

Oaktrees Playgroup

Helvellyn Road, Southampton, Hampshire, SO16 4AS

Inspection date	25/09/2012
Previous inspection date	30/11/2009

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		2
The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision		3

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This provision is satisfactory

- Children are active participants in their learning and show good levels of engagement and motivation.
- A rich and stimulating environment with clearly defined, well-resourced learning areas promotes effective child-initiated learning. There is a strong emphasis on free-flow indoor and outdoor play.
- Children are happy, behave well and have good levels of independence. Overall, they have good relationships with practitioners and each other.
- The manager and the provider work well together with clear roles of responsibility that includes performance monitoring and supervision of staff to improve practice.

It is not yet good because

- The key person system is not successful in communicating and building a genuine relationship with parents and key children to facilitate a personalised learning path for each unique child.
- Assessment and planning systems are not effective enough to ensure that gaps are closing for children learning English as an additional language and offer challenge to the more able child.
- Not all staff are skilled practitioners. They are not consistently able to listen perceptively to, carefully observe and skilfully question children during activities in order to re-shape tasks and explanations to improve learning.

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 had a discussion with the manager about the inspection process and had a tour of the pre-school.
- The inspector carried out observations of practice and of children, including a joint observation with the manager
- The inspector met with the manager and the provider.
- The inspector had discussions with key staff and sampled documentation and records.
- The inspector met and had discussions with some parents.

Inspector

Lorraine Wardlaw

Full Report

Information about the setting

Oaktrees Playgroup registered at their current premises in 2002. It operates from a purpose built room within Mason Moor Primary School, Southampton. It has a secure adjacent outdoor area. Disabled access is through both external doors. The pre-school serves the local area.

The pre-school is registered on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. The pre-school opens each weekday during school term only. Sessions are from 8.45am to 11.45am and from 12.15pm to 3.15pm. There are currently 21 children from the age of two on roll, all are in the early years age range. Children attend a variety of sessions. The pre-school supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language. The pre-school employs four members of staff who are appropriately qualified to at least level two or above. There are links with the school.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- improve children's learning and developmental progress by ensuring assessment links clearly to implementing children's next steps for each unique child
- develop the effectiveness of the key person system by improving arrangements to communicate regularly with parents, gaining children's starting points, keeping parents well informed about their children's progress and involving them in their child's learning at home
- plan targeted adult-led activities to meet children's learning needs, particularly for those learning English as an additional language and the more able child.

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

- develop support systems to enable all staff to understand their role with regards to skilful questioning and re-shaping children's learning experiences as necessary, to deliver an effective teaching and learning programme.

Inspection judgements

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

Overall, children have a fun, purposeful play and learning experience at the pre-school. They confidently select their self-chosen play activities from the interesting and good range of resources on offer to them. The educational programme covers the breadth of the seven areas of learning generally well, which inspires most children to take part and learn. For example, children are involved in growing projects outdoors in tyres filled with soil. Children then pick, and eat the produce at snack time. Outside a child excitedly spots a carrot growing in soil and pulls it out. This leads to other children pulling up carrots of different sizes and bringing them in to wash. Some talk about the size of the carrots but closed questions by the practitioner does not encourage children. As a result, they do not fully use language to develop reasoning skills, ideas and solve mathematical problems during this motivating time. This does not impact positively on the more able child's rate of development and learning.

Staff are deployed well to support children's play and learning and build on their interests which has a positive impact on children's self-confidence and attitudes to learning. For example, children select musical instruments, ribbons and dance bands. They move their bodies to the music and join in some of the songs, switching on the CD player with assistance.

Although most children are making progress towards the early learning goals, staff are not sufficiently closing the gap for those children learning English as an additional language. This is because systems to support these children, such as using their home language in play and learning, using pictures, signing or targeted language group work is not in place. Staff have taken part in cascaded training on 'Every Child is a Talker', however, this is not yet having an effective impact on the promotion of all children's language and communication skills. This is because of the insecure knowledge and skills of the staff and weaknesses in the assessment and planning of adult-led activities. Although staff can assess children's capabilities fairly well they are not using this knowledge to build upon or extend children's learning regularly or over time. Weaknesses in the key person system, where staff are not always fully aware about each child's specific learning needs, also impacts on staff's ability to fully support each child's development.

