

Bolton Children's Opportunity Group Playgroup

Lowndes Street Nursery, Lowndes Street, Heaton, BOLTON, BL1 4QB

Inspection date	08/10/2013
Previous inspection date	19/10/2010

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 have a good understanding of the procedures they follow if they have concerns about a child's welfare and they are deployed effectively to meet children's care and learning needs.
- Partnership working with other agencies and parents to plan for children's learning and welfare is excellent, and the group provides outstanding support to help parents engage with their children's learning.
- Staff provide good or better levels of challenge to help children develop, especially for communication and language, by making individual and detailed plans for children's learning.
- Children are settled, happy and confident, and staff are careful to support their independence and their need to explore, irrespective of their needs, so that they can learn and develop.

It is not yet outstanding because

- The group does not consistently exchange information about children's learning with all other settings they attend, to better inform planning and assessment.
- The changes to how managers check staffs' assessment of children's progress are too recently introduced for their effectiveness to be clear.

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 reviewed a range of information available about the Opportunity Group, to prepare for the inspection, and examined a selection of documentation.
- The inspector toured the premises.
- The inspector carried out observations of childcare staff and their interactions with children throughout the day.
- The inspector held a meeting with the manager and spoke with staff, children and parents at appropriate times during the inspection.
- A joint observation was completed by the inspector and the manager.

Inspector

Jennifer Kennaugh

Full Report

Information about the setting

Bolton Children's Opportunity Group Playgroup first opened in 1979 and is registered on the Early Years Register and the compulsory part of the Childcare Register. The group is a not-for-profit registered charity run by a committee. It operates from single-storey, post-war buildings in the Heaton area of Bolton. Four rooms are available to children, and there is an enclosed outdoor play area that is accessible from each room. The group has a dedicated room for sensory play. The entrances to the premises are accessible to all adults and children. There is a car park at the side of the premises, and transport can be provided by the local education department and the group.

The group is open term times only. Sessions are available on Monday to Friday from 9am to 12pm for children aged from two to four years. A pre-school session is offered from 9am to 2pm on Mondays and Thursdays and from 9am to 12pm on Fridays. Baby sessions are offered Tuesday to Thursday from 1.30pm to 3pm, when the parents stay on site. There is a team of 10 childcare staff, eight of whom have appropriate level 3 qualifications. One staff member has an early years foundation degree and is working towards Early Years Professional Status. There is a multi-lingual member of staff who provides support to children and parents in several home languages. The group has a team of volunteers and additional reception and administration staff. There are also two mini-bus drivers and a mini-bus escort who is working for a level 2 qualification. There are currently 50 children on roll, attending for a variety of sessions. The group supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

The Opportunity Group receives support and advice from the local authority early years quality team.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- embed the recently enhanced ways of monitoring staff's assessment of children's learning and evaluate their impact on children's progress
- enhance the consistency with which the playgroup liaises with other settings attended by children, in order to exchange information on assessment and planning for children's learning

Inspection judgements

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

Children make good or better progress in their learning, as key persons have strong knowledge of how individual children learn. Staff make plans for inclusive activities based on their observations of what individual children can do and use information about their interests to help motivate them in their learning. The educational programmes are challenging and well matched to individual children's ages and stages. The individual education plans made termly, or more frequently as needed, for each child are always developed in conjunction with parents. The plans also incorporate any information and targets set by other professionals involved with supporting children's learning and development. As a result, plans are precise for individual children's developmental needs, and draw on a wide range of sources. Observations are made frequently on children's learning and these are compared to expected developmental norms for children's ages. Comprehensive assessments are made of children's learning, through tracking their progress in detail. This enables staff to see if progress is as expected, above, or below for their age and stage. Consequently, staff can address any gaps in learning that may emerge, so that early intervention can prevent greater future difficulties. Assessments are also made of what children can do when they join in order to inform initial planning, to supplement the information from any other professionals and parents.

Staff provide excellent support for children who need additional measures to stimulate their verbal communication skills through the use of pictures. They encourage children to select the correct picture for the next activity, and give it to staff while staff model the use of the correct word such as 'snack'. This helps to develop children's vocabulary. Staff also take care to use specific praise frequently with children, such as 'good sitting' to reinforce the importance of this at small group times. Children delight in choosing the next song to sing by using pictures to give to staff that show which one they want. As a result, children learn to communicate in order to have their preferences met, motivating them for further development in communication and language. Staff observe for children's repetitive play and provide activities to help children investigate their interest further. For example when children rip paper repeatedly, they plan to introduce them to other materials to provide an alternative experience. This helps to develop children's thinking and forms a basis for staff to continue building their language development. Staff also make eye-catching displays of text at child height, which include familiar high street retailer names and signs, to help children understand that text carries meaning. This demonstrates that staff understand the different ways in which children access text in the world around them, in addition to looking at books.

