

Upton St Leonards Playgroup

10 Bondend Road, Upton St. Leonards, Gloucester, Gloucestershire, GL4 8AG

Inspection date

07/02/2014

Previous inspection date

23/06/2010

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This inspection:

3

Previous inspection:

2

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 requires improvement

- Children are safeguarded because all staff demonstrate a sound knowledge and understanding of their roles and responsibilities for child protection. Ongoing risk-assessments ensure that any potential hazards are identified and minimised.
- Partnerships with parents and others are now well established and are beginning to become effective in supporting children to be school ready.
- Self-evaluation has recently been effective in identifying and implementing a number of areas for improvement in the pre-school. These are steadily becoming embedded in practise and have led to some positive improvements.

It is not yet good because

- There are times when staff do not always give children the freedom and opportunity to find their own solutions to problems as they over direct children in their play.
- Newly implemented strategies such as those to promote good behaviour, safety and outdoor play are still not fully embedded.

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 voluntary and compulsory parts of the Childcare Register. This report includes a judgment about compliance with the requirements of that register.

Inspection activities

- The inspector observed activities in all areas of the pre-school.
- The inspector held a meeting with the chairperson and the manager and undertook a joint observation of activities which were then discussed.
- The inspector spoke to members of the staff team about the progress of their key children and their understanding of the nursery's 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 nursery and a range of other documentation.
- The inspector took into account the views of parents and carers by analysing information from the parent's questionnaires and talking to parents, helpers and volunteers.

Inspector

Melissa Cox

Full report

Information about the setting

Upton St Leonard's Playgroup was founded in 1966 and is run by a voluntary management committee of parents. The playgroup operates from Upton St Leonard's Village Hall and serves the communities of Abbeydale, Abbeymead and Upton St Leonard's. The playgroup is registered on the Early Years Register and both the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. The areas available to the playgroup include two halls, a kitchen and associated facilities. There is a fully enclosed outside area with hard-standing surface. The attached playing field is used as an additional play area. There are currently 87 children on roll, all of whom are in the early years age group.

The playgroup is open each weekday during school term time only with morning sessions aimed at older children and afternoon sessions for younger children. It is in receipt of funding for the provision of free early education for children aged three and four years. The playgroup is open Monday to Friday sessions from 9.15 am to 12.15 pm and from 12.30 pm to 3 pm. The playgroup supports a number of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The playgroup employs eight staff, and there are also two volunteers who work directly with the children. Both playgroup leaders hold appropriate childcare qualifications. A caretaker and parent helpers support the playgroup.

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 by; ensuring staff have a clear understanding of their role within each activity; enabling children to make decisions and solve problems independently; making sure that learning is not overly directed by adults and by providing children with sufficient challenges to effectively support their learning
- develop the programme for personal social and emotional development further by reinforcing children's understanding of staying safe and following rules for group behaviour while playing and tidying up, by not throwing the toys and taking safe risks on the climbing frame

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. Appropriate levels of support are provided by staff to ensure children have opportunities to make steady progress in their learning and development. Staff gather information from parents on

entry about children's favourite activities and their individual interests, and this information along with subsequent observations is used to plan for children's future learning. Weekly observations are now made and this enables staff to effectively track children's progress in learning and development and regularly complete a summary assessment of the children's progress. Staff confidently discuss their understanding of each child in their care and know their key children well. They demonstrate a suitable awareness of their preferred learning styles and how to support these in their play. Where children are recognised as requiring additional support, staff work with parents and other professionals to make sure that each child's individual needs are met. Staff have carried out the progress check at age two to enable them to assess children's development and act on any areas if there are concerns.

