

St Chads Playgroup

Liverpool Road, Red Street, NEWCASTLE, Staffordshire, ST5 7AF

Inspection date

07/05/2014

Previous inspection date

29/06/2010

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

- The quality of teaching is good. Staff fully understand how to promote the learning and development of young children through play and first-hand experiences. Consequently, children display high levels of engagement and are making good progress.
- Staff provide a high level of care and demonstrate a good understanding of safeguarding procedures and their responsibilities to keep children safe from harm. As a result, children feel safe and secure in their learning environment and their welfare is well promoted.
- The key person system is very effective. Staff are sensitive and attentive to children's individual needs and know them exceptionally well. This enables children to form strong emotional attachments.
- There is a strong emphasis on communication and language. Children display confidence when speaking and are well supported by staff as they move forward in their early literacy skills.
- Partnerships with parents are strong, they are well informed about their children's progress and make a positive contribution to assessments.

It is not yet outstanding because

- There is scope to continue enhancing the resources available in the outdoor environment to provide further opportunities for children to explore and investigate.

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 staff interacting with children in a range of daily care routines, indoor and outdoor learning activities.
- The inspector spoke to the children during free play.
- The inspector carried out a joint observation with the manager.
- The inspector discussed the provision with staff and the manager at appropriate times during the inspection.
- The inspector looked at various documents including, policies and procedures, children's records, evidence of the suitability of staff and safeguarding procedures.
- The inspector took account of the views of parents and carers spoken to on the day of the inspection.

Inspector

Sharon Hennam-Dale

Full report

Information about the setting

St. Chad's Playgroup opened in 1987 and is managed by a voluntary committee. The playgroup is on the Early Years Register and on the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. It operates from St. Chad's Church in Newcastle-under-Lyme, Staffordshire and serves the local and wider community. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area. The playgroup employs five members of childcare staff. Of these, four staff hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3 and one holds a qualification at level 2. The playgroup is open Monday to Wednesday, 9am to 1pm and Thursday from 9am to 11:45am. It operates during school term times and children attend for a variety of sessions. There are currently 32 children attending in the early years age group. The playgroup supports children with special education needs and/or disabilities. It is in receipt of funding for the provision of free early years education for two-, three- and four-year-olds.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- enhance the outdoor environment through increasing the range of resources available for children so they are able to investigate and explore.

Inspection judgements

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

Children flourish and make good progress in their development across all areas of learning in this happy and busy playgroup. The skilled and knowledgeable staff have a good knowledge of the Statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage. They understand how children learn through play and provide a wide range of challenging and quality experiences. As a result, children show high levels of engagement and focus on activities for extended periods of time. The quality of teaching is good because staff are well deployed and interact effectively as children are playing, using a good range of strategies to support children's learning. There are clear systems to evidence, monitor and track children's learning through accurate observations and assessments. Learning journeys are in place for all children and these include photographs, purposeful observations and assessments. These are linked to the areas of learning and are used to track and plan children's next steps. Key persons are knowledgeable about each child's developmental stage and understand their unique interests. The progress check at age two provides a detailed record of children's progress and ensures parents and other professionals have a good understanding of children's abilities. The playgroup encourages children to develop the characteristics of effective learners. Child initiated and adult-led experiences are appropriately balanced. Older children are extremely well supported in

preparation for their future school readiness as they develop specific skills, such as pencil control, letter formation and take part in activities involving numbers.

