

Opportunity Playgroup

Yarburgh, Highfield Road, East Grinstead, West Sussex, RH19 2DX

Inspection date

08/07/2013

Previous inspection date

15/12/2010

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This inspection:

1

Previous inspection:

3

How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend	1
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	1

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This provision is outstanding

- The playgroup maintains a high ratio of adults to children which enables children to have excellent support.
- Children are extremely well cared for because there is a cohesive staff team which is knowledgeable about the individual needs of children.
- Staff are highly skilled and give children excellent support because an effective appraisal system identifies relevant and specialised training.
- Children benefit from a stimulating and enabling environment with resources which help to encourage their learning and development and promote communication skills.
- Comprehensive information about children's abilities, needs and interests is obtained from parents before children start at the playgroup, which enables staff to help children settle and tailor learning and care to meet their individual needs.
- The playgroup works in close partnership with parents and other professionals, which particularly enables children with additional needs to benefit from consistent and continuous support.

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 observed the quality of teaching and support given to children by staff during activities indoors and outdoors.
- The inspector completed a joint observation with the manager of the provision.
- The inspector took account of the views of parents and professionals spoken to on the day of inspection.
- The inspector checked documentation, including evidence of staff suitability and the record of attendance.
- The inspector held meetings with the manager, staff and nominated person.

Inspector

Heather Allen

Full Report

Information about the setting

Opportunity Playgroup registered in 1980 and is run by a parent management committee. It is located at Yarburgh House in East Grinstead, West Sussex. The setting occupies the downstairs rooms of a large house where they have two play rooms and a sensory room. There are two other independent providers located in the same house, one upstairs and the other to the rear of the house. All groups share an outside play area.

The setting is registered on the Early Years Register for children aged from two to five years. Sessions are from 9.30 am to 12.00 pm on Monday, Wednesday and Friday during term time.

It is an established sessional group which specialises in catering for children with a wide range of special educational needs and/or disabilities, as well as welcoming those who are typically developing and encouraging integration. The setting is in receipt of funding for the provision of free early education to children aged two, three and four. There are currently eight children on roll.

There is a staff team of four; all of whom hold appropriate early years qualifications.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- enhance the skills and competency of staff further, for example, by asking other professionals involved in the care of children for clarification when strategies designed to support individual children are not clear and by requesting regular updates of relevant specialist training.

Inspection judgements

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

Children are helped to reach their full potential in a stimulating and enabling environment. Many of the children attending have specific needs. Staff work in close partnership with parents. They meet with parents before children start and obtain a comprehensive picture of the skills, abilities and interests of children. This enables them to select the key person who can best meet the needs of each child and ensure that appropriate resources and support are in place. An assessment of each child is carried out shortly after they start, so staff can ensure they have a thorough understanding of their abilities and needs. Parents are welcomed into the playgroup and encouraged to stay for several sessions while their

child settles in. They are enthusiastic about the support given by their child's key person. In particular, they appreciate staff keeping them up to date on a daily basis about what their child is doing and interested in. Staff also regularly provide ideas about how parents can support their child's progress at home.

Staff work in close liaison with other professionals, including child psychologists, health visitors and speech therapists. Many children attending have limited or no speech and benefit considerably from versatile strategies and resources to enable communication. For example, children can show staff how they are feeling by choosing a doll with a happy or sad face. Speech therapists regular visit the playgroup to give children additional support. They also provide specialist training for staff, including training in the use of sign language and Picture Exchange Communication Systems (PECS). The latter system is especially effective in enabling children to gain communication skills when they are not using either verbal or non-verbal means of communication. A good example of this system in practice can be seen at snack time. Children who are more verbal are given a range of pictures showing drinks and snacks. They can make choices about what they want at snack time by pointing to a particular picture. Children who are less communicative are given only one picture, for instance a picture of a biscuit. When they want the biscuit they communicate with staff by giving the picture of the biscuit back. This is a significant achievement for children who have difficulty in communicating.