Children delight in playing with water in the outdoor area and become engrossed in spraying it and filling containers of a wide variety of sizes. This helps to develop their understanding of relative size as part of early mathematical development. Staff use the opportunity while children are waiting to use the wall tap to emphasise the importance of taking turns and waiting patiently, developing children's awareness of others and their needs. Children shout with pleasure as they stamp in large trays filled with water and staff add paint to this, to help children learn colour names correctly. Staff notice what

fascinates children, such as the changing shapes on a simple computer game, and sit with them, saying the shape names and when there is only one or many of them. This helps to build several areas of learning, including early mathematics and social and communication skills. Children choose to make collages, selecting from a very wide range of materials of different textures and colours. This is in order to help staff build children's vocabulary by talking to them about how the materials look and feel.

Parents are confident to ask for activities and to borrow resources for use at home to support their children's learning, including over holiday closures. This means that they have excellent opportunities to engage directly with their children's learning. Overall, children are very well prepared for their next stages in learning, including the move to full-time school, irrespective of their needs. There is some effective liaison with other settings attended by children in addition to the group, however there is not consistent exchange of information, especially if children attend more than two other settings. This means that a full picture of these children is not available across all the settings attended, in order to inform planning and assessment of their learning. The group effectively supports continuity of learning for children when they are ready to leave for full-time school or nursery by providing detailed information about their progress.

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

The group operates a key person system in order to support children's emotional welfare and key persons show strong knowledge of children, their routines and their preferences. Key persons are therefore able to provide effective support for children's emotional well-being, which consequently facilitates children's learning. Children demonstrate their confidence by exploring the space and resources thoroughly, indoors and outside, as well as by engaging staff in their play. There is a strong emphasis on children developing independence, irrespective of their needs. For example, staff hold children's hands up to show them how to hang up their anorak after playing outside, instead of doing this for them. Children in the main playroom are encouraged to serve themselves at snack and meal times as soon as they are able, in order to further develop their self-help skills. The staff are highly sensitive to the food preferences of children, such as for colour and texture, and work closely with parents and professionals to help extend the range of foods that children will eat. This means that very good support is provided to help children have a balanced diet that they enjoy. There are effective measures in place to support parents to provide healthy food from home if this is needed, and also to prevent spoilage of this by correct storage.

The atmosphere in all rooms is calm and children are observed to use resources safely, due to support from staff. Staff demonstrate a consistently effective approach to help children learn to manage their feelings and actions towards others. This helps children to extend their communication and social development, including children who are being encouraged to use pictorial methods for communication to stimulate their use of speech. This also aids their knowledge of routines during their day, which helps to support emotional security. Staff make use of the sensory room with soothing lights and textures to help calm children and stimulate their communication skills by describing what they can

see together. Resources and toys are highly accessible and cover the breadth of the areas of learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Consequently, children develop independence because they are able to make their own decisions about what to play with. Children's welfare is very well protected by a comprehensive range of policies and parental permissions. The group demonstrates an inclusive ethos to meeting children's specific needs, such as by all staff receiving specialist training to administer medicines for individual children. There is a strong emphasis on maintaining the dignity of the child at all times, which is underpinned by the group's comprehensive equal opportunities policy.

The group provides an outdoor environment which gives children opportunities to take reasonable risk in their play, with careful supervision, such as slides and slopes. The areas are well-resourced with equipment for children in order to develop their whole body control, and to explore sand and water with staff supervision. Children have access to outdoor play, irrespective of their mobility. Adaptations are made to support their safety whilst allowing them to explore and enjoy outdoor exercise, including for those who are mobile but not yet walking. The staff work continually with other professionals such as physiotherapists and speech therapists to implement plans to help children's physical, communication and social development. Local outings are organised to enrich the outdoor experiences provided by the group on the premises and also to give parents the opportunity to engage with their children's learning whilst building family resilience. There is designated space on the premises for parents to remain whilst their children take part in sessions and parents appreciate the 'open door' policy that enables them to seek support from the staff, manager and other parents at any time. This further facilitates excellent partnership working with parents. The group offers parents a wealth of information to support families with young children, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Support for parents continues after children leave the group, as parents are encouraged to use the expertise of the manager and the registered person if they have queries about accessing services for their children. Parents comment 'I don't know what I would do without the group' when describing the positive impact they see on their child and family due to their child attending. This demonstrates the exceptional links between the group and parents.

