

Taunton Opportunity Group

Wooden Spoon House, Crowcombe Road, Taunton, Somerset, TA2 7NF

Inspection date	22/04/2014
Previous inspection date	09/03/2011

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	
	Previous inspection:	
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 form strong attachments with all staff, particularly their key person.
- All staff have excellent knowledge of the children in their care. They meet their individual needs successfully using accurate assessment and planning arrangements.
- There is good partnership working at all levels.
- Children's independence is encouraged well especially for those moving on to school.

It is not yet outstanding because

- Staff do not always share good, and in some cases outstanding, teaching and fresh ideas to maintain consistent practice.
- On some occasions group times are too long for children's age and stage of development.

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 children inside and outdoors as they played.
- The inspector observed staff's interactions, teaching and delivery of care needs.
- The inspector and manager completed a joint observation.
- The inspector spoke to a parent.
- The inspector sampled a range of documentation including children's assessments, self-evaluation and safeguarding and complaints' policies and procedures.

Inspector

Rachael Williams

Full report

Information about the setting

Taunton Opportunity Group (TOG) specialises in supporting pre-school children with special educational needs. The group began in 1974 and in 2000 moved to purpose-built premises situated on the site of Wellsprings Primary School in Taunton, Somerset. The building consists of a playroom, a conservatory and toilet facilities. There is a large enclosed area for outside play. There is also a multi-sensory unit for children with sensory impairments, a parents' room, physiotherapy area and two smaller rooms for visiting health professionals. It is open each week day morning during term time for children from 9.15am to 12.15pm. The group offers a lunch club on Monday to Thursday from 12.15pm to 1.10pm. On Tuesday afternoon from 1.15pm to 3pm the group offers a specialist baby and toddler group, which parents or a main carer attend with their child.

The group is registered on the Early Years Register. Children from two years until the end of the early years age range attend. There are currently 26 children in the early years age range. The setting provides funded free early education for two-, three- and four-year-olds. The voluntary committee employ a manager who has an early years qualification at level 3. She is supported by five staff; four of whom have early years qualifications at level 3.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- develop further coaching arrangements to incorporate peer observations and sharing new ideas obtained on courses to improve consistency in practice

- revise the organisation of group times so that children are not inactive for too long.

Inspection judgements

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

Staff actively involve parents in their children's learning from the outset. There are extensive settling-in visits, and in some cases home visits, to ensure staff, particularly the key person, have excellent knowledge of children's individual needs. Staff plan collaboratively with parents and professionals to develop individual educational and care plans so that children make the best progress from their starting points.

Staff's interaction with children to progress their learning is good. For example, staff provide commentary on children's actions so that words are put to children's movements to develop their language skills. Staff encourage children to explore bubbles in the water

helping them to solve problems through effective questioning. Children thoroughly enjoy the sensory experience as they transport water using different sized containers. Staff introduce children to mathematical language as they pour and splash the water to make more bubbles. There are good opportunities for children to enhance their sensory development, such as gloop on bubble wrap, cars in rice cereal and textured objects in paint.

Children enjoy telling stories. They use the animals on a storyboard to create their own stories. Staff question children well to develop their understanding and language. This also helps children to make connections with other experiences, such as farm visits. Children choose a cow to go on a journey and are thrilled to find there are books with pictures of cows in them. Staff have considered the layout of the environment well ensuring that children have a comfortable book area to explore with easily accessible books for different abilities. Children handle books carefully. They turn the pages, lift flaps and pull tabs gently concentrating on the pictures as staff identify different features.

Staff provide children with good opportunities to develop their independence. They offer them choices, such as to play inside or outdoors. Most staff are good at consolidating children's understanding as they make choices using visual reminders and Somerset Total Communication, a recognised sign language. However, some staff are less confident to use these strategies when working individually with children.

Through comprehensive observations of children's play all staff have very good knowledge of children's next steps in learning. They take every opportunity to progress children's skills. For example, to strengthen children's leg muscles they bounce on the bug. Although this is not always an activity children enjoy staff help them and focus their attention by singing familiar and favourite songs. Staff follow children's interests and use these opportunities to enhance their physical skills, such as using both hands to transport the sand to strengthen muscles on the less dominant side. Children listen carefully to instruction. They place coloured tubes correctly inside larger ones commenting 'bouncy bouncy' as they press them down. This helps children develop strong small muscles skills.

Staff use group times effectively to increase children's sense of belonging. For example, children become familiar with the routines of singing the hello song and learning their friends' names. Children receive individual attention as they are included in the song at their level and given time to respond. Children learn about using technology. They press the switch when they wish to say hello to the next person. However, group sessions are sometimes too long to maintain the interest of some children. For example, after the 'hello' song, staff tell an interactive story and this is followed by snack time. Children thoroughly enjoy a group song time at the end of the session. They make choices about which songs to sing. Staff use props effectively to focus children's attention. They use sign language well to reinforce children's language development. Children are praised for their participation as this is an opportunity for shy children to excel.