The excellent resources also enable communication with children whose home language is not English. They are seen to make significant progress in speaking English during their time at the playgroup. Parents who have limited English are also helped to become involved in the playgroup as parental newsletters have at times been translated into their home language.

Staff place high importance on the inclusion of all children. Some parents whose children do not have additional needs choose the playgroup because there is a high ratio of staff to children. This enables staff to get to know all children extremely well and to give them excellent support. Staff spend considerable time in planning activities that will stimulate children's development across all areas of learning. They carry out weekly evaluations and assess what has worked well or not so well. They use this information to assess how they can improve the activities planned for the following week. At the start of each day, staff look at the individual needs and interests of each child due to attend. They brain storm ways of supporting children and make sure that planning is inclusive. For example, if a child attending that day has limited physical skills, staff ensure appropriate resources are near to the child and encourage other more able children to come over and play. Children clearly enjoy the role of helper, as they share toys and push their friend around the playgroup.

Staff give careful consideration to providing the best possible support when children move on to other settings. Parents greatly appreciate being involved in an information sharing meeting between themselves, staff and other professionals. Following this meeting, staff complete a profile of the child with comprehensive information for their new teacher. This gives the child the best possible chance to settle quickly into a new environment.

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

Staff are enthusiastic about giving children the best possible chances. There is an extremely effective key person system in place. As a result, children look well settled and at home in the environment. Staff know and follow the routines of the children. This works especially well for children in the autistic spectrum. Children are encouraged to get involved in their own learning and develop independence. For example, when children have completed an activity they demonstrate they have done so by putting a coloured sticker onto a picture of the activity. They point to the activity they would like to do next. Children gain confidence in making choices about what they want to do. Resources that interest them are easily accessible. Staff provide an effective balance of enabling children to initiate their own play as well as giving adult support.

Children have ample opportunities to play outdoors and benefit from fresh air and exercise. The environment is carefully designed to be suitable for outdoor activities in most weathers, with grassed and tarmac areas. Children are sheltered from the heat of the sun as they play under awnings in the sand pit and have snack time in the shaded picnic area. Children learn about the importance of protecting themselves when they go out in hot sunshine as staff carefully explain to them that they need to wear hats, otherwise they will get a headache. Children clearly respect the advice and promptly put their hats back on.

Children learn the importance of good hygiene practices and are prompted to clean their hands before snack time. Staff are sensitive to children who dislike washing their hands and provide cleansing wipes as an alternative. The rolling snack time encourages children to make choices about when they are hungry or thirsty. Fresh water is always available, but children can also choose alternative drinks. They become accustomed to enjoying healthy food because they can choose from a good range of nutritious snacks, including different fruit. Staff are well aware of any special dietary needs and organise snacks at the start of the session so that all children's needs are catered for in advance.

Children are safeguarded because staff have an excellent knowledge of safeguarding procedures and would know what to do in the event of a child protection concern. A high priority is given to children's health and safety. Staff are extremely vigilant in their supervision of children and attentive to their needs. They provide close supervision for children who lack fear and are more adventurous, enabling children to safely explore the environment.

Staff also give particularly close support to children who are less mobile. They constantly provide activities or sing to them so that they are not isolated. Specialised equipment supports children to stand so they can view the surrounding environment. The sensory room is exceptionally well resourced to support children with limited movement. Children lie under mobiles reaching out to touch a favourite rabbit. Swirling lights and rotating pictures on the wall provide visual stimulation. Children are motivated to wriggle on their backs towards the different wall textures. They gently push a ball which is placed near them and giggle profusely when it is rolled back to them.

Children concentrate for long periods of time lining up toy pigs and walking them along a ledge. Staff support them and extend their learning by counting the pigs and describing their colour and size. They tell the story of the three little pigs and engage the interest of other children who come to listen. Children who are usually less communicative are stimulated to join in conversations.

