

Eaton Elephants Playgroup

Eaton Primary School, Purtingay Close, NORWICH, NR4 6HU

Inspection date	11/09/2013
Previous inspection date	05/11/2008

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

- Staff clearly understand how to support children's learning and development and are skilled in their ability to adapt activities to meet children's individual needs, styles and pace of learning.
- The indoor and outdoor child-focused learning environments provide imaginative and stimulating activities that engage children and capture their interest. This encourages children to become confident, motivated in their play and inquisitive learners.
- Children feel safe and secure in their relationships with staff. The strong key person system, built around effective settling-in arrangements, strengthens relationships with children and their families and supports continuity between pre-school and home life.
- Partnerships with parents are a key strength of the setting and staff work hard to ensure there is a joint approach to children's care and learning. Transitions are handled sensitively, enabling children to make successful moves on to school.

It is not yet outstanding because

- There is scope to ensure that children's independence during snack time is promoted by encouraging them to choose when to have their snack and involving them more in preparing and serving snacks and drinks.
- Links between the playgroup and some other early years providers that children attend are not firmly established, to provide children with a high level of consistency in their care and learning.

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 activities indoors and outside.
- The inspector spoke with the owner, staff and children during the inspection and carried out observations of the children.
The inspector looked at children's progress records, planning, evidence of suitability of staff working within the setting, a selection of policies and other relevant documentation.
- The inspector also took account of the views of parents spoken to during the inspection.

Inspector

Lindsey Cullum

Full Report

Information about the setting

Eaton Elephants Playgroup registered under the current private ownership in 1997. It is registered on the Early Years Register and both the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. The playgroup operates from a mobile classroom within the grounds of Eaton Primary School in Eaton, Norfolk. There is an enclosed area available for outdoor play. The playgroup is accessible to all children and serves the local area.

The playgroup opens Monday to Friday from 9am to 3pm, during school term-times only. Children may attend for a variety of sessions. There are currently 60 children attending who are in the early years age group. The playgroup provides funded early education for three- and four-year-old children. It supports a number of children who speak English as an additional language and who have special educational needs and/or disabilities.

The playgroup employs eight members of staff. Of these, seven hold appropriate early years qualifications and one will begin training shortly.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- develop children's independence further during snack time, by allowing them to choose when to have their snack and encouraging children to help with the preparation and serving of food and drink
- improve relationships with other early years providers that children attend, to more effectively share information and support consistency of care and learning for children.

Inspection judgements

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

Children thoroughly enjoy their learning in this well-resourced, vibrant and stimulating playgroup. They make good progress because staff fully understand how young children learn and provide an educational programme, which has depth and breadth across all areas of learning. Regular and insightful observations of children at play, help staff make ongoing assessments of their progress. Each child has a 'Learning Story' book that contains comments about their achievements, illustrated by photographs, which show

children take part in a wide range of activities that build on their early learning skills. Staff use information gained from their observations to successfully plan a wide variety of interesting and challenging activities that engage children so they actively learn through their play. For example, children are taught to recognise colours by taking part in many creative activities using different coloured materials or helping with the rainbow themed display. Part of this activity includes mixing coloured food dyes with water to make a range of coloured water bottles. As a result, children have opportunities to experiment with colour, increase their vocabulary as they learn new words for more complex colours and develop their creative skills. Staff are skilled at ensuring children get the most from an activity. For example, they adeptly use open-ended questioning to seek out what the children already know so that they can build on this further. High levels of concentration are evident in the older children, preparing them for more structured learning when they move on to school.

Partnerships with parents are a key strength of this setting and, as a result, parents comment that they feel well informed, supported and very involved in their children's learning. Parents are invited to share what they know about their children as they start attending and have frequent opportunities to discuss with staff their children's ongoing progress and learning. Parents comment that they highly value the 'Parents Pages' sheet that is regularly sent home. This provides information on the current topic or theme and gives ideas on how parents can support children's learning at home. The key person system is successfully implemented. This ensures that each key person is knowledgeable about individual children and, in particular, children with additional needs. Staff skilfully adapt activities to ensure that all children are able to take an active part and are fully included in all activities. Furthermore, staff liaise closely with parents and other professionals involved in children's care to ensure that children receive appropriate intervention and encouragement. Consequently, all children are developing well.