Children engage in a good range of activities that promote their early literacy development. Communication and language development is extremely well developed in the playgroup by all staff. Staff skilfully support this development as they listen to children and encourage them to talk about their own experiences and about what they are doing. They engage children in activities, such as, singing and storytelling throughout the session. All staff consistently used open-ended questioning when talking to children and provide children with time and space to think critically and extend their ideas. As a result, children demonstrate they are confident speakers and readily engage in conversations with their peers and all adults in the playgroup, knowing their contributions are valued. Staff extend children's understanding of the work as they introduce new vocabulary within activities. For example, as children play with sea creatures staff ask them what they are and introduce names, such as 'crayfish'. The book corner stimulates children's interest in books and they enjoy looking at books independently or sharing them as a group. Children listen attentively when stories are read by staff and eagerly respond to questions. Children are making good progress in their mathematical development. They explore mathematics in their everyday routines and activities. For instance, as the children handle shells staff encourage them to talk and think about the different shapes and sizes. Regular access to art and craft activities provide children with regular opportunities to develop their skills. For example, children make active choices as they explore media and materials in designing their octopus for the display wall. Children display a high level of imagination as they actively engage in role play. For example, as they bandage a member of staff's hand in the home area, children respond enthusiastically to questions from staff on what has happened and how they are making it better. In the outdoor environment, they pretend the Wendy house is a 'drive through' ice cream shop and serve children arriving in their cars at the window. Children enjoy all of their experiences and play eagerly. Consequently, they are enthusiastic to learn and make good progress. In particular, children enjoy using the outdoor environment and demonstrate they have good physical skills as they ride tricycles. Opportunities to enhance children's understanding of the world is provided as they plant seeds and grow flowers. However, there is scope to continue enhancing the outdoor environment and to increase the range of resources available for children to explore and investigate.

Partnerships with parents are very effective. Parents say they are happy with the playgroup and are kept well informed of their child's progress. They are provided with regular opportunities to contribute what they know about their child both on entering the playgroup and on an ongoing basis. Their contributions to assessment are highly valued and play an important part in helping staff gain an accurate picture of children's progress and development. In addition, parent workshops and coffee mornings enable staff and parents to share information about the learning which takes place and discuss their children's learning journeys with their key person. The playgroup also provides activities for parents to support their child's learning at home. For example, the children take 'Noddy' home and record his exciting adventures in a diary. This is shared with children upon his return to the playgroup. Staff work closely with parents and external agencies when there are any emerging concerns about a child's progress or if children have identified special educational needs and/or disabilities. Individual learning plans ensure

that learning is tailored to meet each child's specific needs. As a result, children with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress in all areas of their learning. Staff have high expectations of all children in their care and create a positive and enabling learning environment. As a result, the playgroup provides children with a strong foundation for the next stage in their learning.

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

The playgroup provides a welcoming and nurturing environment. Parents are very complimentary of the care their children receive. The experienced staff provide children with a high level of care which enables children to build secure attachments. Children's emotional well-being is very well supported through the effective and well-established key person system. Regular information shared between key persons and parents ensures that each child's individual needs, interests and routines are continually identified. This informs children's ongoing care and learning needs. Children demonstrate that they feel safe and secure in the playgroup and this provides a strong base for their independence. Children benefit from a selection of good-quality resources. All resources are stored at a low-level to encourage children to make active choices, which promotes their independence. Displays of children's work gives them a sense of being valued, resulting in a positive impact on their self-esteem. Children are encouraged to build positive relationships with their peers and develop good social skills as they play well together, share and take turns. For instance, children respond well to each other's ideas as they play enthusiastically with dinosaurs. Children display confidence and a sense of belonging is fostered in the playgroup. As a result, children make good progress in their personal, social and emotional development.

Staff encourage children to follow good hygiene practices and develop their self-care skills. Children are reminded to wash their hands at appropriate times and many of them demonstrate a good level of independence in their self-care. The playgroup provides snacks which are freshly prepared and include a range of fruits and vegetables. Snack times are sociable occasions where children enjoying sitting with each other and talking to their peers and adults. Fresh water is constantly available for children to access independently throughout the day. The children are, therefore, well supported to start to think about the importance of having a healthy diet and making good food choices. Independence is further promoted when children are encouraged to put on their own coats when going outside. They have regular access to the outdoor area where they benefit from fresh air and exercise. There is a good focus on outdoor physical activities and children ride tricycles and cars with good control and coordination. As a result, children are well supported to develop an understanding of the importance of exercise as part of a healthy lifestyle. Staff are vigilant in ensuring children play safely and risks are minimised. They check the premises for hazards and supervise children closely at all times. Children effectively learn about their own safety as they learn how to leave the building quickly in an emergency situation and regularly practise the fire evacuation drill. They are reminded to think about safety as they play with toy vehicles inside and become 'traffic wardens' outside. Children are able to take well supervised risks as they play, for example, riding their tricycles and cars at speed. Children demonstrate that they know how to keep themselves and others safe. For example, older children demonstrate a good

spatial awareness of each other as they move around the playground.

