

Emmanuel Stepping Stones Playgroup

Emmanuel Community Rooms, Emmanuel Complex, Thorpe Drive, Waterthorpe, Sheffield, S20 7JU

Inspection date	01/07/2014
Previous inspection date	13/07/2010

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

- The quality of teaching is good. Staff interact successfully with children during their play and extend learning through effectively using questioning techniques.
- Children display good dispositions for learning. They are inventive, and readily share ideas with each other, persist with problems and find their own solutions.
- Partnerships with parents are a strong feature of the playgroup. Consequently, parents are fully informed of their child's progress and activities.
- The provider monitors the playgroup effectively. She has a secure understanding of the strengths of the playgroup and the areas that she is targeting for development.
- The provider ensures that safeguarding is given a high priority. Systems for the safe recruitment of staff and monitoring of their ongoing suitability are rigorous. Good strategies are in place to teach children how to keep themselves safe.

It is not yet outstanding because

- Staff do not always seize the opportunity to enrich children's imaginative role-play activities, in a way that encourages children's use of expressive language.

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 looked at a sample of documentation including, evidence of suitability checks carried out on staff, staff qualifications, the playgroup's self-evaluation form and assessments of children's learning and development.
- The inspector observed teaching, learning and care practices in the playroom and the outdoor area.
- The inspector and registered provider undertook a joint observation of teaching practice and discussed this.
- The inspector took account of the views of parents who were spoken to on the day of inspection.
- The inspector spoke with children and staff during the inspection and held a meeting with the registered provider to discuss the leadership and management of the playgroup.

Inspector

Eleanor Proctor

Full report

Information about the setting

Emmanuel Stepping Stones Playgroup is managed by a voluntary management committee. It opened in 2009 and operates from a large hall within the Emmanuel Complex in Waterthorpe, Sheffield. The setting is registered on Early Years Register and compulsory part of the Childcare Register. There are currently 16 children on roll. The playgroup is open on Monday and Tuesday between 9am and 11.30am, term time only. Children have access to an outdoor play area. The playgroup supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. There are three members of staff who work with the children, all of whom hold an appropriate qualification.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- enhance the imaginative play experiences for children, for example, by encouraging them to explain their ideas, to raise children's use of expressive language to a higher level.

Inspection judgements

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

Overall, children in the playgroup benefit from effective teaching by this skilled staff team. As a result, they make good progress in all areas of their development. Children are provided with an appropriate balance of adult-led activities and opportunities to learn through their own play and experiences. Staff allow children to explore, experiment and find their own ways of doing things. When children play with the play dough they manipulate the dough, choose cutters and frequently stop to review their efforts and make changes. One child works so intently as her key-person watches and appreciates the learning that is taking place. Therefore, the key person does not interfere and interrupt this process. Staff offer sensitive support to extend learning with open-ended questions that stimulate children to think about what they are doing. For example, a member of staff joins in with children exploring the small world dinosaurs. She asks the children what sound the dinosaur might make and introduces vocabulary to describe this. Children listen carefully and use words, such as 'roaring' to describe what they hear. Children are inspired by the staff while playing with small world dinosaurs, to develop their mathematical skills. They are introduced to comparative language as they decide which legs are 'bigger' or 'smaller'. They then compare these with their own legs and decide the 'bigger' dinosaur legs are 'smaller' than their own legs. Children use technology with confidence and familiarity. For example, a child using a computer manipulates the controls and uses the mouse to operate the system.

Children develop good dispositions for learning, which supports their future learning when

they move onto school. Children are supported to plan their own activities, find the resources they want and learn how to solve problems for themselves. They are beginning to read and write as appropriate for their stage of development and they particularly enjoy story time, because staff engage children very well, encouraging children's responses to picture books and stories. For example, the children enjoy looking at books containing photographs of themselves. Children particularly enjoy participating in their favourite activities, such as painting on the paint wall, and show that they are highly motivated to learn and consistently display the characteristics of effective learning. However, there are occasions when staff do not seize upon the opportunities presented through children's spontaneous play, to enrich children's expressive language.

