

Sherborne Playgroup

The Old Telephone Exchange, Sherborne,, Nr Cheltenham, Gloucestershire, GL54 3DH

Inspection date	24/10/2013
Previous inspection date	04/06/2013

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	
	Previous inspection:	
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 play in a safe and secure environment where staff promote children's safety and well being throughout the daily routine. This supports the good progress which children make in their learning.
- Positive partnerships are in place with parents, which promotes good consistency between the home and the pre-school environments.
- Staff get to know individual children well, forming warm and trusting relationships so that they settle quickly, grow in confidence and feel secure.
- Activities staff provide outdoors and at the forest school site are challenging and stimulating. This strengthens children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning and knowledge of the world around them.

It is not yet outstanding because

- There are missed opportunities to track the progress that particular groups of children make to further support the setting's self evaluation and action plan.

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 activities in the playroom and observed outdoor play which included a forest school visit.
- The inspector had discussions with the managers and committee chair throughout the course of the inspection.
- The inspector took account of children's assessment records, planning documentation and discussions with key persons.
- The inspector checked risk assessments, policies involving children's safety, previous registers and staffing records and checked the security of the building and grounds.
- Inspector took account of the preschool's self-evaluation and action plan, and of the views of parents spoken to on the day.

Inspector

Victoria Weir

Full Report

Information about the setting

Sherborne Playgroup is a community playgroup run by a committee of parents in the village of Sherborne, Gloucestershire. It operates from the old telephone exchange and is located next to the village primary school. It has been registered since 1993. Children have direct access to an outside play area. The playgroup serves the local and wider community. The playgroup is registered on the Early Years Register. The group accepts children from two years old. The playgroup opens Mondays, Tuesday, Thursdays and Fridays between 9am and 3pm and on Wednesdays between 12am and 3pm. The playgroup is open term time only. Children attend for various sessions. The group is able to care for children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities or for whom English is an additional language. Disabled access can be arranged. Four members of staff work with the children, three of whom hold relevant level 3 childcare qualifications. One staff is working towards a qualification. Staff receive support from the Early Years Foundation Stage consultants in the local area.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- consider using assessment for groups of learners to target the drive for improvement.

Inspection judgements

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

Staff demonstrate a strong understanding of how to support children's learning. They regularly monitor each child's development through observations to create targeted individual learning plans. Staff then bring this information to the planning stages of the weekly activities so that children receive good support. Records reveal that children progress well against the developmental bands for their age and ability. Staff are aware of areas where children require extra help and they work effectively together overall to narrow gaps in achievement, particularly for those children who may have special educational needs and/or a disability, to progress in their communication and personal and social skills.

The legal requirement for a written assessment for two-year-olds is implemented and the key person liaises with parents to help them understand this process and to share information. Parents receive consistent feedback during daily conversations with staff. Parents speak positively about the playgroup and the welcome their families receive. A

clear range of information including children's learning portfolios is on display to help parents engage generally in their children's learning and development. Staff use questionnaires to engage new parents effectively and find out about children's starting points. This ensures that children's needs are met on entry. Contributions to on-going records of development by parents are suitably embedded in practice. Staff are good at adapting the planning of activities to take into account the interests and needs of the children. They provide, for example, a range of resources that are themed to role play. This includes treasure bags, as they note that the boy's involvement in role play provides valuable opportunities to develop their literacy skills. Older children approaching school age are more adept and confident in accessing software at the computer station. This means children can make good progress in skills during their time at playgroup.

Staff in the pre-school routinely encourage children's progress across all areas of learning. Children develop their physical skills well through exploring and negotiating the outdoor provision which includes climbing steps, managing ride on toys and digging in the sand. Children develop their expressive skills through activities which excite children to use their imagination and creative skills in play. This includes activities such as going on a picnic or being a pirate, or through exploring different mark making tools on different textures such as using charcoal to draw on bark or soil paint. The setting routinely supports children's understanding of the world, for example at snack time they look at apple seeds and discuss the autumn gardens of children.

Staff make good use of mathematical language and perceptively take up opportunities as children play, by bringing in mathematical concepts. As a result, children confidently develop their counting skills and this enables them to answer questions posed such as 'Can we find out how many if we add two more?'. Staff then praise children warmly for their efforts. Children recognise their own names and as their understanding grows, staff introduce other letter shapes and sounds. Accessible materials tempt children to explore mark making, developing their co-ordination and dexterity. Thoughtful organisation by staff means children begin to link their writing to a purpose through role play. For example, writing x on maps to find treasure or creating a poster for the car mechanics in role play outdoors. Children enjoy story time which supports their development of language. Staff encourage children to become actively involved, for example by using props to retell a story to which they have just listened. Singing and rhyme are used well in the setting to ensure that children develop a wide vocabulary and support their understanding of words.

