

# Lowson Street Pre-School Playgroup

Lowson Street, DARLINGTON, County Durham, DL3 0EY

<b>Inspection date</b>	18/09/2013
Previous inspection date	15/10/2008

<b>The quality and standards of the early years provision</b>	<b>This inspection:</b>	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

- Children are motivated, keen to learn and quick to engage in play. They make good and often very good progress.
- The manager is a good role model for her team. She demonstrates very good practice and is passionate about providing the best possible care for children.
- All staff have a very good understanding of their responsibilities with regards to child protection and the setting is safe. Children are well safeguarded.
- Staff provide good information to parents to enable them to support their children's learning at home. This shared approach enables children to make the best possible progress.
- Children form strong relationships with all staff and are happy and confident within the pre-school's warm and welcoming environment.

### It is not yet outstanding because

- There is scope to improve the organisation of some group times to prevent children from becoming distracted and losing concentration.
- Staff are not always consistent in encouraging children to be independent when preparing to go outdoors to play and at snack time.

## **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 care in the pre-school rooms and the outdoor area.
- The inspector held meetings with the manager and spoke to staff and children.
- The inspector looked at children's assessment records and planning documentation.
- The inspector checked evidence of suitability and qualifications of practitioners working with children, the provider's self-evaluation and other documentation.
- The inspector took account of the views of parents expressed through conversations during the inspection.
- The inspector carried out a joint inspection with the manager.

## **Inspector**

Lindsey Pollock

## Full Report

### Information about the setting

Lowson Street Pre-School Playgroup has been registered since 1999. It is on the on the Early Years Register. It operates from two rooms adjacent to Harrowgate Hill Methodist Church and has a secure outdoor play area. The pre-school serves the local and surrounding areas.

The pre-school employs five members of childcare staff including the manager. All hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3 and above. The manager has an Early Years Degree and Early Years Professional Status.

The pre-school opens Monday to Friday term time only. Sessions are from 9am until 12 noon and 12.30pm until 3.30pm. Provision is made for children to have lunch if they attend for both sessions. There are currently 40 children on roll. The pre-school provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

### What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- minimise disruptions and background noise during group times to prevent children from losing their focus and concentration in order to further promote their listening and attention skills
- make the most of every opportunity to further develop independence at snack times and when children are preparing to go outside.

## Inspection judgements

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

Children clearly enjoy their time at the pre-school and are busy and happily occupied throughout the sessions. Staff have a secure knowledge of the learning and development requirements and of how children learn through play. The manager is a particularly strong practitioner in this area and is a good role model for her staff team. Together they provide a variety of exciting activities and opportunities to promote children's learning and development. These are based on children's interests and their next steps which have been identified through observation and assessments. Before the children start at the pre-school, staff obtain information about their likes and capabilities from parents. This information is then used, along with the pre-school's own initial assessment, to plan for

children's starting points.

The quality of teaching is good and staff successfully help children to acquire the skills, attitudes and dispositions they need to be ready for school. Staff engage children naturally in conversation during group activities and free play. Parents comment very positively about the progress their children have made in their speech since attending the pre-school. The manager is skilled in bringing stories alive for children and encouraging their interaction. Children laugh and giggle as they join in with the words of the story and they participate well, taking great pleasure in roaring like a tiger. They are keen to listen carefully during a planned activity to help them develop their listening skills. However, staff do not always take advantage of the space available for these lovely activities so that children can enjoy them fully without being distracted by noise elsewhere in the room. Children show much excitement and enthusiasm in their play. They are naturally curious and take great delight in proudly showing the staff and other children the spider they have found in the outdoor area. Staff seize the opportunity to talk to them about the spider, counting how many legs it has, and discussing colours, size and shape. They then support children to carefully return it to where they found it, teaching them to care for living things. They engage in role play with children, being careful to take their lead but suggesting ideas to extend their play.

Parents are fully involved in children's learning. They have good opportunities to discuss children's progress with their key person on a regular and frequent basis and staff are always happy and keen to speak to parents. Detailed information about what children have been doing at the pre-school is recorded in individual learning records which are sent home for parents to read. Staff encourage parents to contribute to these books and show what children have been doing at home. This is then used to inform planning to ensure all are working together to help children make good progress. Parents comment that they are very happy with the level of information provided about their child's development and feel they are kept fully up-to-date.