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

Children benefit greatly from a well-organised room, which is well equipped and focuses on fully including all children regardless of their special need. Children have a good sense of belonging and are familiar with consistent routines and expectations. For example, they know when they enter the setting they place their large laminated photograph on the registration board. Staff use communication passports effectively to help children settle. Staff know the children exceptionally well and ensure that specific equipment is readily available on their arrival. Staff are very respectful as they always talk directly to the children and give them time to process information. They consistently talk to the children. They sensitively use their name, explaining what they are going to do before touching or moving them so children make positive attachments and feel secure within the environment.

Children become aware of how to keep themselves safe. For example, as children crawl under a table staff reinforce safe practices reminding them where they are and the potential risk of bumping their head. All children are involved in regular fire drills so that they become aware of the routine and are less fearful. Children behave well as staff support them well to understand expectations and boundaries. Staff work in partnership with parents to share strategies to enable consistency between home and the pre-school. During their settling in visits staff and parents organise behaviour agreements to encompass manual handling and the use of appropriate restraint, such as to support children in their mobility and strength building exercises.

Children learn good hygienic practices. For example, they know to wash their hands before they eat their healthy snack of banana, savoury biscuit and yoghurt. Parents provide extensive information on children's feeding and dietary requirements so that staff can meet their individual needs successfully. Staff are respectable when changing children's nappies. Staff change nappies routinely and when required. Staff talk to children throughout the process explaining what they are doing and encouraging them to help, such as raising their legs. There are regular opportunities for children to be outside and active in the well-equipped play space. For example, children enjoy jumping along the number caterpillar and staff pushing them on the swings. There are robust systems in place to administer medication. Each child has a specific care plan, which staff regularly review with parents and health professionals. Staff record any administered medication and share with parents. Staff receive specific training to meet children's medical needs.

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

The provider has failed to notify Ofsted of a change to the manager in September 2013 and committee members following the annual general meeting in November 2013. This is an offence. However, Ofsted are now aware of the changes and it has little impact on the good care, learning and development children receive at the setting. Therefore, no further action has been taken at this time and the provision remains registered with Ofsted.

Staff have generally good knowledge of the safeguarding and welfare requirements as set out in the Statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage. Staff implement

policies and procedures appropriately and these underpin the good provision. For example, there is an accurate record of children's attendance completed by parents and monitored by staff. Children are cared for in a safe and secure environment. Staff complete thorough risk assessments of all areas used by the children. They also review the activities children participate in and the resources and equipment used to progress children's learning and development. Staff know children well and deploy themselves effectively to maintain children's safety. For example, some children show curiosity at the older children playing in an adjacent playground. Staff position themselves appropriately in front of a padlocked gate so that children cannot leave their play area.

The management team use effective arrangements to enable suitable staff to work directly with the children. There are comprehensive recruitment arrangements, which include vetting procedures, employment history, proof of qualification and references. Staff receive thorough induction training so that they are clear on the operation of the pre-school and their responsibility to meet the needs of the children. All staff undertake relevant and ongoing training, assessed through annual appraisals and general supervision meetings so that they routinely meet children's individual needs. However, there are limited opportunities for staff to share new ideas gained on training courses to increase consistency in good practice. For example, the continued use of Somerset Total Communication when working individually with children and ideas for music therapy. All staff know what to do if they have any concerns about a child in their care. They are fully aware of their responsibility to report and record their concerns confidentially to the lead practitioner for safeguarding. They follow effective systems to seek advice and make referrals to Somerset Direct. All staff are clear on the importance of reporting any concerns about another member of staff to the manager, or to the chairperson of the committee, and referring concerns to the local authority designated officer to ensure children are protected.

There is a strong focus of working in partnership with parents and health/education professionals to enable continuity in children's care, learning and development. There is an excellent exchange of information at drop-off and collection. Consequently, the key person has valuable knowledge of any new concerns arising, medical interventions and achievements at home. Parents value this exchange of information as they know that their children are being cared for to a high standard. The key person informs the parent at collection about the activities children have enjoyed. They also discuss any medication that staff have administered, information on what children have had to eat and any nappy changes. Staff work well in partnership with parents and school. They establish school entry plans to ensure that the necessary support is available for children as they move on to school.

The manager uses self-evaluation well to drive improvement. She identifies that her personal target is to embed her knowledge of her new role into practice. Staff use meetings well to identify actions for improvement, such as to introduce peer-to-peer observations to improve standards of practice through visiting other settings. Recently, staff have involved parents more formally to provide feedback so that they can improve the service they provide. The manager monitors planning and assessment arrangements well, such as children's progress check at two and introducing a development journal for parents. Staff consistently review the environment to ensure that all children are included.

They effectively track children's progress, identify any gaps in learning and make appropriate referrals to ensure they meet children's needs. Therefore, children make good progress from their starting points in their learning and development.

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	143087
Local authority	Somerset
Inspection number	968523
Type of provision	
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	2 - 5
Total number of places	26
Number of children on roll	26
Name of provider	Taunton Opportunity Group Committee
Date of previous inspection	09/03/2011
Telephone number	01823 284550

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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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