

Little Badgers Playgroup

St Peter's Parish Centre, High Street, Whetstone, LEICESTER, LE8 4AJ

Inspection date	08/05/2014
Previous inspection date	08/11/2010

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	3
	Previous inspection:	3
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

- The manager and her staff work well as a team and are deployed appropriately to support the care needs of children.
- Children form secure attachments with their key person. This helps them to settle quickly and enjoy their time at playgroup.
- Staff develop positive relationships with parents. They comment that they are happy with the provision and the range of information shared with them.
- Partnerships with specialised professionals are well established and ensure that children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are supported consistently through a shared understanding of their needs.

It is not yet good because

- Information about staff suitability to work in the playgroup is not consistently recorded.
- Some resources, such as mark making tools and playmats, are not attractively presented to entice children to play with them because they are well-used and pencils and crayons require sharpening.
- Staff do not always provide parents with enough information to enable them to fully extend and enhance children's learning experiences at home, should they wish to do so.
- Children's self-care skills are not fully supported because they can not access all hand

washing facilities to develop their independence.

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 playing in both playrooms, outdoors and during dinner club.
- The inspector took account of views of parents spoken to on the day and from written information on thank you notes.
The inspector checked evidence of suitability and qualifications of staff. She also
- looked at a selection of the playgroup's policies, planning documents, children's records and their learning journals.
- The inspector spoke with the manager, staff and children at appropriate times throughout the inspection.

Inspector

Cathryn Wilkinson

Full report

Information about the setting

Little Badgers Playgroup opened in 2010 and operates from the parish rooms of St. Peters Church in the village of Whetstone, Leicestershire. Children are cared for in two large playrooms with access to an outside play area. The playgroup serves the local area and is accessible to all children. The playgroup is registered on the Early Years Register. There are currently 40 children on roll, aged from two years to four years. The setting opens four days a week during school term time, on Tuesday and Thursday from 9.15am to 3.15pm, with an option to attend a dinner club. Sessions on Wednesday and Friday operate from 9.15am until 12.15pm. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The playgroup employs six members of childcare staff, five of whom, including the manager, hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3. The playgroup provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children. It supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. The playgroup receives support from the local authority.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- improve the system for recording the suitability information about all people working in the playgroup, including students and volunteers, which confirms that they are suitable to fulfil the role.

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

- review the way that parents support their children's learning by suggesting activities that they may like to do at home with their children
- refine the procedures for children washing their hands at dinner time in order to fully utilise available time, space and resources while encouraging children to be independent
- review the way in which toys and resources are monitored to maintain a well-presented range which entices children to play and explore, with particular regard to playmats, mark making tools such as pencils and crayons and children's personal learning journals.

Inspection judgements

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

Staff at the playgroup have a generally sound understanding of the learning and development requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage and plan a fairly balanced educational programme. Parents update the playgroup about the current interests of their children and this links into activities that are planned for children. For example, children are interested in fire engines and staff arrange a visit from the fire service to give them opportunities to have hands-on experiences as they sit in a fire engine and ask questions of the fire crew. On another occasion staff arrange for the children to visit the church and the vicar performs a christening service through role play. Staff know children and families quite well and provide toys and resources that they enjoy. However, some resources are very well-used and are not always attractively presented, which, at times, makes them less inviting for children to play with. For example, pencils and crayons are broken and need sharpening, glue sticks are empty and playmats are old and need cleaning. Children are making good progress in relation to their starting points and capabilities, the length of time they have been at playgroup and how often they attend. Useful information is gathered about children on entry to enable staff to set children's next steps in learning. The playgroup has implemented the progress check for children between the ages of two and three years and parents are invited to playgroup to discuss the related documentation, before it is shared with health visitors. Other assessments and records of children's progress provide parents with a picture of where their children are in their learning. Tracking systems, recommended by the local authority, are in line with the early learning goals and ensure that gaps in learning are being identified and planned for. This information is kept in children's learning journals. Some photographs support staff observations of children's playing and learning. The learning journals are available for children to independently access, however, the files are old and torn and children find it difficult to find theirs. This means an opportunity for them to celebrate their learning is missed.

Communication and language development is promoted quite well throughout the playgroup. Staff play games with children in small groups, which have been recommended in training sessions, to further promote children's language skills. They set up a cosy book den which entices children to visit, where they talk together about the story books they share. Staff speak directly to children and skilfully question them to encourage their thinking and problem-solving skills, for example, they ask, 'Are there more boys or more girls here today?' Children learn to recognise their name on name cards as they self-register at the beginning of a session and when they visit the snack bar. Children are prepared for school life as they organise themselves in activities, such as snack time and when they sit and listen in group situations, for example, when a story is read by staff before they eat their dinner. Children demonstrate the characteristics of effective learning. During an activity in the clothes shop, children sustain their attention and interest for a considerable period taking the role of the shop keeper, sorting out payment at the till and tidying up the clothes rack. Throughout the year, children undertake activities to help them understand the diverse world in which they live. For example, they take part in activities to raise their awareness of the celebration of the Chinese New Year and they

raise money to help towards children who are less fortunate than themselves. Recently parents talked to children about their jobs which complemented a successful project to promote children's learning about 'What I want to be', when children dressed up for a variety of jobs while raising money for charity.

