

Spring Lodge Playgroup & Out of School Clubs

Spring Lodge, Powers Hall End, Witham, Essex, CM8 2HE

Inspection date	11/11/2014
Previous inspection date	11/08/2011

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	3
	Previous inspection:	3
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 safeguarded appropriately as the staff know the steps to take if they have concerns about children in their care.
- Staff form partnerships with parents and professionals to promote a continuity of care.
- Children who speak English as an additional language gain support to help them settle and communicate their needs.
- Children's behaviour is promoted well as staff are positive role models and give clear explanations for appropriate behaviour.

It is not yet good because

- The monitoring of staff's performance is not rigorous enough to promote a consistently good quality of teaching, as a result, not all children make good progress.
- Children's learning outside is not promoted well due to staff's limited understanding of the importance of outdoor play and the impact it has on children's progress.
- Children are not able to freely express themselves during creative activities because at times staff do not encourage children to follow their own ideas.
- Children's understanding of people and their communities is limited due to a lack of positive image resources.

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 and examples of teaching, inside and outside.
- The inspector held discussions with the manager, staff, children and parents at appropriate times during the inspection.
- The inspector conducted a joint observation with the manager.
The inspector looked at a range of records, including policies, information about staff qualifications and vetting checks and children's learning and development records.
- The inspector took into consideration the setting's self-evaluation programme.

Inspector

Claire Parnell

Full report

Information about the setting

Spring Lodge Playgroup and Out of School Club opened in 1990 and is run by Witham Community Association. It operates from one room within Spring Lodge Community Centre in Witham. The setting serves the local community. The setting opens five days a week from 9am to 3pm, term time only. The setting also offers a holiday club for children aged two to eight years during the summer holidays, from 8.30am until 5.30pm. Children attend a variety of sessions. Children are cared for in one room and have access to an enclosed outdoor play area. There are currently 32 children in the early years age range. The setting receives funding for the provision of free early years education for three- and four-year-olds. The setting supports children who speak English as an additional language. There are currently seven staff working directly with the children, six of whom have appropriate early years qualifications at level 2 and 3. The setting is registered on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- improve the quality of teaching by putting in place appropriate monitoring and training arrangements, including sharing examples of good practice between staff, so that children receive consistent and effective teaching methods, in order to support children's good progress.

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

- develop further staff's understanding of the importance of outdoor play and how this impacts on children's learning, to enable them to plan for and provide resources to support all areas of learning outside and ensure children's development is fully optimised at this time
- extend children's experiences of creativity by providing a wider range of open-ended activities, carefully planned support from staff and opportunities to allow children to freely express themselves within art and design
- provide further resources and learning opportunities to support children understanding of the differences in today's society.

Inspection judgements

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

The quality of teaching is variable. Some staff provide children with challenging, well-planned activities that promote children's learning, particularly their communication and language. For example, some staff offer challenges and questions according to children's abilities during a mark-making activity. This supports some children to explore marks, recognise the letters linked to their name and develop their language and speaking. Whereas, other staff have a limited understanding of how children learn and how they can provide support to promote children's inquisitiveness and curiosity to learn. This is particularly apparent with planned, adult-led creative activities. For example, children are provided with pre-cut petals and told how to glue the petals to make a poppy for Remembrance Day. This results in limited creativity for children to freely express themselves through art and design activities. Furthermore, the quality of learning opportunities in the indoor and outdoor environments are very different. For example, indoor resources are freely accessible to children to support their independence and self-selection. These resources promote all the areas of learning. However, children's learning outdoors is limited due to the lack of resources available to them, promoting all the areas of learning. This is because staff have a very limited understanding of the importance of outdoor play and the positive impact that this has on children's learning. Therefore, children receive less support and enthusiasm to explore and become active learners.

Children who speak English as an additional language receive appropriate support to help them to settle and to help them to communicate their needs. Staff are quick to gain information from parents to support children's communication and language and to positively reflect their home language. Children are confident to ask for additional resources and can help themselves to indoor toys and equipment in drawers and trays at their level. Children show some curiosity to learn about technology and staff support this by allowing children to take photographs themselves, sharing the children's photographs with others. Children develop a keen awareness of numbers and shape through activities involving dough and cutters. During this activity, staff use effective questions to help children to talk about the texture of dough and the shapes they are making.

