

St Michael's Playgroup

Church House, Mount Pleasant, Louth, Lincolnshire, LN11 9DR

Inspection date	18/09/2014
Previous inspection date	09/12/2013

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's learning opportunities are effectively evaluated through looking at what they have learned, how they learn best and through talking to parents. Consequently, children are making good progress through challenging experiences that interest, motivate and prepare them well for future learning.
- Staff work well together alongside the manager who regularly observes and monitors staff performance. Consequently, teaching is consistently good and children continue to receive a good quality of learning opportunities.
- A cohesive staff team provide a warm, welcoming family atmosphere that helps children settle well and build strong positive relationships. As a result, children are well supported emotionally and are ready to learn.
- Children remain safe and secure while at the play group. This is because good policies and procedures with regard to safeguarding children are implemented by vigilant staff, who also teach children how to keep themselves safe.
- The manager and provider work well together and are committed to developing the playgroup. They take well-targeted steps to address any areas identified for improvement.

It is not yet outstanding because

- Staff do not consistently encourage children's critical thinking through supporting them in making predictions and testing out their own ideas.

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 the playroom and in the outside area.
The inspector checked evidence of staff suitability to work with children and the provider's self-evaluation and action plans in place, in order to secure continued improvement.
- The inspector spoke with the manager, staff and children at appropriate times throughout the inspection.
- The inspector carried out a joint observation with the playgroup manager.
- The inspector took into account the views of parents, local authority representatives and members of the committee spoken to during the inspection.

Inspector

Kathy Kilner

Full report

Information about the setting

St Michael's Playgroup was registered in 1986 and is on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. It is situated in a room in St. Michael's Church House, which is located near the centre of the market town of Louth, Lincolnshire. The playgroup is accessible to all children. There is an enclosed outdoor play area. The playgroup is managed by a voluntary committee and employs five members of childcare staff. Of these, three hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3, one holds an early years degree and the manager has Early Years Professional status. The playgroup opens Monday to Friday all year round. Sessions are from 9am until 3pm. Children attend for a variety of sessions. There are currently 20 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.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- maximise opportunities for children to develop their thinking skills by encouraging them to predict and then test out their own ideas, for example, by letting the children explore why it might be better to move the guttering away from the wall.

Inspection judgements

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

The manager and staff in the playgroup have a good understanding of how young children learn. They use this knowledge to support learning and consequently, teaching is good. Staff observe children in self-chosen play and document their learning in a 'learning journal'. Children's next steps are clear and precise with relevant learning opportunities planned to meet them. Staff have reviewed the information they ask for from parents as children begin their time at the playgroup. As a result, a more comprehensive document is in place to include, for example, how children communicate and who they like to talk to. This means that staff and parents collaboratively inform more robust information to support starting points. Staff have strong relationships with parents and encourage them to support the learning observed in the playgroup. New ways to complement this have been implemented since the last inspection and continue to develop to improve outcomes for children. Children who speak English as an additional language or have special educational needs and/or disabilities are well supported. All children's individual progress is effectively monitored by each child's key person. This includes the progress check for children between the ages of two-and-three years, which is shared with parents and used to address any areas of concern to better support future learning. In addition, staff work effectively with external professionals, to ensure continuity of care and learning. Staff

meet with teachers from local schools and complete a summary of children's progress to share with them. This supports the move to school and helps to prepare children for their next stage in learning.

Children are well supported in their communication, personal, social, emotional and physical development. Staff speak clearly and slowly so that children can absorb what they are saying. Children's immediate interests are noted and sounds are added to support and consolidate learning. For example, as children become fascinated by a fly, staff make a buzzing noise and repeat the word 'fly.' Children are bathed in descriptive words as staff describe objects to support and extend their language. A large mat, for example, is described as, 'soft and squishy'. Staff encourage the children to recall a well-known tale and ask questions that make them think such as, 'I wonder what the bears will do now?' This fosters their critical thinking. However, sometimes opportunities to further encourage children's critical thinking through supporting them in making predictions and testing out their own ideas are missed. For example, the children become absorbed in rolling conkers down some guttering but they continually hit a wall. Children are obviously concerned by this so staff turn the guttering and the supporting structure the other way, without consulting the children for their ideas.