Consequently, children make sound progress in their learning given their starting points. While the tracking and assessment of children's progress in the pre-school is generally secure, the quality of teaching requires some improvement. This is because teaching is variable across the pre-school as staff do not make the most of the opportunities to extend learning. Planning develops from children's individual interests and preferences and staff encourage them to develop activities for themselves. For example, children expressed an interest in a favourite space characters and staff introduced the theme of planets and space as a result. Children have been captivated by this theme and many have brought in additional resources such as books and toys to support their learning further. However the improvements to how staff plan for children interests have yet to become good because the activities and staff interactions are still very adult directed and led. For example, children are encouraged to take part in a craft activity that is theme based which places a main focus on the end product rather than the process of making. Some staff over direct children during these activities, taking over the project rather than enabling children to think, experiment or build on their own creativity. Purposeful interactions between the staff and children are still developing, but staff generally interact well with the children and take some opportunities to ask children open-ended questions to extend their thinking and learning. Children who have English as an additional language or have an identified language delay are suitably supported in developing their vocabulary and language skills. Staff are sensitive to each child's level of language development and make sure that they explain any new vocabulary and that the child fully understands this.

Parents are kept well informed of their child's progress and are now more involved in their children's learning. They receive information about the activities children are involved in and formal arrangements are in place for sharing children's learning folder. Parents and carers are encouraged to continue their child's learning at home and contribute to the assessment and planning process through comments in children's learning records or through observations of activities at home which they share with staff. Staff have provided a range of resources such as books and other information in the new parents area which is beginning to be used by parents to support their child further at home.

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

Children are happy to come to nursery and settle well at the beginning of the day. Staff are on hand to welcome in their key groups and the key person system in the setting works well in practise to support children individual needs. This is evident as children are beginning to form stronger attachments with key staff as revisions to the key person system are becoming more established, after recent changes to staffing. This suitably promotes children's sense of security within the nursery. Overall routines, staff deployment and activities support the varying needs of the children in the pre-school to a satisfactory level throughout the day, with some good practice exhibited from stronger members of the teaching team. The pre-school has a suitable range of resources which are accessible and relevant to children's interests and arranged flexibly so that they can explore and make choices. The use of technology is becoming embedded into everyday practice and make children use of computers with some success, although the lack of adult guidance, sometimes limits the enjoyment of these activities.

Children's health and physical well-being are effectively promoted. They take part in regular physical activity, both indoors and outdoors, and develop their agility and coordination through weekly group PE classes. The outdoors areas are used in all weathers. The pre-school have plans to develop this further but this area is underutilised. It only provides a satisfactory range of activities for the children, many of which lack the capacity to promote active learning. However outdoor play is supplemented with indoor physical play opportunities and children learn to take risks safely as staff encourage them to challenge themselves on the large equipment. Some staff do not consistently reinforce the need to observe the safety rules with some children who take part in this activity. They do not help children assess the increasing risks they take as they jump further and further from the ladders. This means that children's understanding of keeping themselves and others safe is not effectively promoted at this time. Nevertheless staff generally help children learn about their own safety in other ways for example, reminders not to run in the setting or to be careful when playing in the water play to ensure they don't slip. Appropriate action is taken to ensure accidents are kept to a minimum and staff are suitably qualified to administer treatment. Robust procedures are followed for the administration of medication. The treatment of on-going medical needs is suitably risk assessed and monitored.

Children's knowledge of a healthy lifestyle is promoted as staff encourage children to bring in healthy snacks in their lunchboxes. This is a sociable opportunity for staff to meet with their key children in their groups. This routine also provides children with a chance to engage in conversation with their peers and learn about taking turns in conversation and listening to others. Children show increasing independence in self-care skills and many take themselves to the toilet, fetch and put on their own coats and shoes for outside time or help to tidy away at tidy up time. These are skills which help prepare them in readiness for school.

