

Cathedral Playgroup

Catholic Social Centre, Balmoral Road, LANCASTER, LA1 3BU

Inspection date

15/07/2014

Previous inspection date

08/12/2011

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This inspection:

2

Previous inspection:

3

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 happy and settled in an environment where they are greeted with a friendly smile. Their emotional well-being is fostered well through the effective key-person systems that supports children's individual needs and interests.
- Children are fully safeguarded with staff who show a high regard for their safety. They have a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe because the staff effectively teach them this, skilfully linking to their play and learning.
- The quality of teaching is good. The manager and her team work extremely well together. They bring together their strengths to create a diverse and dynamic team who share ideas and teaching strategies to support all children in making good progress.
- Partnerships with the local school are strong. The staff use a range of effective teaching techniques and make enhancements to their setting to fully prepare children for their move to school. As a result, children benefit from smooth transitions.

It is not yet outstanding because

- Children with English as an additional language have fewer opportunities to view a wider range of words in their home languages within the environment.
- Children have less access to a variety of different reading materials, such as newspapers and home-made books, to extend their strong literacy skills further.

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 had a tour of the setting.
 - The inspector took account of the views from parents and carers spoken to on the day of the inspection.
 - The inspector held discussions with the children and staff on the day of the inspection.
 - The inspector observed children in the indoor and outdoor environments.
 - A joint observation was carried out with the manager of the setting.
- A range of documentation was looked at by the inspector. These included, children's observation and assessment records, planning documents, the policies and procedures, the setting's self-evaluation form, staff suitability checks and information provided to parents.

Inspector

Charlotte Bowe

Full report

Information about the setting

The Cathedral Playgroup was registered under a new committee in 2011 and is on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. It is situated in the heart of Lancaster and is managed by a committee. The playgroup serves the local area and is accessible to all children. It operates from within the cathedral hall and the setting have access to a large hall, toilet facilities and a kitchen. There is a secure outdoor play area for children to access. The playgroup employs six members of childcare staff. Of these, three hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3 and one holds an appropriate early years qualifications at level 2. The nursery opens Monday to Friday term time only. Sessions are from 9am until 1pm. Children attend for a variety of sessions. There are currently 33 children attending who are in the early years age group. The nursery provides funded early education for three- and four-year-old children. It supports a number of children who speak English as an additional language and children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. The playgroup is a member of the Pre-school Learning Alliance.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- enhance the already rich language environments to further support children with English as an additional language by, for example, displaying a range of words in their home languages within all of their play environments for them to observe
- extend the well-stocked reading areas further with a wider variety of literature, enhancing children's literacy skills by, for example, providing comics, newspapers, maps and photographic books made by the children, for them to observe.

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 given their starting points. The staff skilfully gather information from the parents on spidergrams to determine what children can already do as they begin at the setting. They complement this as they make their own initial observations within the setting, to fully determine children's unique starting points. On the spot observations are completed regularly and effectively capture children's achievements as they play. This supports staff in identifying where children are in their learning as they closely link this to the Early Years Foundation Stage. In addition, it clearly highlights the interests that children have and staff actively make enhancements to their setting to support children effectively. Assessments of children are conducted regularly and accurately record the progress that children are making towards the early learning

goals. The next steps in their learning are clearly identified and the staff record these on their individual planning boards so that they can support children through a good range of activities throughout their week. As a result, children make good progress in their learning and are ready for their next stages and for their future move on to school. Children with English as an additional language are well supported because the staff implement effective teaching strategies to support them in making good progress. For example, the staff work together with the family upon arrival to the setting and ask them for words to use within the setting to support children's home language. They store these in their files and use them with the children throughout their time at the setting as they confidently say familiar words in the child's home language. Picture cards are used to support children in expressing their needs and interests. However, although the environments are already rich in print in English, there are fewer examples of words in the various home languages of some children for them to observe and recognise. The staff are proactive in identifying where there are gaps in children's learning and readily support children with special educational needs and/ or disabilities. They work together with the parents and other professionals to support children through effective targets that are specific, measurable and achievable. As a result, all children are fully supported in making the best possible progress in their learning and development.

