

St Johns Playgroup

St Johns Cricket Club, Forest Vale Road, Cinderford, Gloucestershire, GL14 2PH

Inspection date

17/12/2014

Previous inspection date

29/06/2009

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

- An enthusiastic staff team welcomes children warmly and know them and their families well. Consequently, children are happy, confident and have close relationships with the staff.
- Children have access to a wide variety of resources that they can explore independently, which ensures children are motivated to learn.
- The dedicated management and staff are regularly reflecting on and improving their practice to improve children's experiences and learning opportunities.
- Partnerships with parents is strong as staff work closely with parents to meet all children's individual learning and care needs.

It is not yet outstanding because

- Management does not monitor staff practice fully to ensure a consistent high quality of teaching.
- Staff miss some opportunities to encourage children to undertake self-care tasks to support their growing independence.

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.

Inspection activities

- The inspector made observations of children and staff interactions in the playroom, dining area and outside.
- The inspector had discussions with the manager, the chairperson of the management committee, staff, children and parents.
- The inspector sampled required documentation including children's records, planning, and policies and procedures.
- The inspector carried out a joint observation with the manager.
- The inspector checked evidence of suitability checks and qualifications of all staff working with the children.

Inspector

Jan Harvey

Full report

Information about the setting

St John's Playgroup registered in 1974 and moved to new premises in April 2004. It is situated close to an industrial park on the outskirts of Cinderford. It operates from two rooms in a single storey building. There are stairs separating the two rooms used. There is an outdoor play area available as well as a large field for outdoor play. The playgroup opens during school term times on a Monday 9.30am to 12 noon, Tuesday 9.30am to 1pm and on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday 9.30am to 2.30pm. The playgroup is managed by a voluntary management committee of parents and serves the local area. There are currently 37 children on roll aged from two to four years. The playgroup receives funding for the provision of free early education for children aged two, three and four years. The playgroup supports children with special education needs and/or disabilities and those who are learning to speak English as an additional language. A team of seven staff work directly with the children. Of these, five hold a recognised childcare qualification at level 3.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- strengthen systems for monitoring staff practice and assessment to ensure consistent high quality teaching from all staff
- maximise all opportunities to develop children's independence throughout daily routines.

Inspection judgements

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

Staff have a secure understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage and how children learn and develop. They provide a stimulating educational programme and accurately monitor children's progression. This strong support for children's individual needs results in all children achieving and making good progress. Staff identify children's starting points effectively by holding discussions with parents on their children's early development before they start. In addition, parents complete an information booklet about their child and staff complete a settling-in review. Staff use this information well to track and plan each child's progression and encourage parents to be involved in this process. Staff provide regular newsletters and information sheets to parents, which include details of children's experiences and give ideas to parents how to promote learning at home. Staff complete the required progress checks for two-year-old children, which include parent's contributions to plan for children's next stages in learning. Staff understand the importance of this to help identify children who may need additional help to reach their

expected levels of development, such as speech delay. Staff work well with other agencies and liaise with parents when required. The examples of children's work, photographs and information in their learning journals, plus records in the playgroup's daily planning journal, clearly demonstrate that staff promote learning well across all areas. Consequently, all children, including those who are learning to speak English as an additional language, receive the support they need to progress, according to their capabilities and starting points.

Staff organise the inside and outdoor play areas with a good variety of activities and experiences. Craft materials are easily accessible so that children can use them independently and make their own choices about what they want to create. For example, a child made a large model of a flag using boxes, tubes, tapes, scissors and glue. Staff promote children's physical development with activities, such as bouncing on a large bouncy castle. This helps children to develop their coordination and counting skills as they count their jumps and the number of children on the castle. They also begin to assess risks as children told each other, 'They can't jump holding any toys'. Staff promote children's safety well during activities of this kind, for example, by explaining that four is the maximum number of children allowed on the castle to be safe. They also encourage them to consider other children's safety by giving them sufficient space to jump.

Staff deployment is very effective in ensuring that children receive the attention they need as they play. Staff respond intuitively to children's needs, such as moving to support colleagues who are supervising very popular activities to ensure that more children can join in. For example, when children wanted to paint in the puddles outside, extra staff went out to maintain the required ratios, so children were safe and supported in their learning.

Staff develop and extend children's language. They speak to children consistently and clearly ensuring that they have eye contact with them as they speak, making them feel listened to and valued. This results in children enjoying positive interactions with adults, engaging in interesting conversations and developing good communication skills. For example, children's discussions about, 'Sunsets' and, 'Shipwrecks', stimulated children's imagination for role play and promoted their understanding of the world. Children enjoy one-to-one and group stories, becoming fully engrossed in what the skilled staff say, developing their listening skills. However, occasionally, some staff do not use open questions consistently to encourage children to think. Staff ensure books are easily accessible to children inside and outdoors. Staff help children recognise their names, letters and the sounds that they make. They give them laminated name cards at meal times and use sounds during conversations. For instance, staff in the morning asked, 'What day is it today?', and talked about, 'W for 'Wednesday', and 'Its w for windy'. Staff help children to develop number and mathematical knowledge during a variety of activities. For example, when a child was sponge painting staff supported them to make and name the shapes they created and at snack time, staff identified the two halves of a bread stick. Occasionally, some staff did not maximise all mathematical learning opportunities. For example, they did not promote fully the children's counting skills during snack time or when walking up and down steps during outside play. Nevertheless, the play and learning experiences enable children to make good progress in their learning towards

the early learning goals.

