

Four Oaks Pre-School Playgroup

Four Oaks Junior & Infant School, Edge Hill Road, SUTTON COLDFIELD, West Midlands, B74 4PA

Inspection date

12/09/2014

Previous inspection date

13/07/2011

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This inspection:

3

Previous inspection:

2

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

- Children are happy, settled and develop strong emotional attachments to their key-person and other staff.
- Staff provide an enabling environment both inside and outside, so that children actively initiate their learning and expand their own ideas.
- The manager and staff have a good awareness of child protection issues. They know how to report concerns in order to safeguard children in their care.
- All parents are warmly welcomed and staff make the time to talk to parents daily to share information. Consequently, parents are happy with the service provided.

It is not yet good because

- The arrangements for supporting children's individual learning are not robust because information gathered about children's starting points does not always contain sufficient detail and staff do not consistently observe, assess and plan for children's next steps.
- Staff do not consistently support children in following good health and hygiene practices.
- Self-evaluation is not sufficiently robust to fully identify and prioritise all areas for improvement.

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 in both the inside and outside learning environment.
- The inspector spoke with staff at appropriate times throughout the inspection.
- The inspector looked at activity planning, records of children's learning and a selection of policies and records.
- The inspector checked evidence of suitability and qualifications of staff.
- The inspector took account of the views of parents spoken to on the day.

Inspector

Trisha Turney

Full report

Information about the setting

Four Oaks Pre-School Playgroup has been operating for 25 years and is run by a committee. It was registered in 1993 on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. The playgroup operates from self-contained premises located within the grounds of Four Oaks Primary School in Sutton Coldfield. There is an enclosed outdoor area available for play. The group is open term time only, from Monday to Friday. Sessions are from 9am until 3pm Monday and Wednesday, from 9am until 12 noon on Tuesday and Thursday, and from 8.45am until 12.45pm on Friday. There are currently 40 children on roll in the early years range. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The playgroup provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children. The setting supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. There are eight members of staff who work with children. Of these, one member of staff holds Early Years Professional Status, six members of staff hold relevant childcare qualifications at level 3 and one member of staff holds a level 2 qualification.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- ensure assessment procedures begin with clear information from parents about children's starting points and capabilities, and are used consistently across the playgroup to assess children's development
- monitor the quality of assessment processes to ensure that all staff use regular observation and assessment of children's achievements, to plan precisely for individual children's next steps in learning.

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

- improve good health and hygiene routines by ensuring these are consistently followed, particularly in regard to snack time procedures
- review the processes for self-evaluation in order to precisely identify all weaknesses in the provision and plan effective strategies to bring about rapid and continuous improvement.

Inspection judgements

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

Staff demonstrate their secure understanding of how to capture children's interest by providing a range of activities to enhance learning both inside and outdoors. They ensure there is an appropriate balance of adult-initiated and child-led activities to promote children's development and, at times, children's learning is enhanced well. There is a range of quality resources available, which support and enhance learning. Children enjoy participating in the range of planned and freely chosen learning experiences provided for them by staff who demonstrate a clear understanding of how children learn. As a result, children freely explore their environment and are able to develop their sensory awareness, as they investigate various materials, such as sand. Children also enjoy exploring creative activities, such as using cotton reels and paint to create pictures for their under the sea display. Staff use thoughtful questioning to encourage children to talk about the different colours they see as they mix the paints. Children enjoy making marks with pens, or using their fingers and hands in the paint. This helps to stimulate their ability to use equipment and resources, as well as allowing them to develop creatively.

Staff support children to extend their communication and language skills through regular structured activities that weave learning new vocabulary into all children's experiences. For example, staff enthusiastically support language and large muscle development as they join in with children at the start the day for singing and dancing to action songs. Staff also use a range of questions and comments to promote mathematical development and, as a result, children use mathematical language spontaneously in their play. For example, as children paint pictures they say, 'it has got two wheels'. Staff talk regularly with children in effective ways. They listen to what children say and do, ensuring children feel valued and boosting their self-esteem and confidence.

There are some procedures in place for assessment and tracking children's progress. However, staff do not always plan appropriate activities that focus specifically on what individual children need to learn next. This means that children's good progress is not assured and so they are not consistently developing good levels of skills in readiness for school. Key persons observe children in their key groups and use some observations to assess their learning needs. However, observation and assessment is not carried out frequently enough to be effective. This results in some key persons not having a sharp enough focus on individual children's development. Nonetheless, children enjoy the activities offered and their good relationships with staff support them to be enthusiastic learners. Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities are given appropriate support and make satisfactory progress according to their individual starting points.