Staff ensure that children learn to appreciate and respect differences and similarities through a range of resources and experiences. Posters and role play toys provide positive images of diversity. Children take part in activities and learn about different festivals and celebrations, such as, Easter, Eid and Diwali. Good behaviour is promoted through the positive role modelling of staff and from each other. Staff provide clear boundaries and implement the golden rules consistently throughout the playgroup. Staff manage inappropriate behaviour in a calm, sensitive way that is appropriate to children's age and stage of development. Consequently, children behave extremely well and demonstrate that they feel safe in the environment. Transition arrangements are effective and ensure continuity of care and learning. Children have settling-in visits, which can be extended to meet their needs, to ensure a smooth transition from home to the playgroup. The transition to school is extremely well supported as the playgroup have very strong links with the local school. Staff from school visit the playgroup to observe and meet the children and children make regular visits to the school with playgroup staff. As a result, children are very well prepared emotionally when they move on to the next stage in their learning.

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

Safeguarding arrangements are strong. The manager ensures safeguarding is given high priority and all staff working in the playgroup are fully aware of their responsibilities. All staff attend and receive regular safeguarding training and confidently know the procedures to follow, if they are concerned about a child's welfare. Recruitment and induction is robust and regular suitability checks ensure that all those working with the children, are appropriate to do so. All documentation relating to the safeguarding and welfare requirements is completed to a high standard and firmly underpins the safe and effective running of the playgroup. For example, comprehensive risk assessments, completion of regular fire drills and every member of staff trained as a qualified first aider mean children's well-being is paramount. The premises are secure throughout so no unauthorised person is able to gain access. The manager is fully aware of significant events that are required to be notified to Ofsted, which ensures a well led playgroup which protects children's welfare and safety. Actions from the last inspection have been fully met.

Staff are well qualified and experienced. They form an effective team and are fully committed to creating, maintaining and improving the playgroup, so that children continue to receive good quality care and learning. The manager provides strong leadership and constantly evaluates the quality of practice and breadth of provision. She understands her role and responsibilities to meet all the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. Monitoring is rigorous and precise to ensure that any areas of further development are identified. All staff are involved in tracking children's progress to determine that children achieve well, in relation to their starting points. This means all children, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, make good progress towards the early learning goals. Staff practice is monitored effectively through regular supervision meetings

and appraisals, where training needs are also discussed and actions implemented. Staff have clear job descriptions and a good understanding of their roles and responsibilities. The manager demonstrates a strong commitment to developing her own skills and ensures she and all staff attend regular training to continue to develop their knowledge. Self-evaluation is undertaken regularly, is accurate and identifies areas for development. Staff meet regularly to ensure that they all play a part in reflecting on the provision and contribute to self-evaluation. Parent views are regularly sought and listened to. The manager is clear about plans for the playgroup's future, focusing on the continuing development to the outdoor environment.

Partnerships with parents, other settings and external agencies are strong and contribute well to the good progress children make. Staff actively seek advice from specialist support and involve parents fully whenever information is shared. This ensures that all in partnership work very well together to meet the needs of all children. Parents receive a detailed welcome pack from the playgroup containing key policies and information about how their child's care is organised. They have many opportunities to become involved in the playgroup and newsletters keep them up-to-date about coming events. Feedback from parents is overwhelmingly positive. Parents are very happy with the progress their children are making. They speak highly of the supportive, friendly and approachable staff who they say 'go the extra mile' and 'care so much' for their children.

The Childcare Register

The requirements for the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are	Met
The requirements for the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are	Met

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	218229
Local authority	Staffordshire
Inspection number	871239
Type of provision	
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 17
Total number of places	26
Number of children on roll	32
Name of provider	St Chads Playgroup (Newcastle) Committee
Date of previous inspection	29/06/2010
Telephone number	07716 829539

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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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