Children show a good level of self-care according to their individual development and some are able to manage a variety of aspects of personal hygiene appropriate to their age and stage. For example, staff talk to children about the importance of washing their hands thoroughly and, as a result, children have opportunities to learn effective hygiene routines. All areas of the premises are clean and well maintained to help prevent the spread of any germs. Suitable practical safety measures, such as safety gates and radiator covers, are in place to help prevent accidents. Staff deployment is observed to be highly effective to support children's welfare and learning. This is because the group provides greater ratios of adults to children than stipulated under statutory requirements, in order to effectively meet the needs of all children attending.

A highly-flexible approach, which is based on the needs of individual children, is taken at all times, to maintain children's emotional well-being when they join or leave the group. The group requests information from any previous settings attended by children in order to inform initial planning, and also seeks highly detailed information from parents and other agencies and professionals to supplement this. Meticulous information to support

children's good health and well-being is kept from when children join the group, in order to meet their needs. The group works with parents and children's next settings to devise flexible plans that meet individual children's needs to help them become familiar and settled for their next stage in learning. For example, children may be introduced to their next setting over several months of gradually increasing visits.

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

This inspection was scheduled following concerns raised about safeguarding and child protection. Ofsted investigated the concerns and found that legal requirements in relation to staff understanding their roles and responsibilities were not being met. A notice to improve was issued which asked the provider to ensure that staff understand their roles and responsibilities especially in reporting child protection concerns to management. The provider has taken satisfactory action to ensure that legal requirements continue to be met. Risk assessments and safety checks are detailed and regularly reviewed to enable children with a range of needs to play safely and freely in permitted areas. Staff have a comprehensive understanding of how to manage any concerns they may have about a child's welfare due to good knowledge of safeguarding procedures. The managers, staff and volunteers are checked and vetted for suitability to work with children. There are detailed records, procedures and policies to cover the use of mini-buses to transport children and the mini-bus escort is qualified in paediatric first aid. This supports children's safety if travelling to and from the group on this transport. All documentation related to statutory requirements is completed to support the safe and effective running of the setting, including a policy for the use of devices with cameras on the premises, such as mobile phones. A comprehensive range of policies and procedures is used to maintain a high standard of care and learning for all children in the group.

Responsibilities of staff and managers are clearly defined to ensure that staff have a good understanding of how to carry out their roles to a high standard. Procedures for recruitment, induction and staff performance management are comprehensive. However, the staff is an established one and staff turnover is low, demonstrating that staff are sensitively managed. The induction procedures for volunteers are also detailed, in order to protect children's welfare and safety. Staff are supported to identify areas where they would like more training through regular meetings as a whole group and also through their individual appraisals. The manager demonstrates a good understanding of how to help a stable staff team develop their skills and experience, by occasional, yearly re-deployment, while maintaining continuity for children.

Staff plan educational programmes based on the needs of individual children, which provide good levels of challenge appropriate to their age and stage of development. There are systems in place to monitor the quality and consistency of observations, planning and assessment of children's learning. This means that good or better practice to support children's learning is maintained throughout the group. However, the manager's recent changes to monitoring the staff's assessment of children's learning to help them make even better progress have yet to become fully embedded. As a result, their impact is not

yet available for evaluation. The staff quality of teaching is monitored by managers through frequent informal observations. This enables any perceived underperformance to be quickly tackled so that staff continue to be clear about the high standards expected from them, when working to support children's development. The manager demonstrates good knowledge of strategies to support staff when they need to improve aspects of their practice and implements these when required.

The group has excellent partnerships with parents, who praise it for the standards of care and education of children, including children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. They particularly praise the support provided by the staff when statements of special educational need are required for children, as they transfer to full-time school. Partnership working with other agencies and professionals is exceptional, in order to maintain support for the wide-ranging needs of children attending the group. Parents contribute to the group's development both through verbal and written means and there are many ways through which parents can support each other and offer their support to the group. Staff have regular opportunities to share information with the manager for the evaluation process at whole staff meetings and appraisals. The group has met all actions and recommendations from the previous inspection, and demonstrates a purposeful approach to self-evaluation. The staff, committee and manager strive to provide an inclusive, early years experience for all children, no matter what their needs.

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	315940
Local authority	Bolton
Inspection number	913975
Type of provision	
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 8
Total number of places	30
Number of children on roll	50
Name of provider	Bolton Childrens Opportunity Group Committee
Date of previous inspection	19/10/2010
Telephone number	01204 491 085

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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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