Specific areas of learning are also well supported in both independent play and planned activities. Children are supported in their interest in the natural world as they use magnifying glasses to discover spider's webs and rain drops on the grass. Children who are beginning to count are supported as they randomly count holes made with their fingers in dough, or conkers in a dish. Consequently, good use is made of incidental learning. Routines are used as a further source of learning. Older children are challenged by open questions that prompt mathematical thinking very effectively during routines. At snack time they are given plates to hand out and are asked if there are enough and then, how many more they need. Children are developing a love of books as they sit and share stories individually with a member of staff and are able to comment and turn the pages. Small group story time using a book and resources to support the words help children understand how words have meaning. Older children know the letter their name begins with and are able to recognise some familiar letters. This is because the staff support children's listening skills and plan activities to develop sound recognition. For example, 'listening walks' further support hearing and recognising sounds, which prepares children for later reading and writing.

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

Many of the children in the playgroup have only just begun their time there, but already display secure attachments to their key-person. Children eagerly point to pictures of themselves with their key-person. Those children who are initially unsettled are supported and are able to take their time to observe and join in when they are ready to do so. Good communication with parents at the beginning of the session and at the end, reassures both parents and children. Staff have observed all children and know what they are interested in and they use this knowledge to settle children very effectively. Children visit the playgroup before they start there, which helps with the move from home to the playgroup. Consequently, children demonstrate their sense of security and belonging as

they interact positively with adults, other children and visitors.

Children's behaviour at the playgroup is good because staff consistently deal with any minor disagreements. Children are reminded that they have to share and take turns and that they must be gentle with each other. Staff explain to children why they are not to carry out inappropriate actions, rather than just saying no. They successfully vary their tone of voice so that children know they have to listen and respond appropriately. Children are asked to tidy away resources so that they do not fall or, for example, break the chalk they have left on the floor. This supports children in considering how to keep themselves safe and in developing independence.

Staff promote and support children's understanding of healthy foods. Older children help to prepare nutritious snacks and children pour their own drinks. The children plant vegetables such as, potatoes. They take the produce home and parents report to staff how delicious that potato tasted when they have grown it themselves. The indoor and outdoor environments are well resourced. Staff have created an indoor environment where children have room to explore on the floor, using their entire bodies to investigate. The large inviting outdoor area invites children to enthusiastically and competently ride bikes and scooters, climb and balance on the tepee and relax with books in the tent. Children have independent access to the outdoor area, as a result, take their learning seamlessly from the indoors to the outdoors. This fosters their individual characteristics of learning.

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

All staff have a sound understanding of their responsibility with regard to keeping children safe. This is because the manager ensures that all staff have undertaken safeguarding training. Furthermore, safeguarding is discussed at staff meetings. This ensures that she knows that staff know the possible indicators of abuse and how to proceed, should they be concerned regarding the welfare of any child. All staff are very clear about the procedure to follow should there be any allegations against any adults who have regular contact with the children. Recruitment procedures are robust and ensure that all members of staff are thoroughly vetted and are suitable to work with children. The manager has implemented comprehensive policies with regard to the use of social media and uses this effectively and safely to engage with parents. Consequently, children remain safe and secure while at the nursery.

The manager has led a concerted drive to meet the actions raised at the last inspection. She has researched and found ways to implement solid starting points informed by parents. Staff practice is monitored and teaching is consistently good, with staff offering quality learning experiences in incidental and planned learning. The manager oversees the monitoring of learning and development and this is helping children to make more rapid progress. Training to support practice is clearly focused on outcomes for children such as, a communication training programme that has enhanced practice in effectively supporting children's language skills.

The manager, with excellent support from her local authority and chair of the committee, has worked extremely hard to effect successful changes since the last inspection. She has monitored and evaluated comprehensive action plans to successfully meet all actions and recommendations raised. Self-evaluation is realistic and honest and has identified other areas she has plans to address. The manager actively supports training and ensures that staff cascade the knowledge gained to benefit other staff and ultimately, the children. The proactive approach to sharing information with other providers, strong partnerships with parents, school and other agencies makes a strong contribution to meeting children's needs. This collaborative approach enables everyone involved with the children to work together to effectively support children's progress in learning.

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	509653
Local authority	Lincolnshire
Inspection number	962684
Type of provision	
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 17
Total number of places	18
Number of children on roll	20
Name of provider	St Michael's Playgroup of Louth Committee
Date of previous inspection	09/12/2013
Telephone number	07904 441359

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

