

Derwent Road Playgroup

United Reformed Church, Derwent Road, St. Helens, Merseyside, WA11 9AT

Inspection date	13/06/2014
Previous inspection date	14/07/2011

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	2
	Previous inspection:	1
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 motivated to learn in the stimulating and resourceful play environments. Furthermore, practitioners use good teaching techniques to engage children, which means they make good progress in their learning.
- Children form trusting relationships with practitioners, which helps them to feel secure and develop a sense of belonging within the setting.
- Partnerships with parents and other professionals are given high priority. As a result, practitioners share information effectively, so that children's individual care and learning needs are well supported.
- Children are kept safe from harm because practitioners understand safeguarding and how to manage risks and effectively promote children's good health and safety.

It is not yet outstanding because

- There is scope to enhance the already good transition procedures by embedding and evaluating how practice supports children to be even better prepared for school.
- There is scope to enhance the ongoing programme of professional development to further raise the quality of supervisions provided to staff.

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 both child-initiated and adult-led activities, including practitioners' interactions with children across the two main playrooms and the attached outdoor play area.
- The inspector looked at children's profile documents and planning records. She checked a sample of regulatory documentation, such as the safeguarding policy, medication records and risk assessment procedures, including evidence regarding practitioners' suitability.
- The inspector held discussions with the manager and practitioners at appropriate times during the inspection. A joint observation of an adult-led play experience was carried out with the manager in the main indoor playroom.
- The inspector took into account the views of children, parents and carers spoken to on the day of the inspection.

Inspector

Hilary Boyd

Full report

Information about the setting

Derwent Road Playgroup registered in 2003 and is on the Early Years Register. It is run by a committee and operates from designated areas in the United Reformed Church Hall in St. Helens. Children are cared for in two main playrooms and have access to an outdoor play area. The setting is open Monday to Friday during term time only. Sessions are from 8.45am to 11.45am on Tuesday, Thursday and Friday, and afternoon sessions are Monday to Friday from 12.45pm until 3.45pm. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The setting employs seven members of childcare staff. Of these, one holds an early years qualification at level 4, five hold level 3 and one holds level 2. There are currently 51 children on roll in the early years age group. The setting receives funding for the provision of early education for two-, three- and four-year-olds. It supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and receives support from the local authority and other professionals.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- strengthen the good transition procedures further, such as building on how children are prepared for the next stage of learning, through sharing images obtained from schools and using questionnaires to evaluate their impact
- enhance the programme of professional development for practitioners, to ensure high-quality supervisions are carried out and these are based on consistent and focused evaluations of the impact of their contributions to practice.

Inspection judgements

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

Children thrive in this good quality setting and demonstrate the characteristics of effective learning through participation in various play experiences. The quality of teaching is good and sometimes outstanding. This is because practitioners have a secure knowledge of the Early Years Foundation Stage and they have a good level of understanding of how children learn and develop. Consequently, practitioners understand the importance in providing good quality interactions which stimulate and motivate children in their learning. Relevant information gathered from parents before children start at the setting is shared and discussed with practitioners. As a result, they confidently talk about the interests and abilities of their key children and use this information to support and extend their individual development. Consequently, practitioners provide interesting and challenging play experiences that meet the needs of all children who attend. Furthermore, those with special educational needs and/or disabilities have exceptional support. This is because

practitioners work closely with parents and other professionals when considering the intervention strategies required to support individual children. For example, practitioners liaise with outside agencies as appropriate and collaboratively set manageable targets to support individual children. The individual educational plans are reviewed in partnership with parents and others. This ensures that those children who are, or could possibly fall below their expected levels of development receive targeted and individually tailored support to ensure they are well prepared for the next step in their learning.