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

Leaders and managers are strongly committed to providing an enabling environment which supports all children to meet their full potential. Many of the children attending have a complex range of additional needs. The playgroup maintains a high ratio of adults to children which enables children to have excellent support. Staff work closely with parents and gain comprehensive information about children's abilities, needs and interests so that appropriate resources and support can be put in place promptly. A key person is carefully chosen so that they have the relevant skills and knowledge to best support children as soon as they start. Staff know children extremely well due to the small numbers of children attending. They work cohesively with parents and other professionals throughout children's time at the playgroup so that learning and care are specifically tailored to meet individual needs. As a result, children benefit from consistent and continuous support. Parents are full of praise for the dedication of staff and other professionals caring for children. They describe the significant progress made by children during their time at the playgroup.

Leaders and managers are passionate about providing an environment where children receive the best possible opportunities. An extremely effective performance management system is in place which encourages and supports staff in their professional development so they can best care for children. Children are safeguarded because new staff receive a prompt and comprehensive induction and are not left unsupervised with children until all suitability checks have been completed. All staff have received safeguarding training and have a clear understanding of procedures to follow in order to protect children. They participate in a formal performance appraisal twice a year. During self-evaluation leaders identified that regular staff supervision and performance monitoring would also be highly beneficial. This is now in place and enables early identification of any training needs or additional support which would benefit children. Staff are extremely well qualified and are encouraged to continuously update their skills and knowledge by attending training to support the specific needs of children attending. For example, they have received professional training in the use of sign language and for using PECS. Training is cascaded to staff who have not been able to attend so that all staff can support children when their key person is not present.

The playgroup is run by a committee of parents who understand the needs of parents and children. Parents are warmly welcomed and encouraged to be involved in both their child's learning and development and in the running of the playgroup. The playgroup works in close partnership with other professionals, such as speech therapists, in order to provide cohesive support for children. Professionals regularly visit the playgroup and give

individual support to children in the setting as well as visiting the home environment. Joint meetings take place between professionals and staff where strategies and goals are planned for individual children. These strategies are designed to determine the best possible experiences and activities which will enable children to make progress. Staff are enthusiastic about supporting children and promptly implementing strategies. However, on occasions, staff do not always seek further clarification from professionals before putting strategies into practice to make these completely effective, or request regular top-ups of professional training to further enhance their high levels of children's care and learning.

Effective self-evaluation systems are in place because leaders and managers, staff and parents are all involved in analysing the strengths of the playgroup and areas where improvements could be made. The manager has an excellent understanding of the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage. She has analysed and successfully addressed areas for improvement which have previously been identified. For example, at the last inspection, the playgroup was asked to ensure that children's hours of attendance are clearly detailed. Children are now additionally safeguarded because the exact times of arrival and departure of all children, visitors and staff are clearly recorded. They were also asked to ensure that a written records of complaints is maintained. A record has been drawn up so that complaints can be recorded, although no complaints have been received. In addition, the playgroup was recommended to develop continuous improvement of the provision for children through a secure system of self-evaluation, working in partnership with parents. Parents are now involved in self-evaluation which recently identified that many parents were having difficulties with potty training. The playgroup supported parents by inviting them to a coffee morning where a nurse specialising in incontinence gave them potty training tips.

The safety of children is of paramount importance. The premises are safe and secure and a daily risk assessment of the environment is carried out before children arrive. A daily list is kept of the adult responsible for collecting each child from the playgroup. A password system is in place if someone different from usual is due to collect a child. Children are given a high level of supervision when parents identify that their child is particularly adventurous. Regular fire drills are carried out so that when a real emergency occurs, staff are able to evacuate children safely. Most members of staff have a current first aid certificate. As a result, there are always several trained adults present who are competent to deal with any accidents or injuries. Comprehensive risk assessments are completed for outings, such as a visit to the Bluebell Railway. Parents are invited to join the outing so that children are extremely well supported and safeguarded by a high ratio of adults to children.

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	113622
Local authority	West Sussex
Inspection number	813449
Type of provision	Sessional provision
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	2 - 5
Total number of places	4
Number of children on roll	8
Name of provider	Opportunity Playgroup Committee
Date of previous inspection	15/12/2010
Telephone number	01342 323215

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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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