Children are building on their understanding of good behaviour because the staff have introduced new behaviour strategies based on kindness, safety and respect. Staff are polite and speak positively to the children supporting them in recognising to respect and value others. They are beginning to model and re-enforce these, although sometimes staff fail to be consistent in the approach. Strategies such as sand timers and photograph prompts have also been introduced to help some children further but this is very much in

its infancy. Any behaviour incidents noted on the day of the inspection were generally related to the lack of challenge provided by the activities on offer resulting in occasions where children become bored or disinterested. For example, children throw the soft toys from the book corner into the air as part of their game, but this soon becomes boisterous which impacts on others enjoyment. Some children have regard to tidying up when asked and some help to put away the toys. On the whole strategies are becoming embedded and there has been a decrease in incidents of poor behaviour, particularly in the older age groups of children.

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

Recent changes in the staff team within the last months have led to a number of positive improvements within the pre-school. The staff team have recently conducted a thorough evaluation of all aspects of their practise which has included input from the local authority, parents, children and other settings in the area. This secure self-evaluation process now underpins a working action plan for improvement, which accurately reflects the current strengths and weaknesses of the pre-school. Supervision opportunities have been introduced and are becoming embedded, which means staff are now receiving mentoring opportunities to discuss the quality of interactions with children. The quality of teaching is steadily improving and becoming more consistent. However, it is still only providing satisfactory levels of support for children as activities and interactions are still too often adult directed. Consequently, some more able children are not challenged in their learning. However as staff grow in their new roles and commit to their new responsibilities, so does their confidence in implementing this plan. Initiatives are steadily beginning to make a difference as they become more embedded. This is evident in the increasing levels of support that families receive. Training has improved staff confidence in identifying and providing additional support that children may require. This ensures that any early interventions that are offered are targeted and closely monitored. This provides the very best support for each child before their move to school. As a result, any differences in the levels of progress children are making, given their starting points and specific needs, are steadily narrowing.

The current chairperson of the pre-school has a secure understanding of her responsibilities to monitor safeguarding in the pre-school. She is fully involved in overseeing all aspects of recruitment and staff induction alongside the manager as the nominated person for the pre-school. All staff have up to date suitability checks and established protocols ensure that staff know to promptly declare changes to their suitability, should this become an issue. Her commitment to the pre-school is commendable and alongside the staff team and other committee members, she has driven forward a number of significant changes in recent months, many of which have contributed positively to safeguarding the children in their care. This ensures staff's continued suitability to undertake their roles. Safeguarding procedures are secure. Staff and volunteers are fully aware of their safeguarding responsibilities and know what to do and who to contact in the event of child protection concern. They have attended safeguarding training and this continues to be updated to ensure they strengthen their

knowledge, understanding and skills in this area. A mobile phone and camera policy is strictly enforced in the pre-school and staff and visitors are closely monitored to ensure phones are not used. An annual risk assessment is completed on the premises and outdoor area and staff undertake daily risk assessments of all areas, resources and equipment. They suitably supervise children in their care.

Close links with the other nurseries, schools and children's centres in the local area provide staff with valuable opportunities to gather and implement new ideas and share good practice. As these newly established partnerships develop they impact positively on the levels of support that children now receive from other professionals that are involved in their care. While new strategies and support systems are still developing a steady increase is being noted in the progress that children now make in their learning, particularly in their behaviour towards each other and their communication skills. Staff have secured further links with outside agencies to seek advice and support for children's individual needs. A number of new initiatives have been introduced by staff to support children with additional needs and close monitoring of these has showed that they have been successful in promoting increased levels of progress in children to help them catch up with their peers. As a result, children now gain the early intervention and support they need to before they make their move to school.

Partnerships with parents are positive. They are highly complementary about the staff and the care and education their children receive and in a recent questionnaire parents highly rate the pre-school for the service it provides. Increased levels of information are being shared with parents through social networking sites and regular meetings so that they can become fully involved in their child's learning.

The Childcare Register

The requirements for the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are	Met
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The requirements for the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are	Met
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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	101748
Local authority	Gloucestershire
Inspection number	950253
Type of provision	Full-time provision
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	2 - 4
Total number of places	26
Number of children on roll	89
Name of provider	Upton St Leonards Playgroup Committee
Date of previous inspection	23/06/2010
Telephone number	0783 397 122

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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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