

St Michael's Playgroup

St Johns Ambulance Rooms, Milner Road, FINEDON, Northamptonshire, NN9 5LW

Inspection date	15/01/2014
Previous inspection date	03/02/2011

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	4
	Previous inspection:	3
How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend		4
The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children		4
The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision		4

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This provision is inadequate

- The overall quality of teaching is poor and identified learning priorities are not always routinely linked to the planning of activities. As a result, children are not consistently provided with challenging activities that are fully matched to their learning needs.
- Ineffective staff deployment and the poor organisation of the session; including the use of resources impacts on the quality of the care and learning provided.
- Children's safety and well-being is compromised because staff create a potential fire hazard and parents are not always informed of accidents or injuries sustained to their child.
- Safeguarding procedures are not secure. Ofsted has not been notified of changes to the nominated individual of the committee and associated committee members.
- Staff do not receive regular supervision and annual appraisals, and procedures to monitor the overall quality of the provision are poor. In addition, self-evaluation is weak. Consequently, staff practice is poor and the needs of all children are not adequately met.

It has the following strengths

- Staff build kind and caring relationships with the children, which supports their emotional well-being.

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 conducted a tour of the premises and the outdoor area during the inspection.
- The inspector observed activities in the hall and the outdoor learning environment.
- The inspector conducted a joint observation with the manager.
- The inspector held meetings with the manager and deputy of the provision.
- The inspector looked at children's assessment records and planning documentation.
- The inspector checked evidence of suitability and qualifications of practitioners working with children and discussed the provider's self-evaluation.
- The inspector took account of the views of parents spoken to on the day.

Inspector

Ann Austen

Full report

Information about the setting

St Michael's Playgroup was registered in 1987 and is on the Early Years Register. It is managed by a committee of parents. The playgroup operates from the St John's Ambulance Hall in Finedon, Northamptonshire and there is a fully enclosed area available for outdoor play. The playgroup serves the local area and is accessible to all children.

The nursery employs six members of childcare staff. Of these, five members of staff hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 2 and above. The playgroup opens Monday to Friday during term time only. Sessions are from 9am until 3pm. Children attend a variety of sessions. There are currently 41 children attending who are in the early years age group. The playgroup provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children. It supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- improve the quality of teaching and ensure assessment is consistently used to inform the planning of activities in order to provide all children with challenging activities that are fully matched to their learning needs, and therefore, help them to make best progress
- ensure staff deployment and the organisation of the provision meets the needs of the children at all times
- ensure resources are effectively used to support children's learning and development, and therefore, help them to make best progress
- ensure potential fire hazards are removed; this refers to the flammable items placed on top of the fireguard, which surrounds a powerful heater
- ensure parents are informed of any accident or injury sustained to their child
- develop knowledge and understanding of what should be notified to Ofsted, in particular changes to the nominated individual of the committee and all associated committee members
- ensure all members of staff receive regular supervision and appraisals in order to improve their teaching skills and professional development.

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

- improve procedures to monitor the overall quality of the provision, including the quality of teaching and the delivery of the educational programmes so that children make good progress and develop evaluation procedures to overcome weaknesses in order to improve the quality of the provision for all children.

Inspection judgements

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

The educational programmes do not adequately cover the seven areas of learning and the quality of teaching across the whole staff group is not consistently secure. This results in weak teaching that is not matched to all the needs of the children and significantly limits their progress in order to be ready for school or the next stage in their learning. For

example, staff do not motivate children's interests effectively by joining in their activities for any sustained length of time. In addition, staff do not always ask challenging questions that will inspire the children to think and answer questions. For example, during a craft activities children are not encouraged to feel and talk about the different texture of the collage materials or stimulated to talk about the pictures they are creating. Staff also miss opportunities to extend the activity further, for example, by providing children with scissors to cut out the materials for themselves. Furthermore, staff occasionally over direct activities. For example, staff name and sound the letters of the alphabet to the children while they complete the alphabet puzzle instead of encouraging them to have a go themselves. Consequently, older children's literacy development is hindered.

Parents are encouraged to provide information at the start of the placement. For example, information about children's favourite activities and language development. This is used to aid the settling in. At the time of the inspection staff are beginning to implement new observation and assessment procedures. However, procedures are not yet robust and identified priorities are not effectively used to inform the planning of challenging experiences in all areas of the children's learning and development. As a result, children are not provided with stimulating activities that are fully matched to their ongoing learning needs. Staff understand the requirement to complete the progress check for children at age two; so that they are aware of children's progress at this stage.

Children are given opportunities to develop their physical skills. For example, children use their leg muscles to manoeuvre the wheeled toys around the outdoor area and learn to 'stop' when the traffic light is red and to 'go' when the traffic light is green. In addition, children's small muscles are strengthened as they manipulate the dough. Children use tools, such as the rolling pin and cutters with growing confidence. Some older children are beginning to give meaning to the marks they make, for example, they are beginning to write their name and are sometimes encouraged by the staff to write shopping lists in the shop. Children enjoy creating tall towers and bridges and show excitement when they are knocked down. However, staffing arrangements and the poor planning of the session often affects the children's enjoyment and participation in their chosen activities. This is because staff often spend time supervising the children instead of being actively engaged in promoting their learning and development. In addition, children's learning and development is also compromised because staff spend time dealing with administration issues and tidying the room.