Children express themselves very well. They chatter to each other when they are playing, talking about what they are doing or sharing their ideas. They listen well in small groups and understand simple instructions and comments made by staff. Staff model clear language during their activities without discouraging children's efforts as they copy new words. This enables all children to use their growing skills and become confident communicators. Children thoroughly enjoy stories, listening attentively to their favourites. They are able to recall and put into their own words what the story was about or answer questions afterwards. Children's love of books is actively encouraged. They frequently choose a book to look at alone or with friends, using the pictures to tell a story, demonstrating their increasing understanding that print carries meaning. To enhance this area, staff provide a variety of large boxes, which children snuggle up in or choose to use for their imaginative games. For example, they pretend these are boats and use language well to describe how they are sailing on the sea or that their boat is sinking. Children find additional resources to add to their play, such as magnetic sticks, which they adapt into oars. Other children are drawn in, excited by the imaginative play. Consequently, children learn to play together and are able to adapt resources for different purposes.

Numbers and simple mathematical concepts are threaded throughout activities. For example, staff talk about more and less, encourage children to compare size and shape and sing simple number rhymes during group activities. They experiment with a variety of

magnets, beginning to understand which materials will be attracted. Staff respond to children's spontaneous play by asking open-ended questions, which encourage children to think creatively, solve problems and link ideas. For example, when children are playing with the farm and want to create a stable for the horse, staff question what they might be able to use for this. Children confidently suggest ideas and successfully find the resources they require. Children enjoy the wide variety of malleable materials that are provided. They spend lots of time playing and experimenting with dough. Children handle tools, such as small knives, cutters and rolling pins with increasing control, making sausage shapes, which they cut into pieces. Staff enhance learning opportunities by skilfully introducing additional materials, such as glitter with the dough, which children use to represent icing on the pretend cakes they are making. Children thoroughly enjoy mixing the glitter into the dough, feeling the different texture with their hands. Many opportunities are provided for children to explore and experiment with textures. Trays containing varied natural materials, such as, sand, water, soil and ice, as well as other manufactured materials, are frequently provided and enjoyed by the children.

Children enjoy opportunities to draw, colour and make marks. Outside they chalk on the pavement and boards, drawing a variety of shapes. Staff join in their activities and introduce more complex shapes, such as triangles, which some are able to identify and copy. They also use chalks to write numbers, supported by staff to make their own game of hopscotch. Children develop their early writing skills, using crayons, pencils and paints. Self-registration encourages children to recognise their names and some children sound out or write the letters of their names as they attempt to label their pictures. Children enjoy dressing up and role playing familiar experiences, such as, using the tools from the workbench to repair toys or they pretend to be a Fireman. Children join in small groups for their play, with one child volunteering to be the monster, which causes lots of screaming and fun as the children run away. Games of hide and seek encourage lots of taking turns and staff join in these with enthusiasm, supporting children in learning good social skills.

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

Arrangements to help children settle into the playgroup and build secure emotional attachments with their carers are very effective. Children refer to staff as 'Auntie' and each other as friends creating a calm, relaxed and happy environment, where children feel cherished and very secure. Successful implementation of the key person system ensures children's individual needs are known and met. Children are confident, play very well together and are well behaved, demonstrating their understanding of the clear boundaries and high expectations of the staff. They are kind, offering to share and take turns with resources with little or no prompting. Staff act as positive role models, speaking kindly to children and gently reminding them to say 'please' and 'thank you' when appropriate. Regular praise and encouragement from staff, helps to develop children's self-esteem and sense of achievement. The setting is inclusive and children learn to respect and celebrate each other's differences. For example, some staff introduce children to the different languages they speak, during group times, so that children have fun learning simple words in Spanish. Furthermore, children with English as an additional language or those who are bilingual are well supported, as staff use gestures, pictures and learn key words in their

home language, to aid communication and help children settle. Children also take part in activities locally and in fund-raising events, such as Red Nose Day, promoting their understanding of their own community and broader aspects of life.

The playgroup environment is warm, welcoming and very child-centred. Toys and activities are thoughtfully presented, for example the farm set is placed onto material to represent grass and fields. Displays featuring children's artwork and photographs are beautifully displayed around many of the walls. Added to this, the book corner contains photograph albums of the children enjoying a variety of different activities, which they enjoy looking through and discussing with their friends. Consequently, the environment is stimulating and vibrant and children experience a strong sense of belonging. The outdoor area is exceptionally well used to promote children's learning and well-being. This has been developed to provide rich learning opportunities and an exciting place for children to play, discover, explore and have fun. Children are actively involved in planting and growing, helping to tend the crop growing in planting boxes and harvesting the tomatoes or beans, which they eat at snacktime. This helps children to learn about where their food comes from and how it is produced. Children also develop a good understanding of wildlife and the lifecycles of insects, as they observe bugs living in the 'bug hotel' they have created.

