

St Andrews Playgroup

St Andrews Church Hall, Roman Road, Lowestoft, Suffolk, NR32 2DQ



Inspection date

25 February 2015

Previous inspection date

23 March 2011

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	Inadequate	4
	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend		Inadequate	4
The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children		Inadequate	4
The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision		Inadequate	4
The setting does not meet legal requirements for early years settings			

Summary of key findings for parents

This provision is inadequate

- Risk assessments are ineffective. Staff do not ensure that the playgroup is kept safe and secure. Therefore, children are at risk. In addition, staff do not always inform parents of any accident their child has while at the playgroup.
- The provider and supervisor do not understand their responsibilities to implement the safeguarding and welfare requirements. The provider has failed to notify Ofsted about a change to the committee and a change to the supervisor, within the prescribed time period. There is no effective system in place for the provider to ensure that all staff are suitable to fulfil the requirements of their role.
- The provider does not follow the correct procedures when a complaint is made. All records are not easily accessible and the provider does not understand their responsibilities under the Data Protection Act 1998.
- Policies and procedures are not always implemented effectively to keep children safe; for example, visitors are not asked if they have a mobile phone and are not informed of the procedures to follow regarding its use while at the playgroup.
- Teaching is weak because not all staff understand how to promote children's learning and development. Staff induction, supervision and training do not enable staff to improve their skills.
- Staff do not consistently assess children's development and identify the next steps in their learning. The partnership with parents is weak. Staff do not promote a two-way flow of information with them to ensure that children benefit from continuity of support for their learning.

It has the following strengths

- Children benefit from access to a spacious outdoor play area, where they enjoy the fresh air and play with a range of toys.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- develop a risk assessment procedure to ensure that all doors to the playgroup are secure, to remove the risk of an intruder entering or a child letting themselves out of the playgroup
- ensure that parents and/or carers are informed of any accident or injury sustained by the child while at the playgroup on the same day, or as soon as reasonably practical, and are informed of any first-aid treatment given
- ensure that the playgroup policy for the use of mobile phones and cameras is followed, with regard to checking that all visitors understand the procedures to follow when visiting the setting
- develop an effective system to check staff's suitability to fulfil the requirements of their roles, for example, by providing opportunities for them to discuss sensitive issues and confirm their ongoing suitability
- ensure that all staff receive induction training to enable them to understand their roles and responsibilities
- establish suitable arrangements for the supervision of staff, providing support and training to help them to continually improve their skills
- improve staff's knowledge and understanding of the learning and development requirements to ensure that teaching is effective and consistently challenges children to develop skills in preparation for school
- develop the two-way flow of information with parents, with regard to children's learning, to ensure that children benefit from continuity of support between home and playgroup
- use observations and assessments of children's learning to identify the next steps in their development and plan challenging experiences for each child that effectively support them to make good progress
- keep a written record of any complaints and their outcome, and notify complainants of the outcome of the investigation within 28 days of receiving the complaint, ensuring that the record of complaints is made available to Ofsted on request
- ensure that records are accessible and available to those who have a right or a professional need to see them
- acquire an understanding of the legal responsibilities under the Data Protection Act 1998 to ensure that information relating to the children cared for is handled in a way that ensures confidentiality and privacy.

To meet the requirements of the Childcare Register the provider must:

- take all necessary measures to minimise any risks to the health or safety of the children and staff in their care (compulsory part of the Childcare Register)
- ensure that a child is unable to leave the premises unsupervised (compulsory part of the Childcare Register)
- ensure that no one can enter the premises without the knowledge of a member of staff (compulsory part of the Childcare Register)
- keep a written record, for a period of three years, from the date of a complaint, including the outcome of the investigation and the action the provider took in response (compulsory part of the Childcare Register)
- ensure that the parent who made the complaint is informed, in writing or by email if the parent requests this, of the outcome of the complaint, within 28 working days of the date the complaint was made (compulsory part of the Childcare Register)
- make available to Ofsted, on request, a summary of complaints made in relation to the requirements during the past 12 months and the action that was taken as a consequence (compulsory part of the Childcare Register)
- produce for Ofsted, on request, a list of such complaints made during the previous three years (compulsory part of the Childcare Register)
- inform Ofsted of the name, date of birth, address and telephone number of any member of the governing body, such as committee members (compulsory part of the Childcare Register)
- inform Ofsted of the appointment of a new manager of playgroup (compulsory part of the Childcare Register)
- take all necessary measures to minimise any risks to the health or safety of the children and staff in their care (voluntary part of the Childcare Register)
- ensure that a child is unable to leave the premises unsupervised (voluntary part of the Childcare Register)
- ensure that no one can enter the premises without the knowledge of a member of staff (voluntary part of the Childcare Register)
- keep a written record, for a period of three years, from the date of a complaint, including the outcome of the investigation and the action the provider took in response (voluntary part of the Childcare Register)
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- inform Ofsted of the name, date of birth, address and telephone number of any member of the governing body, such as committee members (voluntary part of the Childcare Register)
- inform Ofsted of the appointment of a new manager of playgroup (voluntary part of the Childcare Register).