Staff support children's thinking and problem solving well, for example encouraging and allowing children to come up with and put in place a solution for making the sand dry in the sandpit. Staff model thinking out loud, using phrases such as 'I wonder if' and use skilful questioning. This supports children to think critically and to sustain their interest when play does not turn out as they would expect. For example, children do not give up when they are finding it difficult to make a mixture from soil and water to paint with, they try different techniques.

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

Children are developing many positive skills, which will help them make a smooth transition to school life. Children take part in different situations so they experience having to listen in a larger group. They take part in co-operative circle games as they learn social skills and turn taking. They make independent choices about what to play and show motivation to explore the good selection of resources on offer. From the start of the day, children display good levels of self-confidence as they interact with staff and other children, showing their developing social skills. Children mix well as they share activities in pairs or small groups and show good levels of concentration as they work together or individually.

Children show positive attitudes to energetic outdoor play. Staff offer this as a free-flow option and provide good supervision of children in both the inside and outside areas. Staff are deployed well. A member of staff is always in the outdoor area to supervise children's play, and routine counting of children ensures that all children are present when they come in from outside. Staff use a wide range of resources to support children's learning in both the indoor and outdoor environments. They make good use of low-level units to encourage children's independence in choosing what to do.

Children are gaining an appropriate understanding of risk through such activities as exploring nettles during a walk, and being allowed to hide with a member of staff at Forest School in order to join a carefully managed game of hide and seek. Staff talk about dangers with children, and the need to embed safe behaviours. The children are all aware of simple rules that must be followed and most understand why they must be followed. For example, not to pick or lick berries outside. Children's behaviour shows that they feel safe. Children show confidence in adults by expressing their needs clearly with an appropriate expectation that they will be met.

Staff sensitively support children to explore their differences in conversations around home experiences during snack and lunch times. Different festivals are celebrated throughout the year which gives children a sense of community. Relationships between children are strong; children show care and concern for each other's emotions. Staff use story to explore good behaviour such as sharing. They role model manners for children, reminding them to say thank you. Children are reminded why they must show care and concern for others routinely, and the Forest School clearly provides opportunities for children to explore care and concern for the environment, for example, in a discussing why they mustn't leave paper behind.

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

Staff form a well-established team who work effectively together and who understand the learning and development and welfare requirements. They draw on their many years of experience to help ensure they meet all requirements and safeguard children. Staff complete focused risk assessments on various levels to monitor the safety of the environment. Risk assessments in place include the checking and monitoring of all exit and

entry points to the building and grounds and this ensures that children are secure in the setting. Staff supervision of children's play is effective in ensuring that children are always within sight and sound. All four of the staff team attend regular updates in key areas such as safeguarding children. They demonstrate a strong understanding of how to act if child protection concerns arise. This includes consideration of safe practice as parents arrive to drop children off in the morning. Staff are attentive to maintaining children's good health.

Staff work positively with members of the committee to review the policies that underpin safe practice. Families receive encouragement to take part in playgroup life and parent helpers are welcomed. All staff are involved in self-evaluation of their practice. They attend a wide range of local authority courses which support learning and development and wellbeing of children to extend their skills. The action plan has a set of realistic targets which encompass the breadth of requirements, including health and safety considerations around exit and entry points and extending the outdoors learning experiences of children. They respond positively to address recommendations raised at inspections, such as strengthening the outdoor provision and the safety procedures that entails.

Staff use assessment information on individual children to improve outcomes for children and narrow gaps in achievement. For example, they provide many outdoor mark making opportunities to encourage boys to engage in mark making. However, at this time there is no formalised tracking for groups of learners to help managers to better link action plan improvements to the needs of the present groups of children attending. The playgroup's inclusion in the Forest School initiative is particularly effective in supporting children's understanding of the world.

Staff work well with families to establish friendly relationships. When children require support from outside agencies, such as a health visitor, staff are thoroughly committed to joint working. They build good partnerships with the adjacent school staff so that children gain confidence in the transition to full-time education. Visits from the reception teacher helps children build up their confidence. Staff are good at sharing developmental information with other providers who care for the same children. They pass on written notes, for example, to childminders, so that everyone can work effectively together to support children's care and 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

Unique reference number	101526
Local authority	Gloucestershire
Inspection number	940069
Type of provision	Sessional provision
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	2 - 4
Total number of places	20
Number of children on roll	10
Name of provider	Sherborne Playgroup Committee
Date of previous inspection	04/06/2013
Telephone number	01451 844833

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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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