The quality of teaching is good. The staff are well qualified and have a very good understanding of how children learn. Children's next steps are well supported because they plan activities that challenge them to develop their knowledge and skills across all areas. Children develop their communication and language skills because the staff engage effectively with them during their play. They communicate with them using purposeful dialogue and ask a range of open-ended questions. For example, children begin to dress up and prepare for their pretend party. The staff skilfully join in and ask the children what they are dressing up as. Children respond appropriately and talk about getting married. They further support them in developing their creative and critical thinking skills by asking who they are going to marry and where the party is going to be. As a result, children develop their speech and language and are well-supported in developing and extending their own initiated play. Children learn to care for living things because the staff sensitively explain the need to be careful as they handle a ladybird that they have found. They encourage the children to take a closer look using the magnifying glass and ask them to talk about what they see. They then encourage the children to carefully place it into the natural bug house so that it can make itself a home. This ensures that children learn about living things and gain an awareness of the habitats that small creatures live in. Children develop their early reading skills as they confidently select their name and self-register as they arrive at the setting. The book areas are well stocked with a good range of books and supporting resources. However, the range of literature materials does not offer children opportunities to extend their understanding that print can be portrayed in different forms, such as, newspapers, comics, fact and fiction books and photographic books made by themselves. Children develop their early writing skills as they independently sign their name in the signing in book. This all means that children have depth and breadth in their learning and development across all areas.

Partnerships with parents are good. The staff work together with the parents to ensure that they are fully involved with their children's learning at every possible stage. The staff effectively communicate what children have learned during their time at the setting as

parents collect their children, and through the What we have done today sheets. The staff value the contributions from parents and actively encourage them to record their children's achievements from home. They skilfully use this information to complement children's learning within the setting. Children's learning journal files are well presented and contain a good range of observations, assessments and photographs of the children. Parents are encouraged to look at, and contribute to these at any time. Termly parents meetings provide them with an opportunity to look at these in more depth and to discuss their children's learning with their key person. As a result, children's learning is effectively complemented and a shared approach is fully embraced.

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

Children arrive at this welcoming setting happily because they are greeted with a friendly smile and reassured as parents leave. A robust induction procedure ensures that children's individual needs are effectively met. Children are given time to settle in their own time because the settling-in sessions are tailored around their individual needs. The staff know their children very well because they skilfully gather information from the parents relating to children's needs, interests and care routines as children begin at the setting. Close and trusting relationships are formed with their key person. The staff observe the children over a number of weeks to identify who they have made a special connection with before they allocate them a key person. As a result, children's emotional well-being is fostered well. Children are valued for who they are and are encouraged to talk about their special events during register time. Children delight as they talk about the colourful bracelets that they have made. The staff readily support children who are more reluctant to speak out in groups. For example, they listen to children who tell them about their recent visits to school and the uniforms they have bought in preparation. They explain this to the other children alongside them. The staff encourage the children to clap after children have told their news. This ensures that they feel valued and special for their achievements. As a result, children develop their self-esteem and self-confidence. Children socialise well at snack time and as they play together. This is because the staff are good role models and skilfully intervene to teach them how to respect each other and share their toys. Children are praised as they eagerly follow instructions and clear away their mats after register time. This ensures that they have a good awareness of the expectations of the setting. Consequently, children display positive behaviour.

The play environments are spacious, appealing and rich in print. They are creatively decorated with colourful display boards, posters and a wide array of children's work. The staff work very hard to ensure that the areas of play and a good range of activities are set up each day for the children to engage with. These are well resourced with a wide range of good quality toys and equipment that meet children's individual needs and interests. The staff have high expectations of children and organise the toys and equipment safely and effectively so that children can begin to make choices for themselves. Children confidently self-register using their name cards as they arrive in the morning and hang up their own coats and bags on their pegs. They independently pour their own milk for snack and help to clear away their dishes and empty their plates. Children independently choose whether to play indoors or outside and confidently help themselves to the accessible

resources. This means that they are independent in their learning in preparation for their move to school. The staff fully support children in their transition to school. They prepare them well as they make enhancements to their own setting so that children feel assured about their move. For example, older children begin to take books home in their book bags to share with their parents so that they are familiar with what happens at school. They enjoy dressing up in different uniforms in the role-play area and listen to stories about starting school. The staff have strong links with the nearby school and often take them to watch plays and take part in activities. They actively invite teachers into their setting to observe the children in an environment where they feel confident and secure. As a result, children are very well prepared for their move and benefit from smooth transitions.