Children's achievements and involvement in play experiences are observed regularly by practitioners. They complete regular and accurate assessments of all children based on the good range of evidence collected in children's individual profiles. Consequently, formal records, alongside practitioners' secure knowledge of their key children, demonstrate that all children are progressing well towards the early learning goals, given their initial starting points. They skilfully use this information to plan purposeful, stimulating and challenging play experiences to ensure children are interested and motivated in their learning. As a result, children engage in a range of both child-initiated and adult-led activities which effectively promote development across all seven areas of learning and development. Children are developing good personal, social and emotional skills as they interact well with both practitioners and each other. Practitioners recognise children's contributions and efforts made during play experiences as they acknowledge children's achievements. As a result, children are developing good levels of self-esteem and confidence. They are supported well in the acquisition of communication and language skills. This is because practitioners use a range of good teaching strategies to promote language development. For example, they give a commentary as they play with children, they speak clearly and repeat short sentences to support children's speaking skills. They enhance children's level of involvement as they talk to children, show genuine interest and promote early conversation skills. The extensive range of visual displays, including environmental print and numerals, help to support children's increasing awareness and understanding of early literacy. Furthermore, visual aids and practitioners' use of sign language help to promote inclusive practice. Children develop an understanding of the world, the natural environment and other communities through adult-led activities. For example, the manager invites visitors into the setting and numerous displays depict various multicultural experiences, such as Chinese New Year, healthy lifestyles and the life cycle of a butterfly. As a result, children are developing a good level of knowledge and understanding of the various features of the world and other communities.

Practitioners value parents' input and this is evident before children start at the setting. For example, flexible and responsive settling-in procedures are carried out. Parents are requested to contribute to the initial assessments of children's starting points on entry. The manager has recently reviewed the formats used to gather this information, and evaluation of these is positive as they now gather in-depth information related to ages of development. The setting use various methods of communication which help keep parents informed about their children's learning and development. For example, daily discussions help keep parents informed about their children's participation in various play experiences. Furthermore, written summaries of children's progress are shared with parents and they have regular opportunities to review their children's individual profile records. The effective use of exchange books provides additional opportunities where children, parents and practitioners add their written contributions. Children's progress and development are

shared with schools as they move into mainstream education. Teachers are invited into the setting to observe children, and key practitioners accompany children on additional visits to the feeder school. Effective transition procedures support children with the next step in their learning. For example, practitioners use planned group times as opportunities to hold discussions and display school uniforms. However, there is potential to strengthen the good transition procedures further, such as building on how children are prepared for the next stage of learning.

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

The majority of children arrive happy and demonstrate their familiarity with routine activities. For example, they accompany their parents or carers to carry out self-registration and hang up their bags and belongings together. Practitioners greet children warmly as they arrive and provide additional support and reassurance to those who have recently started at the setting. Consequently, children start to form trusting relationships with practitioners, who are responsive and empathetic to their individual needs. An effective key-person approach is used to promote and support the emotional development of children. Regular discussions held between the key person and parents help to ensure that children's individual care needs are known and fully promoted. Relevant information about children's health and medical needs is obtained before children start. This information, alongside identified training and guidance from healthcare professionals, helps to ensure that practitioners have the knowledge and skills to promote children's individual needs. Therefore, children are emotionally prepared for their transition into the setting.

The indoor environment in the two playrooms is organised into areas of continuous provision where children can initiate their own play experiences using the good range of resources provided. Practitioners organise the space well to provide a good range of play experiences for children, both indoors and outdoors. As a result, children show high levels of interest and motivation during their self-chosen play. For example, older children in particular positively interact with each other as they use various resources while they play together. They use hollow plastic discs to create their costumes as they act out characteristics of their favourite superhero. All children enjoy playing in the well-resourced outdoor area. They participate in a wealth of play experiences in this space, which effectively promotes their varying levels of physical development. For example, they enjoy using the wheeled vehicles as they skilfully manoeuvre around a designated play area. Other children enjoy exploring sensory play experiences, such as sand and water trays, watering their sunflowers and making marks using chalk. As a result, children acquire good levels of physical skill and ability.

Children are developing their knowledge and understanding of keeping themselves safe because practitioners routinely promote and encourage them to consider aspects of safety. For example, they use developmentally appropriate language as they remind children how to play safely and take turns in their play. Children demonstrate their sense of belonging and security as they carry out routine activities, such as completing self-registration alongside their parents and carrying out personal hygiene routines. Systems are in place which record details of the intimate care routines carried out on children as

required. Children show confidence and good levels of self-awareness as they politely ask to go to the toilet or ask for support from practitioners. Consequently, children are developing awareness at managing their personal needs relative to their stage of development. Furthermore, practitioners act as good role models and this helps children to further develop their personal, social and emotional development. As a result, children are developing a good understanding of how to behave. Children are provided with a good range of healthy options at snack time. Practitioners interact well with children during this routine and use appropriate language to talk to children about what food they are having. Children are encouraged to participate in the preparation of their snack as they use cutlery to spread the toppings over their crackers. They enjoy this social time together as they interact positively with each other and practitioners present.

