

St Michaels Playgroup

Church Hall, Colebrook Way, Weyhill Road, Andover, Hampshire, SP10 3BB

Inspection date

04/12/2014

Previous inspection date

09/10/2008

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This inspection:

2

Previous inspection:

2

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

- All children are enthusiastic, well-motivated individuals, who thrive in the well-planned, stimulating learning environment. They make good progress from their starting points.
- Staff have strong teaching strategies for those children who are below the expected levels of development to ensure the gap closes as much as possible.
- An extremely well-planned nativity in the church hall shows the children's positive learning outcomes and the good links with parts of the community.
- The partnership with parents is strong with good open communication, which successfully promotes children's continuity of care and learning.

It is not yet outstanding because

- On occasions, staff miss learning opportunities because the management systems for checking staff performance and supervision is not of the highest quality.
- The outdoor environment is not highly stimulating, rich and varied for children.

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 play and learning activities and tracked children, indoors and out and during the nativity dress rehearsal.
- The inspector undertook a joint observation with the manager.
- The inspector had a discussion with the manager and looked at documents regarding leadership and management.
- The inspector looked at a sample of children's progress records, planning and had discussions with staff relating to safeguarding and welfare.
- The inspector spoke to some parents to gain their views of the setting.

Inspector

Lorraine Wardlaw

Full report

Information about the setting

St Michaels Playgroup opened in 1975. It is a community run group and operates from a playroom attached to St Michaels Church in Andover, Hampshire. Children enjoy access to an enclosed outdoor play area. The premises are accessible to those with disabilities. The playgroup is registered on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. The playgroup is open five days a week from 9am to 12 noon and from 12.30pm to 3.30pm during term time only. There are currently 53 children on roll. The playgroup receives fundings for the provision of free early education for three- and four-year-old children. The playgroup supports children who are learning to speak English as an additional language and children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. The playgroup employs seven members of staff, all of whom have a suitable childcare qualifications.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- develop high quality professional staff supervision based on sharply focused evaluations of staff practice to ensure all teaching is of the highest quality
- further evaluate and develop the outdoor environment to ensure it is highly stimulating and exciting for children.

Inspection judgements

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

Children across the playgroup benefit positively from their early years experience. All children are aided successfully to make developmental progress from their starting points. This is because of the stimulating, enabling and welcoming play areas of the playgroup and the individual support they receive from the practitioners. In addition, there is a good balance of child-initiated and adult-led planned activities on offer. Overall, the staff support children's learning and development well because they have a good understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage framework and understand how young children learn. They get down to children's eye level and mostly interact with children purposefully building on what they know and can do. For example, in the role-play house they are encouraged to talk about their cooking activities when stirring a saucepan. The adult is skilled in asking varied questions which encourages children to think and respond, introducing new vocabulary, such as, 'Ingredients', when re-shaping and extending their sentence spoken. This effectively promotes children's communication and language skills, as well as their imagination.

Staff support children well to learn physical skills, such as cutting with scissors and the drawing of shapes during the Christmas card making activity. However, staff are less focused on promoting talking during the activity. This is because not all staff can weave all learning areas into one activity to maximise children's learning opportunities, during adult-led activities. Children develop valuable mathematical skills during the routine, such as when they line up in the garden to go indoors they are encouraged to count one another. During the afternoon register, the staff count the adults and talk about one more and one less than eight, introducing simple number problem solving. Children positively contribute during whole-group teaching time. The extremely well-planned nativity dress rehearsal, highly engages the children who show their good knowledge, skills and developmental progress during this special occasion. They sing along happily with big smiles to the simple, tuneful songs, which are pitched at just the right level for the children and often have an active and visual element to them. This captures the children's interest and sustains their focus during the Bethlehem story. This supports many areas of learning, including understanding of the world, because children learn about their culture or those of others and it takes place in the local church.

Staff provide children who are below the expected level of development with additional support through effective teaching strategies learnt by the staff during a language project. For example, specific, well-targeted language groups enable children to make strides in their language development. The child-friendly, stimulating indoor environment and mostly well-chosen play resources effectively support children's all-round development. There are clearly defined play areas for construction, small-world play, mark making, information technology and role play, for example, which means children are able to make good choices in their play and learning. Children know where the resources are located because of the good labelling system and they access them freely. The staff know children well because they carefully observe children's play so they can make good assessments and records of children's progress across all seven areas of learning. This includes the written progress check for two-year-old children. Staff identify accurate next learning aims for children, which are mostly shared with parents and implemented by the staff during freely chosen play.