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

All children and their families are welcomed into the playgroup. The staff are kind and caring towards the children, which supports their well-being and sense of security. For example, children approach their key person and staff for reassurance if they are feeling upset. However, this is a false sense of security because on the day of the inspection staff compromised children's safety and well-being. This was because staff placed flammable items on top of a fire guard, which surrounds a powerful heater; therefore, creating a potential fire risk. In addition, management did not effectively deploy a sufficient number of staff to the outdoor area to ensure children's care and developmental needs continued to be met as they played. Children are supported appropriately in the transition from

home to the playgroup. This is because parents are invited to settling-in sessions and staff gather a range of information about each child's family and background. For example, information is obtained about any known special dietary requirements, preference and food allergies, and any special health requirements. This promotes continuity in the children's care and supports their continual well-being. Staff support the transition of older children as they prepare to move into other early years settings. For example, the children's future teachers are invited to the pre-school and staff provide information about the children's learning and development achievements during their time with them.

Children have access to age-appropriate resources. However, staff do not effectively use the resources to support and stimulate children's learning and development. Consequently, learning opportunities are not fully optimised. Children self-esteem is promoted because staff praise children for their good efforts and achievements. They are encouraged by the staff to play cooperatively with others, to share and take turns. However, children behaviour sometimes deteriorates because the poor planning of the session often leads to a disorderly environment that hinders children's learning and puts others at risk. Children are beginning to develop an awareness of safety and how to stay safe. For example, staff teach children how to evacuate the building in the event of a fire.

Children are encouraged to be physically active, which aids their continuing well-being. For example, children access apparatus in the outdoor area, such as the balance beam and climbing frame. Their individual dietary needs are acknowledged and met because staff take account of the wishes of parents. They are encouraged to enjoy their food and appreciate healthy choices in order to promote their continual growth and development. For example, children are offered a variety of fresh fruit and cheese and ham wraps for their snack. All children are encouraged to develop appropriate hygiene routines and learn that they must wash their hands after using the toilet and before eating. This helps to minimise the risk of cross infection.

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

The leadership of the playgroup is not effective in ensuring that all the requirements of the revised Statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage are met. This has a significant impact on the children's safety, well-being and their learning and development. Risk assessments procedures are poor resulting in a potential fire hazard within the premises and staff do not always inform parents of all accident or injuries sustained to their child. In addition, Ofsted has not been notified of changes to the nominated individual of the committee and associated committee members. Therefore, appropriate suitability checks have not yet been completed. However, Disclosure and Barring Service checks have been completed for all staff working with the children, which ensures they are suitable to work with children. Management and staff are aware of the signs and symptoms of abuse and the procedures to follow should they have any concerns about a child in their care. In addition, the manager has completed designated safeguarding children training. Security of the building is appropriate and staff closely monitor the arrival and departure of the children. In addition, visitors are asked to provide full identification and are required to sign into the visitor's book.

Monitoring of the educational programmes; including assessment and planning procedures is poor. As a result, the quality of teaching is not sufficiently matched to the needs of all children and the children's ability to make sufficient progress in all areas of their learning and development is significantly compromised. Staff hold appropriate levels of qualifications, however, their knowledge is not consistently reflected in the quality of the teaching provided to all children. In addition, the monitoring of staff performance is poor. Staff do not receive regular supervision and annual appraisals meetings. As a result, staff have insufficient opportunities to improve their teaching and deepening understanding of the requirements of the Statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage. Recommendations raised at the last inspection have not been met and current self-evaluation procedures are weak. However, management and staff acknowledge that the overall quality of the provision is poor and are beginning to take steps to rectify this. For example, the setting is now receiving support from the local authority advisory team.

Management and staff develop appropriate friendly, relationships with parents. Parents' comment positively on the caring nature of the staff; that they effectively support children to settle at the playgroup. Management and staff understand the importance of partnership working with external agencies in order to secure appropriate interventions for children to receive the support they need. For example, procedures are in place to seek expert advice from other professionals should the need arise. In addition, partnerships with other providers who deliver the Statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage are continuing to be developed in order to provide continuity in the children's care and learning. For example, links have been established with the local primary school.

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	Requires improvement	The provision is not giving children a good standard of early years education and/or there are minor breaches of the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. It will be monitored and inspected within twelve months of the date of this inspection.
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 monitored and inspected again within six 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	220282
Local authority	Northamptonshire
Inspection number	876336
Type of provision	
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 5
Total number of places	24
Number of children on roll	41
Name of provider	St Michael's Playgroup Committee
Date of previous inspection	03/02/2011
Telephone number	0786 7742606

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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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