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

Staff try hard to make the surroundings welcoming in this packaway playgroup. They organise the rooms to complement all learners and offer activities for all the areas of learning of the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum. Once the session has started, children can move freely from activity to activity, independently choosing resources from drawers, which are accessible to them. Staff are warm, welcoming and affectionate towards children, allowing them to make secure attachments that contribute to their positive well-being. This is also supported by an effective key-person system. Parents comment positively on staff, the care they provide and how excited their children are to come to playgroup. Children are proud of their achievements and staff recognise their efforts by praising them, for example, after a singing session they say, 'Lovely singing, you are super stars'. Children are beginning to have a sense of belonging when they listen and share their daily news with their peers. A further example is when they take home the playgroup soft toys, Dora and Billy Badger and look after them at their home. They play with them and write about the adventures they have together. Sometimes they take photographs of them playing in their home and garden to show when they return to playgroup. Children are aware of the rules and say, 'we should use kind hands, not snatching or pulling hair and no running down the ramp'. They show familiarity with routines, taking responsibility as they tidy away resources after snack time and at the end of the session when they tidy toys away.

Transition arrangements are in place with several local schools and teachers are invited to visit children at playgroup. On occasions children and staff are invited to visit schools together. Staff use this opportunity to take photographs and include these in children's learning journals as a reminder of the school they will be attending. Children are given opportunities to develop independence and recognise their own needs ready for starting school. For example, they pour their own drinks and count out pieces of fruit at snack time. They are encouraged to put on their own coats as they prepare to play outdoors. However, at dinner time, they need help to wash their hands as the taps are stiff and there is only one sink to use. Following a recommendation from the last Ofsted report, staff now share information about children's interests and development with other settings children attend, ensuring all parties work together to meet the children's ongoing needs. Children are provided with a range of healthy snacks, such as, crackers, fruit, milk and fresh water. For those children who attend dinner club, parents are asked to send healthy food in their child's lunch box. Children are encouraged to be independent by opening their own food bags and spreading cheese on their crackers. They spend time in the fresh air through daily outdoor play, with easy access from the two playrooms. They pedal tricycles, bounce on a trampoline, push prams and learn about the world through digging in compost and scooping it into different sized plant pots. They are kept safe outdoors as

gates are locked and gaps in the area are blocked with furniture. Staff are vigilant indoors as they regularly count the children.

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

The inspection was brought forward as a result of a complaint to Ofsted which raised suitability concerns. Following an unannounced visit from Ofsted, the provider was issued with a warning letter and a notice of action to improve, asking the provider to ensure that records are easily accessible and available, with particular regard to the records of staff criminal disclosure reference numbers. The manager is now complying with statutory requirements and checks and records are up to date ensuring procedures keep children safe. The manager is aware of the requirement to notify Ofsted of any significant event which is likely to affect the suitability of the early years provider, or any person who cares for, or is in regular contact with children in the playgroup, to look after children. There are adequate procedures in place for inducting new staff. Suitability checks and a probationary period help to make sure that those who work with children are suitable to do so. However, evidence of the provider's scrutiny of a student's Disclosure and Barring Service check from college has not been recorded. The provider and staff are adamant that all students and volunteers do not have unsupervised contact with children to ensure that children's overall safety and welfare is not compromised.

Children are cared for in a safe and secure environment as staff complete suitable risk assessments and daily checks. All staff convey a genuine enthusiasm and passion for their work and this is evident in their daily interventions with children. They have a good understanding of local safeguarding procedures and know how to identify and report concerns that they may have about children in their care. The manager is currently updating policies and procedures and plans to share these on a weekly basis with parents. Information needed to support children's welfare is sought at the time of registration. This includes medical history, allergies and known health needs. This means the playgroup work in partnership for the best outcomes for children's health and well-being. Training is attended by most staff to support children's individual needs and family backgrounds, to ensure that they are fully promoted. A system of annual appraisals and supervision meetings is being established, ensuring practitioners feel valued and supported. This includes opportunities for staff to discuss any changes in their circumstances, such as health issues, to maintain their ongoing suitability.

Parents are warmly approached by practitioners on arrival and at collection time and an exchange of information takes place about the children's day. Parents appreciate the different methods of communication offered by playgroup, including written progress report, verbal feedback and home to school diaries. They learn about playgroup activities sometimes through newsletters and often through notices displayed on the parent noticeboard or on the playroom doors. Parents comment positively about how 'cooperative the staff are'. They know their children are learning and developing as they talk about what they learn at home, they are invited to share summaries of progress with their child's key person and read other observations of their children's learning. However, staff do not

always encourage all parents to be actively involved with their child's learning at home. This means that children's learning is not always fully enhance and maximised. Partnership working with a range of other professionals is strong. This includes, the local authority and many health and social care professionals. This means that the needs of individual children, especially those with special educational needs and/or disabilities are met efficiently and effectively.

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	EY410320
Local authority	Leicestershire
Inspection number	967101
Type of provision	
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 5
Total number of places	30
Number of children on roll	40
Name of provider	Cheryl Ellen Henderson
Date of previous inspection	08/11/2010
Telephone number	07903 468 932

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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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