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

The manager and practitioners have a secure knowledge and understanding of the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. The manager, who is the designated safeguarding officer, and all practitioners have attended relevant safeguarding training. This has helped to consolidate their understanding of the appropriate procedures to follow, should child protection concerns or managing allegations against adults arise. Clearly displayed safeguarding procedures detailing the relevant contact details help to further support practitioners' knowledge in dealing with any safeguarding concerns. Clear recruitment and vetting procedures ensure that the suitability of practitioners is checked. Detailed induction procedures include relevant information to help practitioners understand their roles and responsibilities in order to support the welfare of children who attend. Risk assessments are effectively carried out detailing potential hazards across all areas used by children. Practitioners check all areas daily to help to make sure children remain safe. These are regularly reviewed to ensure they remain accurate and reflect any changes made to practice. Furthermore, the manager ensures children's safety is given priority throughout each session. For example, self-registration is used when children access the outdoors during continuous provision, and walkie talkies are used to exchange information when the outdoor area is in use. As a result, children's safety and welfare are effectively promoted.

The manager demonstrates an ongoing commitment towards improving the quality of care and learning for children who attend the setting. She evaluates the service provided using Ofsted's online self-assessment tool, and action plans detail ongoing improvements made to progress, such as changes made to the outdoor play area. The committee take an active role in supporting the manager and regular discussions take place which ensure they are aware of the setting's priorities. The small team work well together, which reflects in the happy and welcoming environment provided. The manager and deputy are effective in supervising and supporting practitioners using ongoing informal discussions, targeted training and a buddy system for new staff. The introduction of peer observations helps practitioners to reflect on their delivery of good quality care and interactions with children. Furthermore, annual appraisals and targeted professional development plans are used as tools to support and extend the development of practitioners. Although supervisions are carried out for all practitioners on a regular basis, these are not yet used

effectively to ensure that elements of high quality practice are consistently implemented. The manager recognises that development is required to raise the quality of supervisions further, in order to ensure they focus sharply on the evaluations of staff performance in order to raise the quality of consistent good practice. The manager understands fully her responsibilities in meeting the learning and development requirements. She ensures that children are fully supported, as practitioners observe and assess children's overall development. A good range of monitoring systems ensure that relevant information is recorded within children's individual profile documents. Furthermore, the deputy analyses children's individual assessments to ensure that those who require additional support receive appropriate intervention strategies and are closely monitored. Therefore, children make good progress in their learning because effective monitoring systems ensure that any gaps in progress are quickly identified and appropriate steps are taken to address these.

Partnerships with parents are given high priority as the manager and practitioners work closely with them in order to support children's individual care and learning needs. Furthermore, good links with other professionals are effectively managed. This exchange of information ensures that practitioners have an up-to-date knowledge and understanding of children's medical and learning needs. For example, practitioners have completed additional training in order to administer specialist medication. Policies and procedures are reviewed as necessary by the manager and these are shared with the committee and parents. Daily informal discussions and formal documents detailing children's development and learning provide parents with relevant information about children's individual care routines and learning needs. Parents speak very positively about the manager and practitioners and are extremely happy with the care and attention provided. Parents' comments state that practitioners are 'brilliant' and they are 'very happy' with the care and support provided. Children's views and interests are equally valued as the manager considers these when reflecting upon planning and making changes to the organisation of the environment. Close partnership with other professionals, including those from feeder schools, means that good arrangements are in place to effectively support children's next stage in their learning. Consequently, good relationships with parents, professionals and schools help promote continuity in children's care, which subsequently promotes their individual learning and emotional well-being.

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	EY269075
Local authority	St. Helens
Inspection number	848530
Type of provision	
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 5
Total number of places	30
Number of children on roll	51
Name of provider	Derwent Road Playgroup Committee
Date of previous inspection	14/07/2011
Telephone number	01744 20729

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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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