

St Augustines Playgroup

Matson House, Matson Lane, Matson, Gloucester, Gloucestershire, GL4 6ED

Inspection date	14/02/2014
Previous inspection date	15/10/2012

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

- Children are happy and settled in the warm and caring environment provided by staff.
- Staff have a strong understanding of children's learning and development needs which helps all children to make good progress from their individual starting points.
- Staff help children develop well in confidence, so they explore their environment and enjoy the stimulating range of activities that staff provide for them.
- The staff team implements comprehensive records and procedures to ensure that children are kept safe and secure.
- The leadership and management of the playgroup are strong. There is a clear focus on its continuous development to strive to promote the best outcomes for children.

It is not yet outstanding because

- While the playgroup links effectively with parents over children's progress, staff miss some opportunities to fully involve them in their children's learning; for example, by providing information about the planned weekly activities.
- There is less support to help trainee volunteer staff understand how to seize opportunities to support children's learning and development needs fully.

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 toured the areas that children use and observed activities in both the indoor and outside environments.
- The inspector examined a sample of children's learning records, policies, procedures and welfare records.
- The inspector spoke to parents to gather their views on the nursery's provision.
- The inspector had ongoing discussions at appropriate times with the chair of the committee, the manager, staff and children.
- The inspector undertook a joint observation of an indoor activity with the manager.

Inspector

Sue Bennett

Full report

Information about the setting

St Augustine's Playgroup registered in 2003 and is run by a committee. The playgroup operates from leased premises in the grounds of Matson House, Robinswood Hill in Gloucester. It has additional access to an enclosed outdoor area. The playgroup is registered on the Early Years Register.

There are currently 54 children in the early years age group on roll. The playgroup receives funding for the provision of free early education to children aged three and four years. The playgroup supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and supports children who learn English as an additional language. It opens each weekday from 9 am to 3.30 pm, term time only. Monday, Thursday and Friday morning sessions and Tuesday and Wednesday afternoon sessions are for older children only.

The playgroup employs seven members of staff. The manager holds a relevant qualification at level 6, five staff members hold a qualification at level 3 and one at level 2. The playgroup has achieved the Bristol Standards Quality Accreditation award.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- continue to build on links with parents to enhance their involvement in children's learning and further support at home

- strengthen further the support systems for less experienced trainee volunteer staff to help them understand better how to support children's learning and development needs

Inspection judgements

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

The playgroup committee employs a team of dedicated staff, who have a good understanding of how young children learn and develop. Staff make good use of observation and assessment systems to identify children's emerging needs. For example, they notice that children are showing interest in linking letters with sounds, so they plan activities to promote this further. Specialist staff formulate good quality individual educational plans and work closely with parents and external specialists to support children's specific needs. Children with English as an additional language receive good levels of support. Staff use words from children's home languages as they engage with them to help them understand nursery routines. This helps children to settle quickly and

feel secure. As a result, all children make good progress from their individual starting points on entry.

Staff plan exciting activities that motivate and support children's interests and extend their future learning well. However, they miss opportunities to share this activity programme fully with parents, such as displaying the planning sheet on the notice board to enhance home learning opportunities further. Children make good progress with their language and communication. For example, while using playdough, staff introduce new vocabulary such as 'squishy' and 'squeeze'. They encourage children to use comparative language, such as soft, hard, hot and cold to describe the feel of the dough. Staff use varied teaching strategies with children, such as good questioning techniques to challenge children's thinking. When children want to assemble a puppet theatre, staff say 'What do we need? How can we make it fit together?' Children enjoy this challenge and confidently suggest ways to solve the problem, such as using a toy drill to fix the pieces together.

Staff help children to learn through purposeful, exploratory play. Children enjoy investigation, such as exploring the different sounds that instruments make during a musical activity. Staff teach children useful skills for their eventual move to school. Children listen attentively during group and story times. They enjoy sitting quietly to look at books by themselves and with friends, talking happily together and pretending to read stories to one another. Staff provide good support for children's mathematical development. During group times, some children can confidently count to 20, while others recognise numbers to 10. Staff support children's understanding of size well by asking them to find a 'big' table and a 'small' table when using toy furniture. This means that staff are teaching early mathematical language in a way that is meaningful to children.

Staff provide a good range of learning opportunities in the outdoor area that encourage children to play, explore and be creative, such as using small brushes to draw in muddy puddles and on the paving slabs.. Children greatly enjoy the home challenges that staff set them, such as threading pasta on string to help with their muscle control and counting to 10 as they jump. These activities help prepare children well for their next phases in learning.

Staff have strong links with parents and carers, and liaise with them daily about their children's care routines and learning achievements. Additionally, regular reports and parents' evenings, including those following checks for children age two years, ensure that parents receive good levels of information about their children's progress. Good induction systems, such as taster visits and meetings between parents and key persons, help new children settle quickly into the playgroup's routines, so children are ready to learn.

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

Children enjoy the warm relationships that they have with staff. When they arrive at the playgroup they run happily in keen to share their home experiences them. Each child's key person greets them warmly which helps children to settle quickly, and feel safe and secure. Staff provide opportunities for children to talk in front of others as they grow older

to develop confidence. Children talk confidently about their achievements at group times, such as when showing everyone a necklace made from pasta. They play co-operatively with their friends and help each other to complete jigsaw puzzles.