Inspection activities

- The inspector observed activities and children at play throughout the inspection. She conducted a joint observation with the supervisor.
- The inspector interacted with children and spoke with staff during the inspection.
- The inspector checked evidence of staff suitability. She sampled a range of documentation, including policies, planning and children's assessment records.
- The inspector had a tour of both the indoor and outdoor play areas.

Inspector

Helen Hyett

Inspection findings

How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend. This is inadequate

The quality of teaching is inconsistent because not all staff have a suitable knowledge of the learning and development requirements. Most staff join in with children's play but do not consistently extend or challenge them as they learn. Adult-led activities do not always engage children because they are not well matched to their individual needs. Younger children show little interest in listening to a story and quickly become distracted and bored. Staff observe children during their play and conduct some assessments of their learning. However, staff do not use these to consistently identify the next steps in children's learning. As a result, teaching is often weak and children are not acquiring the skills they need for school. Children are occupied for most of their time at the playgroup. This is because the playgroup offers children a range of toys to play with. When children first start at the playgroup, staff do not gain enough information from parents about their child's stage of development. Parents are not encouraged to have regular discussions with staff about their child's progress and are not always asked to contribute to assessments.

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

Children's welfare is compromised because of weaknesses in the staff's knowledge of the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. Risk assessments are ineffective. For example, a door to the playgroup is not locked and staff are not vigilant enough about monitoring the door. Therefore, should a child attempt to leave the premises or an intruder access the playgroup, staff are unaware. This places children at risk. In addition, staff do not always ensure they report to parents when children have an accident while at playgroup and inform them of the first-aid treatment they have provided. Therefore, parents are not always informed about their child's welfare. Parents share information about children's dietary needs and allergies, and staff take children's needs into consideration when preparing snacks. Staff follow suitable hygiene practices when preparing food. Staff have some links with schools in order to share information about children's needs. Children show that they develop bonds with the staff. This is because staff are quick to offer a cuddle if a child is upset.

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

The provider and supervisor demonstrate poor knowledge of the safeguarding and welfare requirements. The staff do not follow the playgroup policy by asking visitors if they have a mobile phone and they do not ask them not to use it when they are with the children. This puts children at risk. The provider does not ensure that all records are easily accessible. The provider does not understand the requirement to keep a written record of complaints. In addition, parents who make a complaint are not informed about the outcome of the complaint in writing, within the necessary timescale. The provider is not aware of their responsibilities regarding the Data Protection Act 1998. As a result, confidential information is not held securely. The provider has not addressed the actions raised at the last inspection. They have failed to notify Ofsted about a change to the committee and a

change of supervisor within the prescribed time period. They have also failed to address the actions to improve the system for observation and assessment in order to identify children's next steps in learning, and involve parents in children's learning. The provider does not ensure that all staff access induction training to enable them to understand their roles and responsibilities. Staff do not receive supervision to help them understand how to promote children's learning and development. Although most staff have appropriate early years qualifications, the supervisor does not monitor the quality of teaching, or children's learning, and give staff feedback about their practice. Therefore, she does not help staff to improve their performance and does not consistently identify where any additional training is needed. All staff have Disclosure and Barring Service checks. They have a suitable knowledge of how to recognise signs of abuse and report any concerns. However, the provider does not always ensure that staff are suitable to fulfil the requirements of their roles. This is because they do not have opportunities to discuss any sensitive issues or changes to their suitability. Self-evaluation is ineffective and does not identify areas for improvement. The roles and responsibilities of the provider, supervisor and staff are not clear. Therefore, staff do not work together as an effective team to ensure that children are safe and their needs are met. The provider and supervisor do not keep their knowledge up to date and do not know where to access support to improve their knowledge. Therefore, they do not demonstrate the capacity to improve the provision.

Setting details

Unique reference number	251641
Local authority	Suffolk
Inspection number	818405
Type of provision	
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 17
Total number of places	24
Number of children on roll	45
Name of provider	St Andrews Playgroup Committee
Date of previous inspection	23 March 2011
Telephone number	07510624800

St Andrews Playgroup was registered in 1968. It operates from a church hall in Lowestoft. The playgroup is open during term time only, Monday to Friday from 8.45am to 11.45am, and also on Tuesday and Friday afternoons from 12.30pm to 3.30pm. The setting employs seven members of staff, of whom six hold relevant qualifications at levels 2 or 3.

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.

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