Children are encouraged to learn the importance of basic personal hygiene and ensure that their hands are clean before eating or cooking activities. At snack times they eat freshly prepared food, such as chopped fruit and vegetables and small breadsticks. Children with specific dietary needs are always considered. However, children are called for snacks and have limited involvement in the preparation and serving of their own, to help them become more independent in their self-care. The staff attach great importance to children being outside and enjoying fresh air and exercise. They carefully plan the outdoor environment so there is a good choice of resources, which encourage children to be physically active. Children freely access the outdoor area, learn how to dress themselves appropriately for the weather and know to drink plenty of water on hot days. Consequently, their health and well-being is actively supported. Children learn how to keep themselves safe through gentle reminders from staff, such as, how to handle scissors or other small tools correctly. They are learning to take managed risks in their play, for example, as they climb challenging pieces of equipment and ask for support from staff if needed. Fire drills and emergency procedures are regularly practised so that children are confident with the procedures in place to keep them safe from harm.

The playgroup is within the grounds of the primary school where very good links are established. Children are invited to attend some school events, including assemblies, and the reception teacher regularly comes into the playgroup to read to the children, so that she becomes a familiar face. Some activities are planned and shared. For example, the playgroup children go in to the school to view chicks brought in as part of the reception class' learning. This successful partnership working helps children to make associations about their move to big school and, as a result, children are supported in making a smooth transition into school.

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

The owner/manager provides capable leadership to her staff and they all work closely together, forming a very effective team. There is a shared understanding of the Statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage requirements and staff strive to deliver an enjoyable and challenging learning experience, which meets the needs of individual children. Staff convey a genuine enthusiasm for their work, which is evident in their interaction with the children who are nurtured and making good progress whilst in their care. Effective systems are in place to regularly monitor practice and the educational programmes provided. The owner supports opportunities for staff to widen their knowledge and experience, by enabling them to attend relevant training. She has recently introduced supervision meetings, where staff are able to discuss practice issues and their professional development. Regular team meetings are held, where new ideas and initiatives are shared and discussed, so these can be effectively implemented into practice. Effective recruitment and thorough induction procedures are followed to ensure that all staff working with children are suitable to do so and clearly understand their duties and responsibilities.

Staff are proactive in ensuring children's safety is maintained and the children are carefully supervised both indoors and outside. Rigorous systems are in place to assess risk and ensure the premises are safe and secure and any outings are safely managed. Consequently, staff create an environment that is safe and inviting, where children feel secure and happy. Close supervision of the children, and effective staff deployment, contribute to the safety and welfare of the children. Clear policies and procedures, which are accessible to parents, support the good care and learning practices within the setting. Records are well-maintained and stored confidentially, although parents are able to access their children's records at any time.

Safeguarding is considered a priority in the setting. Staff fully understand the issues surrounding child protection and are clear about the procedures they need to follow to report any concerns. All staff are suitably vetted and sign ongoing declarations of suitability and no one has unsupervised access to children, ensuring they are safeguarded. No mobile phones are allowed in the playgroup and one camera is available for staff to take photographs, following consent from parents, to further protect children. The setting has a good relationship with the school, which is on the same site. Communication between teachers and staff effectively support the children in making a smooth transition as they become school age. The setting also works in very close partnership with other professionals and organisations involved in the care and well-being of the children. This multi-agency approach, coupled with staffs positive attitude, means that where children need additional input, individualised plans are formed in consultation with parents, to ensure that appropriate support is arranged. However, links with other early years provision that a few children attend are not fully established, to ensure that children's learning is always shared and consistently promoted across all settings and carers.

Self-evaluation is effective in highlighting successes and aspects for future development. For example, significant improvements have been made to the outdoor provision since the

last inspection with the setting turning an unused space in the school grounds into an exciting outdoor learning environment. Parents have been involved in fund-raising and resourcing the area and comment on the positive impact this had on children's learning opportunities. Strong partnerships are established with parents. Those spoken to, speak very highly of the support they receive from the owner and staff team, the high quality information provided both in writing and verbally, how well they are involved in their children's learning and importantly that their children are happy and developing well while attending the playgroup.

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	EY254180
Local authority	Norfolk
Inspection number	907148
Type of provision	
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 17
Total number of places	26
Number of children on roll	60
Name of provider	Jill Ann Gibson
Date of previous inspection	05/11/2008
Telephone number	01603 502454

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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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Store St
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M1 2WD

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