Staff demonstrate a good knowledge and understanding of their own key children. Strong partnerships with parents are effective in building a shared understanding of children's needs and abilities. This process starts with a discussion and an assessment of children's starting points when they first come to the playgroup. Parents say they have regular information about their children's achievements and activities. Consequently, children are provided with continuity of learning between the playgroup and home. Parents are fully included in the progress check for children between the ages of two and three years. There is a well-established system for observation, assessment and planning. These ensure that children are observed and assessed in all areas of development. This means that any areas which require more support are promptly identified and action taken.

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

Children are confident, secure and very much at home in the playgroup. The strong attachments staff build with them fosters their personal, social and emotional development very effectively. Children are emotionally strong and very well prepared for changes in their lives, such as moving to school. Behaviour in the playgroup is very good. Staff provide good role models, this is evident in the way they listen to children and give them time to explain themselves. This results in children listening to one another as they make plans together and organise play. Children are given consistent expectations by all staff, which helps them to feel secure. They play with friends and obviously enjoy each other's company. Staff praise their efforts, which gives children a positive sense of themselves and their own abilities. Children are eager to share their successes with staff and are proud of their achievements, such as when they thread the wooden vegetables. The very positive response from the staff inspires children to try again.

Children develop a good understanding of keeping themselves safe. Staff give constant reminders of safety with explanations. This means that children understand how their actions affect the safety of themselves and others. The playgroup staff teach children how to safeguard their own welfare. Robust strategies are in place to support children if they are unwell. The administration of medication is carefully recorded and consent from parents are gained for each and every medicine. All of the staff have appropriate first-aid training. This means that children are well cared for, should they have an accident or injury.

Children's developing independence is given prominence. Staff have a secure

understanding of how routine activities are a key part of children's learning and development. Consequently, they utilise and value these opportunities. Children organise themselves well. For example, children fetch their own hats, putting them on by themselves, and then calmly line up to play outside. Snack time provides a valuable social time where children sit together and chat freely to their friends and staff. Parents are given guidance on healthy foods, such as fruit and vegetables. This, together with the nutritious snacks that are provided, ensures they benefit from a healthy diet.

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

The provider and staff give the safeguarding of children's welfare high priority. Recruitment procedures are robust in checking the suitability of staff to work with children. Staff's continuing suitability is monitored effectively because staff know they have to disclose any changes and sign regular declarations to confirm this. The playgroup has an appropriate safeguarding policy in place, which is effectively implemented. Staff demonstrate a secure understanding of the signs and symptoms of possible abuse. They have a clear knowledge of how to proceed with the reporting of concerns, including taking action themselves should they feel this is necessary. The provider has a secure understanding of the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. All required documentation is in place to meet these requirements and ensure that children's welfare is promoted.

The provider monitors and evaluates the playgroup provision very well. She has high ambitions and expectations of the staff team. The welfare of the children is at the heart of her plans to continuously improve the service offered. Staff receive good levels of support and supervision. The provider is frequently in the playroom and the outdoor area, observing and modelling good practice. New staff receive a thorough induction to ensure they have a secure understanding of their role and responsibilities. Their training needs are established through the supervision and appraisal system, which ensures these are well targeted. Training courses are followed up because staff evaluate what they have learned, reflect on how this will change their practice, and have a positive impact on the outcomes for children. This ensures that new methods and ideas are embedded in practice to benefit the children. Regular team meetings support a shared ethos from the team as a whole. This provides consistency and continuity for the children.

Partnership working is a strong feature of the playgroup. The views of parents are actively sought and acted upon. An example of this is the introduction of a regular parents' review sheet, so that parents have regular information about their child's progress. Parents spoken to at the inspection express a high regard for the quality of the provision. They feel their children make good progress and are prepared well for school. Parents say they are listened to and feel included and informed. The provider makes good use of the support offered by the local authority. She works closely with the advisor to evaluate and improve systems, documentation and practice in the playgroup. The provider's enthusiasm and pursuit of high standards is communicated effectively, to create a committed and dedicated staff team.

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	EY401401
Local authority	Sheffield
Inspection number	870899
Type of provision	
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 17
Total number of places	26
Number of children on roll	16
Name of provider	Emmanuel Stepping Stones Playgroup Committee
Date of previous inspection	13/07/2010
Telephone number	01142477698

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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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