The assessment programme is an ongoing and improving system. Children's starting points are gained during their first settling week from parents and other settings that the children have attended. Staff are developing a clear understanding of how to observe, record and use records of children's progress effectively to plan for the next steps in their learning. Tracking systems are in place to monitor children's progress and to identify any areas of concern to enable staff to implement early intervention to close the gaps in their learning. Parents provide information to staff about children achievements at home and staff provide information and advice as to how to support children's learning at home. Parents are actively involved in identifying children's next steps in their learning on a regular basis. The assessment programme allows staff to provide the experiences and learning opportunities to promote children's readiness for school.

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

Children are happy to come to the setting and show their confidence to explore the resources and equipment available to them. Staff build caring and trusting relationships with the families and the children, creating a friendly atmosphere. Staff provide a flexible settling-in process to cater for each child's experiences that promotes children's emotional well-being. The key-person system is successful and promotes children's self-confidence and self-assurance as well as developing relationships with all staff and children. Children develop a bond with particular staff to support their confidence and independence in their learning. The key-person gathers important information from parents about each child to ensure their individual care and development needs are met. Children are very well behaved. This is due to the staff acting as positive role models to children, helping each other and working together as a team. Staff provide clear explanations for children to learn about the impact any inappropriate behaviour has on others. This positively supports children's relationships with their peers, promoting sharing, taking turns and negotiating in their play. This helps children to develop some of the skills they need to be ready for school.

Children's physical skills are supported well. Children use equipment well outside to climb, slide, pedal, run and jump. Indoors, staff introduce parachutes and games to introduce different physical movements. Children gain fresh air most days. However, the staff's lack of understanding about the importance of outdoor play has an impact on children's emotional well-being. This is because children are not motivated to experience a range of stimulating learning opportunities outside to fully support their all-round development. Children are developing a clear understanding of good hygiene procedures. They receive positive support from staff about washing their hands. For example, they understand the routines of the day, such as visiting the bathroom before eating their snacks and lunch. Children are learning to keep themselves safe due to the staff's clear explanations of safety rules, such as pushing chairs under the table to prevent tripping. Children's dietary needs are met appropriately. Children bring packed lunches and staff provide advice for parents as to the appropriate foods to bring to promote healthy eating. Staff have up-to-date information to refer to regarding intolerances and allergies to reflect children's dietary requirements. Staff do not plan activities and provide a wide range of resources to enable children to explore and learn about the differences in today's society.

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

The staff team understand their responsibility towards meeting the requirements of the Statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage. Appropriate recruitment procedures are in place to ensure that suitably checked and qualified staff are employed to work with the children. Staff ensure that they safeguard and protect children effectively. Staff receive up-to-date training and information to have the appropriate knowledge to implement the steps to take if concerns arise about children in their care. Staff carry out a reasonable risk assessment to provide a safe and secure environment for children to play, both inside and outside. Children's records are kept on site, up-to-date and confidential to promote children's ongoing welfare. Visitors are recorded and

supervised while visiting the setting. This helps to keep children safe.

The manager monitors children's progress using a tracking system to identify individual children's interests, strengths and any gaps in their learning. However, the staff's understanding of how children learn and develop is varied. The management's monitoring and reviewing of the effectiveness of teaching and the impact this has on children's progress is not rigorous enough to enable them to accurately identify ways to improve the quality of teaching. Therefore, staff's ability to fully support children's development is inconsistent. Training is in place for staff, particularly long-term professional development. However, the new knowledge that staff gain through training is not always positively implemented to strengthen the identified weaknesses in their practice. Most of the recommendations from the last inspection are met. Appraisals for staff occur on an annual basis which identify strong practices and underperformance. However, the management team does not actively share the positive practices of some staff members to enable all staff to improve their knowledge and practice, to provide a consistent approach to the quality of teaching.

Children benefit from friendly but professional relationships with staff in the setting. Parents' receive and share information on a regular basis to provide a consistent and continual approach to children's learning and care. Parents make positive comments about the setting and have a clear understanding of the intentions for children's learning and ongoing progress. They are aware of who their children's key person is and talk about the positive relationship that they have with them. The setting works closely with local schools to help children to make a smooth transition to formal education. The staff are fully aware of the importance of working closely with other settings that children attend. This helps to promote consistent approaches to learning and to support individual children's requirements.

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	402132
Local authority	Essex
Inspection number	877131
Type of provision	
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 17
Total number of places	26
Number of children on roll	32
Name of provider	Witham Community Association Committee
Date of previous inspection	11/08/2011
Telephone number	01376511042

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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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