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

Good regard is given to promoting children's well-being. Strong bonds and good relationships are evident between children and staff. Children are clearly very happy and show they feel safe in the pre-school. They leave their parents confidently and approach staff with much affection. Effective steps are in place to support children in settling into the pre-school. Staff implement a gradual settling-in programme that is tailored to meet children's individual needs. Parents are welcome to stay with their child as long as they feel necessary. As a result, children feel secure in the pre-school environment and parents are assured that their children are happy and settled.

Staff work hard to build children's confidence and self-esteem to help them prepare for nursery and school. They give children lots of praise and recognise their achievements. Some parents spoken to during the inspection say their children were shy and did not interact much with other children before they began at the pre-school. However, they now feel their children have made great progress and will cope well with the move into nursery and school. Staff take care to promote children's independence by encouraging them to

choose what they want to play with, manage their personal needs and cut their own fruit up. However, they miss some opportunities to help them be even more independent as on occasion they act too quickly to help children put on their coats and the jugs used at snack time are large and heavy, this means children struggle to pour their own drinks. Children's understanding of acceptable behaviour is supported well. Staff are calm, kind and good role models for children and teach them about the importance of sharing and taking turns. They reinforce children's understanding of how to keep themselves safe, for example, they remind them to use tools correctly and involve them well in emergency evacuation practises.

Staff give children clear messages to ensure they are developing a good understanding of how to keep healthy. They talk with children at snack time about what foods are good for them and encourage them to play outdoors in the fresh air by providing an inviting outdoor play environment. Children rarely need any persuasion to play outdoors and have great fun using a broad range of outdoor play equipment. They enthusiastically play with resources, such as, bikes, scooters, climbing frames and a wigwam, which enables them to develop their movement and physical control. Staff protect children's health further by ensuring high standards of cleanliness are maintained to prevent the spread of infection.

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

The leadership and management of the pre-school is good. There are effective arrangements in place to implement and monitor the delivery of the Early Years Foundation Stage requirements for safeguarding and welfare, and learning and development. The manager's strong vision and high expectations are shared by the staff team and they work well together to meet children's needs. All staff, including volunteers clearly understand the safeguarding procedures. They are knowledgeable about the procedures and what they must do should they have any concerns about children in their care. Robust recruitment and selection procedures are in place to ensure adults are suitable to work with children and secure arrangements are in place for performance management. Staff place high priority on keeping children safe. They conduct thorough risk assessments relating to the indoor environment and outside play area and supervise children at all times.

The manager listens to the views and suggestions of parents, children and staff and uses these to improve the pre-school. For example, the arrangements for children to hang their coats up have been changed following a parent's suggestion and children are now able to do this independently. Children are consulted about activities and resources, using 'smiley' and 'sad' face stickers to indicate their preferences. All of the staff team are encouraged to participate in a varied programme of professional development. Training needs and good practice are identified through supervision, appraisal sessions and peer observations. Staff feel well supported and value the guidance they receive from the manager. Consequently, children are cared for in a relaxed, happy atmosphere with a very low staff turnover. The manager very much values the support and guidance she receives from the local authority and health care professionals who are welcomed into the setting. She works closely with them to develop the provision and ensure children are getting all the help they need to

make good progress.

Partnerships with parents are strong. Staff work very closely with parents of all children and provide them with lots of information which helps them to understand the aims and principles of the pre-school. It is apparent from the comments that parents make that they are extremely pleased with the provision and the care their children receive. They say their children attend this pre-school because of the good quality care, the friendly and welcoming staff and the very good range of activities provided. Many say the pre-school was strongly recommended to them. Partnerships with other early years settings are also strong. The staff work closely with local schools, nurseries and childminders to share knowledge and ideas about how to move children forward in their learning.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	508117
<b>Local authority</b>	Darlington
<b>Inspection number</b>	877247
<b>Type of provision</b>	
<b>Registration category</b>	Childcare - Non-Domestic
<b>Age range of children</b>	0 - 5
<b>Total number of places</b>	26
<b>Number of children on roll</b>	40
<b>Name of provider</b>	Lowson Street Pre-School Playgroup Committee
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	15/10/2008
<b>Telephone number</b>	01325 362388

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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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