Children develop their awareness of healthy eating practices because the staff provide healthy and nutritious snacks for them to eat. Children learn about the foods that are healthy because the staff teach them about this. They display posters around the kitchen area so that children develop a good understanding of what healthy foods look like. Children have opportunities for daily exercise and regular access to fresh air because their outdoor environment is freely accessible to them at all times. They develop their physical skills as they plant and dig in the compost area using a variety of garden tools. They have fun as they walk over the bridge and play on wheeled toys in the garden and enjoy going for walks to the nearby school. Children are taught to keep themselves safe because the staff teach them to hold hands and to stop, look and listen before crossing the road. They learn about stranger danger and the staff skilfully link this to children's play and learning. For example, after reading a popular children's story about a girl and three bears, the staff encourage the children to think of the reasons why they should not go into a stranger's house. They further support them as they sensitively explain this to the children. Children begin to manage risks for themselves as they balance along the train. The staff remind children to be careful as they walk over the rounded funnel at the end. This ensures that children develop a good awareness of safety.

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

The manager has a good understanding of her role and responsibility in meeting the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. The whole staff team have attended a safeguarding training course and regularly research the information provided on the Local Safeguarding Children Board website to keep abreast of any new developments. The staff have a firm understanding of what would alert them to any concerns and they clearly know the procedures that they would need to follow to protect children from harm. The staff have good systems in place to keep children safe. The comprehensive policies and procedures are well-written and the staff accurately reflect these in practice. Risks are effectively minimised because the staff conduct thorough daily checks on the equipment and resources. Children are supervised well by staff who show a high regard for their safety and well-being. The door to the hall is alarmed so that the staff are clearly alerted when it is opened and the external door is guarded by a member of staff as children access the toilet facilities. Robust recruitment

procedures ensure that children are cared for by suitable and experienced staff. For example, their suitability checks are swiftly carried out and references are sought from previous employers to ascertain that they are suitable, skilled and competent. Furthermore, the interview process ensures that the manager and the committee can clearly identify whether the candidates are skilled and experienced and can contribute to a team that work very well together. As a result, children are fully safeguarded.

The quality of teaching is good. The manager and her team of staff have a good understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage and a sound understanding of how children learn. They are well-qualified and, form a diverse and dynamic team who work very well together. They readily share ideas and teaching strategies to support children in making good progress towards the early learning goals. They accurately track children's progress through detailed and precise observations and assessments which clearly identify their next steps in learning. These are effectively supported through a good programme of activities that inspire and motivate them to learn and develop across all areas. As a result, children make good progress in their learning. All staff are committed to the work that they do and are effectively supported by the manager and committee. Monthly supervision meetings and yearly appraisals are an opportunity for the staff to discuss their progress and areas for improvement. Target plans are effectively implemented to support staff in developing their knowledge and skills as they attend training events linked to their individual needs. They confidently discuss what is working well and what needs to be improved each day, as they work together and hold regular meetings to discuss children's progress and to look at ways to enhance their setting. The staff show a true commitment to their role and strive to further improve their setting through regular and effective evaluations. They have successfully implemented the recommendations from their last inspection and these are having a positive impact on the children. The staff aspire to raise the quality of their setting and are currently working towards achieving an accredited quality award scheme. This all demonstrates that the staff show a clear determination to raise the quality of care and learning experiences for the children in their care.

Partnerships with parents are good. They report that they are assured that their children are happy and settled because they are always eager to go off and play when they arrive. They are happy with the progress that their children are making and feel fully involved as staff talk to them at the end of each session. Furthermore, they add that staff are knowledgeable and offer a great deal of support and guidance, tailored around their children's individual needs. Partnerships with others are strong. The staff work together with other agencies to fully support the children in their care. Good links have been formed with the local children's centre and the staff are confident to seek advice and support from their local authority teacher team. The staff regularly take the children to the nearby school to take part in Shake up, wake up sessions with the Reception class teacher. This ensures that children can become familiar with the environment that they are moving on to. Furthermore, the class teacher often comes into the setting with children who have previously attended to talk to the children about their move to school. The staff forward a transition document to the school so that they are fully aware of children's individual needs and where they are in their learning. As a result, children have continuity in their care, learning and development.

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	EY422400
Local authority	Lancashire
Inspection number	870165
Type of provision	
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 17
Total number of places	32
Number of children on roll	33
Name of provider	Cathedral Playgroup Committee
Date of previous inspection	08/12/2011
Telephone number	01524 32640

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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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Store St
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M1 2WD

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