

St Leonard's Playgroup

St Leonard's Centre, Rectory Road, Oakley, Basingstoke, Hampshire, RG23 7ED

Inspection date

11/10/2013

Previous inspection date

06/07/2010

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This inspection:

3

Previous inspection:

3

How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend 3

The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children 3

The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision 3

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This provision is satisfactory

- Staff provide a broad range of experiences to promote the children's learning and development that help them make sound progress from their starting points and to be ready for their next stage of learning.
- Partnership working with parents and other carers is strong. Management seek their views and comments for improvement, which are welcomed and acted on.
- The staff team are enthusiastic about the children's care and learning. Mainly accurate self-evaluation and the staff's drive for improvement is set by a clear plan that supports positive outcomes for children.

It is not yet good because

- There is currently no system in place for ensure that staff inform the manager of any change in their suitability to work with children in the pre-school, which is a breach of welfare requirements.
- Staff only provide satisfactory levels of support for children in their play because they do not always deploy themselves effectively enough to extend children's play in order to hasten progress, and some staff are still developing their confidence in linking next steps to the activities on offer.
- The quality of teaching within the pre-school is variable. The level of staff questioning and support is sometimes too general to provide good levels of challenge to children in their play, which sometimes affects children's behaviour as they become less interested.

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 main room of the pre-school and the garden area.
- The inspector held a meeting with the manager and the Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCO).
- The inspector spoke to members of the staff team about the progress of their key children and their understanding of the policies and procedures.
- The inspector looked at children's observation, tracking and assessment records, planning documentation, evidence of suitability of staff working with children in the pre-school and a range of other documentation.
- The inspector took into account the views of several parents and carers spoken to on the day of the inspection.

Inspector

Melissa Cox

Full Report

Information about the setting

St Leonard's Playgroup opened in 1976 and registered with Ofsted in 2001. It run by the Oakley with Wooton Parochial Church Council and operates from the church hall in the village of Oakley, near Basingstoke. The playgroup has use of a hall and an enclosed outdoor area. The playgroup is open from 9.15am to 12.20pm, on Mondays to Thursdays and on Fridays from 9.15am to 2.45pm. The playgroup opens during school term time only. The playgroup is registered on the Early Years Register.

There are currently 28 children on roll in the early years age group. The playgroup receives funding to provide free early education for children aged three and four years. Children attend from the village and local surrounding area. The playgroup supports children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and children who speak English as an additional language.

There are eight staff currently working with the children. These include two members of staff who have gained Qualified Teacher Status and four of whom hold other recognised early years qualifications.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

To meet the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage the provider must:

- ensure staff are aware of their responsibility to disclose any convictions, cautions, court orders, reprimands and warnings which may affect their suitability to work with children (whether received before or during their employment at the setting).

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

- improve the quality of teaching so that it is consistently good, such as by making the learning objectives clear and targeting the next steps rigorously through teaching to support children's individual progress.

Inspection judgements

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

Children appear happy and suitably settled in this friendly environment. All staff have a sound knowledge of the learning and development requirements of the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage. They understand how children learn and

they demonstrate this through discussions and evidence gathered about children's individual development. The planning system and range of activities on offer ensure that, overall, there is an adequate balance of adult-led and child-initiated experiences across the seven areas of learning to support children's play and ideas.

Staff gather good quality information from parents about their children's individual needs, preferences and achievements at home which allows staff to determine starting points on entry for each child. Records show that starting points are in line with the expected range or higher for most children attending. This information is then used to inform planning, to help monitor children's progress and determine the next learning steps for each child. Staff have recently established a more effective way to link children's next steps more purposefully with the activities on offer, which is beginning to be used with good effect. This means that staff are now more confidently able to recognise how the activities on offer link to specific targets in children's learning with a sharper focus on taking into account their starting points and specific needs. This approach remains to be firmly embedded in practices to show a marked, consistent effect on children's progress.

Children are engaged in their play. They show good levels of independence as they choose toys and activities. Overall, they are generally interested in the planned activities offered by staff. For example, a group of children play in the home corner using the resources available to dress up for their roles as 'parents' pretending to care for their 'babies.' Although the game continues for some time, there is only occasional support from staff. The lack of skilled adult interaction through questioning, commentary and conversation means play is not extended to sustain interest and progress learning better.

The quality of adult support is variable when given. On occasions, staff take over or lead children's play too directly, giving children no time to think things through and arrive at solutions for themselves. Sometimes, more capable children are not expected to do things they could. These failures to identify the type of teaching needed, leads to children making only satisfactory, rather than good progress overall, especially the more able ones. However, overall staff generally interact suitably with the children, with some staff asking children useful questions to extend their thinking and learning. For example, when a staff member returns with two full buckets of water, she asks the children how many she has and then extends the activity well, by discussing 'more than' and 'less than', as they observe what happens to the water when they scoop it out in their jugs.

Children's communication and language development are promoted well across the pre-school. Children look at books and clearly enjoy listening to stories. Staff model language well when they talk and interact with the children. They use a variety of strategies to capture children's attention and develop their listening skills. They provide children with additional resources to prompt involvement in sharing the story. Action songs and rhymes promote and build on counting skills and during story time. Children explore a varied range of media and materials, such as, paints, play dough, paper, and glue. These develop their hand control. They persevere with chosen activities. Such skill and determination helps children in their preparation for their next stage in education.