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

All children are very settled, happy and show they feel emotionally secure in the nurturing and enabling environment. An effective key-person and buddy system means young children form strong bonds with the adults, who are responsive to their needs. For example, their key person gives them tender loving care when they have a small accident. Children relate well to the adults who plan their next learning objectives and liaise with their parents for effective home links to ensure children make the best progress while at the playgroup. All children demonstrate they have built good relationships with the adults and their friends, often playing collaboratively together. For example, children play harmoniously outside on the rope swing or in the home corner. Children demonstrate they have a very good sense of belonging because they are very proud of their achievements, and of the activities, they take part in at playgroup. For example, they point and talk

excitedly about the Christmas decorations they made which are hanging from the ceiling during the lunchtime routine. When dressed up for their specific Nativity role children spontaneously and with great confidence and skill recite the new Bethlehem story songs they have learnt. All children behave extremely well because staff are good role models and children have a full understanding of the rules and boundaries of the playgroup.

The staff pay particular good attention to promoting healthy lifestyles. Since the last inspection, the playgroup have introduced free-flow indoor to outdoor play, so children can play outdoors, in all weather, at a time of their choosing. This means children can have plenty of physical exercise and fresh air. They enjoy developing their movement skills because there are opportunities to pedal tricycles, to use the slides, and to run around the garden collecting leaves and twigs to use imaginatively. Although the indoor learning environment is rich, varied with space used well and good use of resources, the outdoors is less imaginative. For example, it is all grass with no clearly defined areas for play resources, such as the wheeled toys. Older children use the toilet independently and wash their hands unprompted because they are well aware of the routines to keep healthy. Children enjoy a nutritious breakfast on arrival at playgroup and snacks of various fruits, vegetables, crackers and cheese with a drink mid-morning, which successfully supports healthy choices.

Children's safety is promoted well by the staff, because they teach children to take turns on the swinging rope outdoors and sit on the bench waiting their turn. Children regularly take part in the fire drill to keep them safe in an emergency. Staff manage the next stage in children's learning, as they move from playgroup to school according to each child's needs. The teachers visit the playgroup and, if required, they work with the school to provide a 'photographic story' of the new setting children will be moving onto. This helps ease anxiety and promotes familiarity.

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

The manager and staff work collaboratively to ensure they effectively implement the Early Years Foundation Stage requirements. Robust procedures are in place for the recruitment, vetting and induction of staff to ensure they are suitable and understand their role. Safeguarding policies and procedures are clear and well-understood by the staff in the event of any potential risk to a child's welfare. For example, the manager has a full understanding about disqualified people and there are strict guidelines for staff on e-safety. The staff make security and safety arrangements a priority. For example, there are robust systems to keep children safe when they are collected at the end of the session. All staff are fully trained and understand the child protection procedures, which include what to do if an allegation is made against a member of staff. They express confidence in raising any concerns with the committee or external agencies if necessary. They are fully aware of each person's responsibilities and use associated safeguarding documentation. The staff's ongoing suitability and performance is regularly discussed during informal supervision and annual appraisals, with some documentation kept. However, the scrutiny of staff performance, particularly during peer observations of their teaching and learning

activities is informal and not of the highest quality. The staff team are well trained and they attend regular courses, to develop their skills and knowledge; including first aid so they can all respond to a child in an emergency.

The manager has a clear picture of the playgroup's strengths and areas for improvement. Self-evaluation and improvement has been continuous since the last inspection and is discussed during regular staff meetings. This includes a more formal feedback day where all staff come together to talk about and devise a yearly action plan, which is mostly well-targeted. Partnership with parents is successful. Staff are welcoming and friendly when parents arrive, with staff greeting each family positively. Parents speak knowingly and glowingly of the playgroup. They say, 'It is brilliant', and particularly like how the key persons come out and speak to the parents personally about their child, to share observations. They are very pleased about how well the staff know their child's individual needs and play preferences. Good systems are in place to link learning to children's home life through lots of information on the notice boards for parents, such as how to promote children's talking. In addition, parents appreciate the information shared on the playgroup's useful website, such as songs the children sing, making hedgehog bread and the playgroup's policies. Partnerships with external agencies, the community, school and with childminders are well established. For example, staff share health assessment records for those children who are not at the expected levels in their development, which helps the key persons devise specific learning plans for them. The playgroup staff work with professional agencies, such as speech and language therapists to deliver targeted activities. This means they successfully help all children to make good progress from their starting points.

The Childcare Register

The requirements for the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are	Met
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The requirements for the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are	Met
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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	109883
Local authority	Hampshire
Inspection number	839015
Type of provision	Sessional provision
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	2 - 8
Total number of places	26
Number of children on roll	53
Name of provider	St Michaels Playgroup Committee
Date of previous inspection	09/10/2008
Telephone number	07940 569651

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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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