensure communication and records for children are equally shared, to ensure consistency for children in their care and learning.

The Childcare Register

The requirements for the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are **Met**

The requirements for the voluntary 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	317608
Local authority	Cumbria
Inspection number	872027
Type of provision	
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 17
Total number of places	20
Number of children on roll	50
Name of provider	Stanwix Playgroup Committee
Date of previous inspection	17/03/2011
Telephone number	07896 000 110

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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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