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

Overall, a good majority of children are well prepared for the next stage in their learning because the pre-school promotes children's personal independence well, such as putting on and doing up their coats. Children settle well and show good levels of self-confidence within the pre-school. For example, they independently get a tissue, blow their noses, and put it in the bin. This also has a positive impact on children's health and well-being.

Children behave well. They know the routines and involve themselves in them, such as shaking the tambourine, which tells everyone to sit on the mat ready for story time. Relationships are strong with staff, although it may not be their key person, and with their friends. There is good emphasis by staff on children's health and well-being. Children enjoy a healthy snack of hot noodles, fruit and a drink that they pour out themselves. They then wash up their own plate and utensils at a low sink.

Children regularly take part in outdoor play whenever they wish but mostly in dry weather. They enjoy the space outdoors as they run and practise their movement skills, such as pedalling on tricycles. Children are gaining a good awareness of their bodies, by independently using the toilet as necessary. Staff ensure that children are learning safe practices. For example, they know that spilt water makes the floor 'slippy'. Therefore, when children notice water on the floor around the water tray they lay down paper towels to soak it up.

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

Overall, the leader and manager of the pre-school ensure that most of the safeguarding and welfare requirements are met. Together they make sure a robust recruitment and vetting procedure is undertaken when new staff are recruited to help ensure their suitability to work with children. Staff undertake an induction so they are aware of the pre-school's policies and procedures and all staff are trained in child protection. The designated person for child protection and staff have a secure understanding of their role and responsibilities about reporting safeguarding concerns. Clear disciplinary procedures are undertaken to tackle staff performance, as necessary.

The manager has a good overview of the educational programmes the pre-school deliver. She is aware of the pre-school's weaknesses regarding delivery of the learning and development requirements. Although they monitor the assessment and planning, the pre-school has been unable to move forward to ensure they effectively meet all children's learning needs. Staff make good use of the on-site early years teacher to assist in developing practice and regularly undertake an Early Childhood Environmental Rating Scale (ECERS). This enables the staff to identify some strengths and weaknesses, which feed into their action plans. The manager has started to use Developmental Matters in the Early Years Foundation Stage to improve practice. However, not all staff are able to effectively self-reflect on their own practices. Hence, the pre-school's self-evaluation does not rigorously analyse and self-challenge all aspects of the pre-school. As a result plans for development are not comprehensive or well-targeted. All staff are undertaking further training, take part in appraisals and have regular supervision by management. However, the system to coach staff to become skilled practitioners is not fully in place. As a result there are inconsistencies in staff practice which impact on how well some staff support children to make progress.

The pre-school has not established a suitable key person system to build relationships with parents that support children's learning. This breaches a requirement of the Early Years Foundation Stage. Parents speak positively of the friendly, approachable staff, and say

how much their children enjoy attending the pre-school. Nevertheless, they are not able to develop a true working partnership with their child's key person because communication is not always consistent and effective between key persons and each family. As a result staff are not always aware of children's needs and family circumstances. Information sharing tends to occur at the parent's request and not on a regular basis. Although the staff complete children's learning journals not all parents are fully informed about them. They do not regularly contribute to them or work together with key staff on identifying their child's next learning steps. This limits opportunities for parents to play a full and active role in their child's learning.

Partnerships with external agencies and other providers are mostly well established. There are good links with the school, but agencies to support children and families for whom English is an additional language are not used. This means that staff do not receive guidance about how to support children learning English as an additional language to enable them to support them fully.

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	Satisfactory	Satisfactory provision is performing less well than expectations in one or more of the key areas. It requires improvement in order to be good.
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 inspected again within 12 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	131550
Local authority	Southampton
Inspection number	813756
Type of provision	Full-time provision
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	2 - 8
Total number of places	25
Number of children on roll	21
Name of provider	Oaktrees Playgroup
Date of previous inspection	30/11/2009
Telephone number	07852 574041

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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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