Staff keep parents suitably informed of their children's progress and are involved in their children's learning which is shared through weekly newsletters. Children's learning folders

are shared and parents may attend regular meetings with their children's key persons to discuss any concerns they have. Parents are encouraged to contribute what they know of their children's progress, such as through adding 'wow' comments in records or through observations of activities at home, which they share with staff.

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

Children are happy to come to pre-school because staff build strong, caring and respectful relationships with families. Good settling-in procedures mean that children and their families are given many opportunities to visit the setting, until parents feel assured their child is happy. Children soon feel confident to play and enjoy their time at pre-school. Staff provide good quality equipment and resources, which they allow children to use as they wish, so they learn through investigative play. Resources are made accessible in low storage units or baskets, including many which are clearly labelled to help children identify the contents. This approach helps with choice and decision-making.

Children's health and physical well-being are effectively promoted. The outdoor area is now used in all weathers. This shared space is now used more effectively to support children's learning. For example, children use large climbing and balancing equipment to develop their agility and coordination as they climb up the rungs of the ladder, run the diggers through the dirt trays or dance in the rain with colourful umbrellas. Overall, staff help children understand the importance of keeping healthy. They talk to children about the importance of washing their hands before eating. Older children gain good personal independence in readiness for school. Staff provide useful information to parents about healthy lunchboxes. Children's safety is of high priority. Children talk about their own and others' safety as they play, knowing to be careful on the wet playground in case they slip. Appropriate action is taken to ensure accidents are kept to a minimum. Staff are suitably qualified to administer treatment.

Sometimes staff do not deploy themselves well to support children's play and sustain their interest. This weakness leads to some incidents of poor behaviour, particularly in the home corner, with minor disagreements over toys or resources. Nevertheless, staff deal with any behaviour incidents positively through explanation. Staff use some strategies to support children's understanding of tidying up; overall, behaviour management is satisfactory and improving. Arrangements for children who move onto school are good. Staff talk to teachers from local schools to share an understanding of children's development so far.

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

Children are suitably safeguarded because staff have a sound understanding of their roles and responsibilities for protecting children from possible harm or neglect. The manager, who is the nominated individual for safeguarding, has a sound understanding of her responsibilities; appropriate safeguarding policies and procedures are in place. These are

shared and discussed with parents. Displays give direction on the procedures to follow should any concerns arise. All staff have completed training in this area, which helps all those working with children have a secure knowledge of what to do should they have concerns regarding a child's welfare.

Risk assessments and daily checklists of all areas children use, ensure that any potential hazards are managed appropriately to protect children from harm. Secure entry and exit procedures ensure that visitors are unable to gain access. a mobile phone and camera policy is strictly enforced. There are suitable recruitment procedures, which include the checking of staff's suitability to work with children. However, the provider has not extended this to checking staff's on-going and continued suitability to work with the children. This is a breach in the welfare requirements but no child has come to harm.

The manager and her staff team have developed a more secure understanding of children's learning and development. The quality of teaching is becoming more consistent as supervision, consultation and appraisals with staff ensure that the impact of their practice is consistently monitored. Training has improved staff confidence in identifying additional support that children may require. The newly appointed SENCO is working closely with staff and parents to ensure children are suitably supported. The manager works regularly alongside her team, which helps her to assess their performance and working practices. A number of strategies, have been implemented to address minor weaknesses in teaching. In addition she closely monitors children's 'learning journals' and any gaps noticed are discussed with staff to ensure appropriate action is taken.

The staff team act on the advice of outside professionals and access further training, which the team's self-evaluation process. There are satisfactory systems to monitor and evaluate the provision. Self-evaluation helps identify and focus on areas for improvement, such as variable teaching practice. All parents and staff contribute to the process/drive change. The recommendations from the previous inspection have been implemented. Children now benefit from daily outdoor play. The manager has implemented a number of new initiatives since attending leadership training and maintaining a suitable overview of children's progress. As a result, any differences in the levels of progress groups of children are making is being more closely monitored to ensure that they make the same levels of progress as others. Detailed written policies and procedures support the safe and efficient management of the pre-school and ensure children's needs are suitably met.

Partnerships with parents are strong. Parents and carers spoken with at inspection comment on how happy and settled their children are at the pre-school. They speak highly of the qualified and caring staff who regularly inform them of their child's learning as well as sharing ideas on how to extend their play at home. Parents' views are regularly sought, through questionnaires, suggestion boxes, parents comment sheets, as well as daily verbal discussion. A good range of information helps parents understand how the pre-school operates and what current events are occurring so they have the opportunity to be involved. There are good systems to share information with other early years providers and professionals that are involved with the children, including those special educational needs and/or disabilities.

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	507842
Local authority	Hampshire
Inspection number	843301
Type of provision	Sessional provision
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	2 - 5
Total number of places	26
Number of children on roll	28
Name of provider	Oakley with Wootton Parochial Church Council
Date of previous inspection	06/07/2010
Telephone number	07772 378265

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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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