

Snakes and Ladders Playgroup

St Aidens Community Centre, Princes Road, Gosforth, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, Tyne and Wear, NE3 5NP

| | |
|--------------------------|------------|
| Inspection date | 18/06/2014 |
| Previous inspection date | 15/01/2010 |

| | | |
|--|-------------------------|---|
| 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

- Children enjoy a broad range of quality experiences linked directly to their interests and developmental needs. As a result, children make good progress in their learning and development.
- Staff make it clear to children that they expect them to act thoughtfully and safely. As a result, children feel safe, are kept safe and their behaviour is good.
- Children are safeguarded well in the playgroup as all staff are familiar with the comprehensive policies and their implementation. Children are well supervised and the premises are secure.
- Positive partnerships with parents and/or carers ensure that children receive good, consistent care in a playgroup that welcomes and actively encourages parental involvement in their children's care and learning.

It is not yet outstanding because

- Children have fewer opportunities to write outdoors. This is because the choice of writing tools and resources is not as wide ranging as the provision indoors.
- Opportunities to help parents gain a greater understanding of teaching and learning, and maximise their children's learning potential are not fully exploited.

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 throughout the playgroup in both indoor and outdoor spaces.
- The inspector looked at children's records, observation and assessment files, planning documentation and a selection of policies.
- The inspector spoke to the playgroup leader, staff and children throughout the inspection.
- The inspector took account of the views of parents and carers spoken to on the day.
- The inspector checked evidence of suitability and the qualifications of staff working with children, and the provider's self-evaluation.
- The inspector carried out a joint observation with the playgroup leader.

Inspector

Janet Fairhurst

Full report

Information about the setting

Snakes and Ladders Playgroup have been registered since 2003 and are on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. It is located in St. Aidens Community Centre in the Brunton Park area of Gosforth, Newcastle-upon-Tyne and operates from one room. The group have sole use of the large hall within the centre. Although there is no designated outdoor play space, staff use a grassed area adjacent to the centre and a nearby park. The playgroup employs nine members of childcare staff. Of these, eight hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3, including one with Qualified Teacher Status. The playgroup opens Monday, Wednesday and Friday term time only. Sessions are from 9am to 2pm. There are currently 38 children attending who are in the early years age group. The playgroup provides funded early education for three- and four-year-old children.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- enhance children's opportunities to further develop their emerging early writing skills by, for example, extending the range of tools for mark making outdoors, such as pencils, crayons and clipboards so children have choice and different surfaces to attempt their writing
- introduce more varied strategies for encouraging parental involvement in children's learning, for example, by inviting parents to workshops to enable staff to share what they have learnt through their training about specific initiatives, such as how to support children's early writing and reading skills.

Inspection judgements

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

Children make good progress in their learning and development. This is because staff have a secure understanding and knowledge of young children and how they learn. Staff use this well to create a rich and stimulating learning environment which contributes well to children's good achievement and personal development. Many interesting, attractive and open-ended activities are available each day. Consequently, children are engaged, motivated and become active learners. Staff carry out regular observations of what children know, understand, and can do. This information is used well to feed into the planning of what the children need to do next. Within the planning, there is a good mix of what staff have identified is the next step to improve the children's learning and the children's own individual interests. As a result, children enjoy their time in playgroup, grow in confidence and develop independence. This, along with children's good social skills and

attitudes to learning, means they are well prepared for the next stages in their learning. Good arrangements are in place to keep parents informed about the progress their children make. For example, staff share with them their children's 'learning journey' file. Staff also complete the progress check for children at aged two years with parents. This enables both parties to identify any individual falling behind their peers or below their expected achievement levels. However, opportunities to enhance parental knowledge of how children develop and learn, along with maximising children's learning potential are not fully exploited. For example, parents are not invited to workshops that provide additional opportunities for staff and parents to share information, and discuss how to further support children's learning.

Children's communication and language skills are encouraged because adults involve them in conversations about what they are doing. Children develop good relationships, playing together and chatting easily. They readily comment on things they have observed, they listen to and enjoy stories, and are becoming increasingly confident about taking part in group discussions. During play, staff take every opportunity to enhance children's learning in readiness for school. For example, they encourage them to talk about size, shape and colour during their play and use magnetic letters to promote children's understanding of letters and sounds. The environment is rich in print displayed on the walls and display boards, which is effective in supporting children's early literacy skills. Children have access to variety of books and space where they can relax and sit in comfort. Staff provide many good opportunities for children to practise their mark making skills. For example, a group of children enthusiastically participate in a shaving foam activity. Here, the staff draw the children's attention to the patterns they make as they swirl and smear the foam in the trays. By modelling how to create straight and wavy lines, the member of staff encourages the children to practise some of the skills needed to develop their early writing. However, these good opportunities are not fully extended outdoors to further strengthen the children's good literacy skills when playing outside. This is because staff do not always have a wide range of writing tools and resources, such as pencils, crayons and clipboards available to fully encourage children to write in all areas and for different purposes.