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

Children are settled and comfortable in the playgroup environment. They enter the setting with confidence and become engaged in play almost immediately. Those requiring a little

reassurance approach their favourite adult for a cuddle before beginning their busy playgroup session. Parents are invited to stay with children who have just joined the playgroup and staff follow an effective settling-in procedure to help children to feel settled, comfortable and relaxed. Parents play an active role in this process and help to guide their children's early days at playgroup. As a result, children settle into the playgroup very quickly, and are confident and happy. They choose their own resources and make choices about whether they will play indoors or outdoors for the majority of the time. Parents share relevant information with key-persons about their children's likes and dislikes. This helps their child's key persons to form a clear picture of their home environment. However, the information shared is not always robust enough to enable the key person to form a precise initial assessment of the child's capabilities or what they need to learn next.

Staff support children's emerging understanding of the importance of a healthy lifestyle that involves physical exercise and a healthy diet. Children have plenty of opportunities for fresh air and exercise through daily access to the secure outdoor environment. Good use is made of the outdoor space to cover all seven areas of learning. They enjoy both planned and freely chosen learning outdoors to enhance their development in all areas. Staff provide nutritious snacks, which include fruit and vegetables, and children's individual dietary requirements are met. However, there are times when children's early understanding of good health and hygiene practices is not promoted as well. For example, staff do not always remind children to wash their hands before eating and children take fruit and toast from a shared plate, which puts children at risk of cross infection.

Children learn about the needs and feelings of others through sharing, taking turns and helping others. Their behaviour is good as staff share consistent expectations and act as effective role models. Children willingly take on responsibility, for example, for tidying away equipment at the end of the session. The playgroup is comfortable and children move freely and safely in their environment because staff take appropriate steps to ensure that hazards are kept to a minimum. Gentle reminders from staff help children to understand about keeping themselves safe as they play and use a variety of equipment. Complying with these expectations means that children enjoy their playgroup experiences and have some emerging skills to underpin their eventual move to school.

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

The manager understands her responsibility in meeting the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. Recruitment procedures for new staff are followed, ensuring that those working with children are suitable to do so. A record is maintained of suitability checks and children are never left alone with anyone whose suitability has not been verified. A system of supervision is established to help identify the strengths of staff and to identify any training needs. This helps to promote positive outcomes for children. Staff are aware of the signs and symptoms of abuse, to help them recognise when children may be at risk. They know how to report concerns in line with Local Safeguarding Children

Board procedures. The playgroup premises are safe and necessary steps are taken to limit risks, so that children can play safely indoors and outside.

Staff are enthusiastic and motivated. They understand how children learn and have knowledge of the seven areas of learning. They use their knowledge to plan a range of activities that help to promote children's learning. The manager has some systems in place for reviewing and evaluating the educational programme and the overall quality of teaching. For example, the setting has received accreditation under the Effective Early Learning Programme, which places particular emphasis upon evaluation, development and improvement of quality and effectiveness. As a result, the playgroup has identified some areas for improvement. For example, the programme identified that fewer boys are engaging in activities to develop their early writing skills. Consequently, staff have introduced new initiatives to help extend learning in this area, such as increasing mark-making tools in the outdoor area. However, the overall self-evaluation of the provision is not robust and the manager does not have an effective method to target specific areas of weakness. For example, weaknesses in the use of the playgroup's observation and assessment systems mean that not all children's progress is tracked precisely and this affects staff's ability to make sure that children make consistently good levels of progress. Key persons also obtain limited information from parents about their child's developmental starting points. This inhibits them in forming an accurate picture of children's capabilities on entry to the provision.

Staff understand that developing strong relationships with parents and other external agencies has a significant impact on children's learning and development. Partnerships with parents are generally secure and parents are provided with clear, written information about the playgroup. Key persons share a verbal account of children's days with parents on collection, and encourage parents to view records and discuss their child's progress. Parents receive regular newsletters and are encouraged to share details of children's achievements at home. Parents spoken to during the inspection are extremely complimentary about the playgroup and state that their children are very happy and are making progress there. They find staff, friendly, approachable and welcoming. Staff have close links with the on-site school and are developing links with other early years settings, which children attend. This enables them to complement the learning that takes place across other aspects of children's lives. Close liaison with the on-site school and sensitive support provided by staff ensures that children are emotionally prepared for their move on to school.

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. We re-inspect nurseries and pre-schools judged as requires improvement within 12 months of the date of 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		There were no children present at the time of the inspection. The inspection judgement is that the provider continues to meet the requirements for registration.
Not met		There were no children present at the time of the inspection. 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	229110
Local authority	Birmingham
Inspection number	866418
Type of provision	
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 17
Total number of places	30
Number of children on roll	40
Name of provider	Edge Hill Pre-School Playgroup Committee
Date of previous inspection	13/07/2011
Telephone number	07966 147 584

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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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