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

The playgroup is friendly and welcoming for children and parents and its organisation is good overall. As a result, children are happy, settled and gaining in confidence. Children play very well together, taking turns and sharing resources. For example, a child said, 'I know I have to share but I want to put this in the washing machine', and a friend said, 'I know, but let's both put it in now'. This is because staff are good role models and consistently encourage children to develop their personal, social and emotional skills. Children have high levels of concentration at activities as staff give them the time and space to complete their chosen tasks before moving on to daily routines.

Staff make good use of resources that children can access easily. The indoor and outdoor play areas are well organised, which ensure that children can take part in a wide variety of activities. Staff have identified that children particularly enjoy playing outside where they can have fresh air. The children have access to a wide range of resources to stimulate and provide opportunities for learning and enjoyment. They develop a range of skills, for example, using rackets and a ball, balancing, and mixing paint to make different colours. They persevere at self-chosen activities. For example, children succeeded at tying knots to make a hoop and fastening tricky seatbelts in a toy aeroplane.

Staff ensure the safety of children is a priority and teach them how to keep themselves safe. For example, staff encourage children to find a space away from other children to play with rackets and balls. They talk about putting on warm coats and boots on a cold day, and not leaving scissors on the floor when they have finished using them. Staff teach children about healthy foods through discussion and talk about eating their own fruit and vegetables. Meal times are a happy social time for the children where they can sit together and talk. Staff encourage them to pour their own drinks and open their own packets of food. However, meal times do not fully promote children's self-help skills, such as preparation and clearing away.

Staff teach children about healthy lifestyles. For example, children said, 'Milk has to be kept in the fridge' and, 'Got tights on to keep legs warm'. Children learn about good hygiene routines and can independently take themselves off to wash their hands. They know they must wash their hands after being outside, using the toilet, before eating and after messy play. These are all skills that prepare children well for school and support children's well-being.

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

The dedicated management team demonstrates a secure understanding of their responsibilities for meeting the safeguarding and welfare, and learning and development requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. Staff clearly understand their

responsibilities with regard to child protection issues. As a result, this helps to keep children safe from harm. Regular risk assessments, both indoors and outside, effectively minimise the chance of accidental injury. Management ensures, through a sound recruitment procedure, that all staff have checks with regard to their suitability, qualifications and experience, in order to keep children safe. A well-established induction procedure for new staff complements this. Consequently, all staff demonstrate a good understanding of policies and procedures, and implement them appropriately.

The manager and deputy have a good overview and knowledge of the educational programmes. This enables them to monitor all areas within planning and assessment, and identify any gaps in learning. Management carries out suitable annual staff appraisals and discusses the continuous professional development of staff at weekly team meetings. However, management does not use fully effective systems to monitor staff performance to secure consistently high quality teaching. Nonetheless, management ensures staff continue to update and develop their knowledge and enhance their practice by attending regular training. This has included safeguarding, child protection and first-aid training. Staff use their new skills and understanding well. For example, staff are developing their story-making sessions to be even more effective for the children's learning. As a result, staff assess children's developmental progress well. They plan exciting activities to ensure that children benefit from an interesting and varied curriculum that promotes learning across all areas.

The management places a strong focus on improving the quality of the provision and the outcomes for children. The playgroup has recently gained a national quality assurance award. There is a clear emphasis on keeping children safe and helping them to make good progress in their learning and development. Staff have acted upon the recommendations raised at the previous inspection, therefore, improving the provision. For example, staff and management's self-evaluation of the planning process and parents' involvement has improved learning outcomes for children. In addition, staff celebrate diversity and promote equal opportunities at all times. There are visual displays celebrating children's differences and resources for children to choose freely. These include books to develop their knowledge and understanding of similarities and differences between themselves and others. Consequently, children benefit from attending an evolving provision. Plans for improvement are extremely comprehensive with staff assessing all changes to ensure that they really are beneficial. Staff ask children and parents for their views on changes and the service provided using information from parents' questionnaires and discussions.

A clear strength of the playgroup is the good partnership work to promote consistency of care for children. Children benefit from observing the friendly interaction between their parents and the staff. Parents spoken to at the inspection happily discussed how staff supported them with different changes in their life, for example, with the arrival of a new baby. Staff liaise effectively with childminders and other settings that children attend and have good links with other professionals. This helps to support children's smooth transfers between learning environments.

Staff share information with parents through daily discussions and half-termly, written development summaries that detail children's progress and next steps for learning. This means that parents receive information that helps them support continuity in children's

learning. Staff liaise well with parents who comment that their key persons and all other staff are always supportive and on-hand for advice. Parents are highly complimentary of the positive changes that have taken place stating, 'It's fantastic, you have made the setting much more comfortable and functional for the children'.

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	EY285690
Local authority	Gloucestershire
Inspection number	833667
Type of provision	Sessional provision
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	2 - 5
Total number of places	24
Number of children on roll	37
Name of provider	St John's Playgroup Committee
Date of previous inspection	29/06/2009
Telephone number	07810 428386

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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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