Children are encouraged to be imaginative and creative. They enjoy painting, playing with small world toys and equipment, and acting out roles in meaningful role play situations, such as the home area. Children's knowledge of the wider world is extended by visits from the police, paramedic and dentist. Through these visits, they start to develop an understanding of the role of the people who help us. Children begin to learn about technology by using interactive toys, such as communication boards which allow children to record and play back their own voice. Staff support this learning with regard to children's individual ability, as they know when to leave them to explore for themselves. The children's interest in the football world cup is exploited well by staff to help them learn about the wider world. For example, children learn about countries' flags and use a large world map to locate where they are. The playgroup does not have a designated enclosed outdoor space. However, staff make good use of the nearby play park where children can climb and practise their balancing skills. They also make use of the adjacent grassed area which is safely cordoned off. This enables children to enjoy playing outdoors, running around, throwing and catching balls.

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

Parents and children are warmly welcomed into the playgroup, starting with reassuring settling-in arrangements which help to develop close and caring relationships with all staff, and particularly with their key person. Staff work closely with parents during the settling-in sessions, and detailed information is recorded reflecting children's individual needs. This effectively promotes continuity in the children's care and supports their ongoing well-being. Children receive good reassurance throughout the session, and cuddles and kind words help them to feel safe and secure. There is a wide range of resources which are stored at a low-level. This means these are easily accessible and therefore children can make independent choices about their play.

A good emphasis is placed on promoting children's personal, social and emotional development. Staff provide children with very positive role models, speaking to children quietly and respectfully. Children's behaviour is very good. Positive friendships between children are clearly evolving, and this is evident as they play together well. Staff give them clear boundaries, encourage their sharing and taking turns, and make sure they know what is happening next. Staff consistently encourage and praise children's efforts, recognise their achievements and respond to their concerns. Children are encouraged to be independent for example, accessing their own resources, washing their hands and pouring their own drinks. These skills help children as they make the transition to school.

Children's specific health, dietary needs and allergies are well documented and understood by the staff team. A healthy lifestyle is encouraged and children keep active through regular opportunities to play outdoors or by taking part in physical play indoors. Children bring a packed lunch from home and parents are encouraged to follow the playgroups healthy eating policy. This is also reflected in the good attention given to making children's snacks provided by the playgroup which are healthy and nutritious. Children are kept safe as the premises is secure and free from hazards. Children are well supervised and risk assessments and comprehensive daily checks are used to effectively monitor their overall safety, with prompt action taken to reduce risks. Staff teach the children about keeping themselves and others safe. For example, an older child reminds his younger friend that he cannot go over the rope to retrieve his ball saying, 'no it's not allowed'.

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

The playgroup leader has a well-developed understanding of the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. Consequently, all aspects of children's learning and care are effectively promoted. Children are safeguarded well. Staff are diligent in child protection matters and fully understand their roles and responsibilities in protecting the children in their care. Procedures for vetting and assessing staff, including rigorous recruitment and induction processes, are effectively implemented. This ensures that all staff working with the children are suitable. Detailed risk assessments are carried out and all staff are committed to the safety and well-being of all of the children, who attend the playgroup. All staff receive a full induction to ensure that they understand all of the playgroup's policies and procedures. Annual appraisals and regular staff supervisions are undertaken to

monitor the continued professional development, conduct and training needs of staff. Regular team meetings and training also effectively support staff well in their daily work with the children.

The manager and staff plan for and consistently review the educational programme. They monitor children's learning to assess and track their progress so that they can identify where children need help. The manager monitors the practice of staff to ensure the delivery of activities promotes learning effectively at all times. Through supervision sessions, staff have opportunities to discuss their roles in the playgroup and areas for development. A number of staff have recently successfully completed level 3 training. The impact of staff qualifications on the quality of the teaching and learning experiences for children is positive. Staff explain through this training they have gained a better understanding of child development, and the importance of understanding when to intervene and when to stand back from children's play. Therefore, children make good progress in their development. Self-evaluation of the playgroup covers all aspects of the provision. Staff contribute suggestions and children have opportunities to express their views when they look through their learning journals. The playgroup leader invites parents to feedback their views on the service they receive, thereby ensuring staff are aware of their opinions. Recommendations from previous inspections are taken on board and promptly addressed.

Very positive partnerships between staff and parents ensure that children's needs are well met. Staff ensure that parents are kept informed of children's progress, through individual feedback about observations and access to children's development records. A newsletter, social network site and displays around the playgroup provide parents with additional information about the range of experiences enjoyed by their children. In addition, staff provide parents with some ideas as to how they can support their children's learning at home and in the playgroup through the book loan scheme. Parents spoken to during the inspection express positive views about the good level of care and education provided by the staff. Parents comment on the good level of information sharing and find the staff very approachable and helpful at all times. The playgroup leader is very much aware of the importance of partnership working with external agencies in ensuring that children are well supported when required.

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 | EY269789 |
| Local authority | Newcastle |
| Inspection number | 860738 |
| Type of provision | |
| Registration category | Childcare - Non-Domestic |
| Age range of children | 0 - 17 |
| Total number of places | 34 |
| Number of children on roll | 38 |
| Name of provider | Snakes and Ladders Playgroup Partnership |
| Date of previous inspection | 15/01/2010 |
| Telephone number | 07890020182 |

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance '*Complaints procedure: raising concerns and making complaints about Ofsted*', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

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.

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

Piccadilly Gate
Store St
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2012