Children enjoy exploring the playgroup areas, both indoors and outside and confidently make independent choices between the good selections of toys available. They greatly enjoy opportunities for imaginative play, such as dressing up as emergency workers or princesses. Staff provide a good range of pretend play resources that enable children to re-enact their home experiences, such as changing nappies on dolls and pretending to wind them after feeding time. Such play helps children make sense of the world around them.

Staff are good role models who work together strongly as a team. Children copy this in their social interactions are keen to rise to staff expectations. For example, they behave well because staff have a consistently strong approach to promoting positive behaviour. Staff explain the need to share toys, take turns and 'be a good friend'. Children are keen to be helpful, such as tidying away toys; staff celebrate their achievements by saying 'well done' and 'thank you'. These teaching strategies develop children's self-esteem and social skills well, preparing them well for their future learning.

Staff promote children's awareness of safety well, such as explaining the need to walk and not run in the indoor area. Additionally, each morning, children help staff to undertake safety checks on the areas that they use. Children are developing a strong awareness of healthy lifestyles and are independent in their personal care routines, such as hand washing. They understand that putting on coats and boots for outdoor play helps to keep them warm and dry.

Staff provide children with a range of healthy options at snack time, such as fruit, milk and bread sticks. Staff talk to them about fruit keeping them strong; such conversations promote their understanding of healthy eating well. Children have good daily access to the spacious outside area for fresh air and exercise, where staff offer a good range of physical learning opportunities. Children greatly enjoy their time outside and these play experiences. The stimulating range of resources range from climbing apparatus, digging exploration areas and moveable toys. This outdoor learning meets the needs of children who prefer to learn in more active ways outdoors.

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

The playgroup's leadership and management have a strong understanding about the safeguarding and welfare requirements, making sure that staff safeguard children's well-being. A comprehensive range of policies and procedures underpin staff practice and help to further ensure children's welfare.

Reviews of all documentation are regular and the folder is easily available for parents' to peruse. Senior safeguarding staff have the relevant multi-agency training and all other

staff attend regular training updates. During discussions, staff clearly demonstrate their understanding of procedures to take should they have any concerns about children in their care. Staff supervise children well at all times and adult to child ratios are good. The committee has rigorous recruitment and vetting checks for all new staff to ensure that they have suitable qualifications and experience to work with young children. All staff receive good levels of induction training when they begin work at the playgroup.

Staff put children' safety as a paramount focus. The recent review of procedures for collection and arrival times has enhanced the existing good systems. Staff continue to rigorously monitor the doors and external gates at these times ensuring that children are safe and secure in the playgroup's grounds. At collection time, parents now wait outside whatever the weather and each child is handed over to their known person individually by staff. Staff keep thorough attendance records to show which children are on the premises and who collects them. Additionally, registration records identify whether children are playing indoors or outside; staff use electronic devices outside to communicate with staff indoors. These comprehensive systems ensure that staff know where children are at all times. Stringent security systems ensure that visitors cannot enter unless staff allow them access; all undergo identity checks and sign in procedures. Risk assessments are thorough with regular reviews. The management promptly address any hazards or concerns. Emergency evacuation drills for fire regularly take place and are appropriately logged. Records for medication, accidents and incidents are comprehensive. Staff always ensure that they inform parents about any incidents that may occur during their child's time in the nursery. These meticulous procedures help to ensure that the playgroup is a welcoming, safe and stimulating environment for children to enjoy.

The manager has good systems in place to monitor the learning and development programmes. This includes the scrutiny of assessment records to ensure equality of opportunity for all children. Additionally, the manager regularly observes staff as they interact with children and meets with them individually. A 'peer observation' system contributes significantly to the consistency of practice between staff. There is a monitoring programme to support trainee volunteer staff, including review meetings. However, sometimes, senior staff miss intervention opportunities to promote their understanding of good practice further. For example, trainee staff put on children's shoes for them rather than encouraging them to do so independently and do not always make the most of opportunities to extend children's understanding. Staff have good opportunities for further professional development. The manager leads by example with a level six qualification. Appraisal systems are thorough and effectively help to identify their future training needs. These processes strongly promote good quality practice and help to ensure the best outcomes for children.

The leadership and management have a priority focus on ensuring the playgroup's continuous improvement. Thorough processes of self-evaluation include the views of staff and parents, enabling the clear identification of the provision's strengths and weaknesses. Recent changes to the progress tracking systems, positively impact on identifying gaps in children's learning. During discussion, the manager explains further development plans, which illustrates her strong commitment towards setting challenging targets for future improvement. The recommendations from the previous inspection, relating to the monitoring of teaching and promoting children's mathematical and literacy experiences

have both been successfully addressed, showing the team's determination to drive improvement.

The playgroup has effective links with other early years' settings and local primary schools. Staff meet together to share children's learning and development needs and any additional support strategies involving external specialists, so gaps are closing for children who started with lower starting points. These processes help to ensure the smooth transfer for children as they move between their educational phases. During discussions, parents comment on the high quality care and attention that staff provide. They feel that they receive good quality information about their child's progress and time in the playgroup, that staff are very approachable and receptive towards their suggestions. They particularly stress the safe and secure structure of the playgroup.

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	EY263188
Local authority	Gloucestershire
Inspection number	954812
Type of provision	Full-time provision
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	2 - 5
Total number of places	24
Number of children on roll	54
Name of provider	St Augustines Playgroup Committee
Date of previous inspection	15/10/2012
Telephone number	01452 384442

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance '*Complaints procedure: raising concerns and making complaints about Ofsted*', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

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.

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

Piccadilly Gate
Store St
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2012

