

Soham Playgroup

The Weatheralls Cp School, Pratt Street, Soham, ELY, Cambridgeshire, CB7 5BH



Inspection date	19 June 2015
Previous inspection date	14 January 2010

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	Inadequate	4
	Previous inspection:	Good	2
How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend		Good	2
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

- Despite frequent advice from others over several months, the committee has failed to notify Ofsted of changes to members and this is a requirement of the Early Years Foundation Stage. Furthermore, background checks have not been carried out for these individuals. The potential impact upon children is reduced as these people do not have direct contact with children at the playgroup.
- The impact of training received by staff and subsequently, cascaded to committee regarding safeguarding procedures, is weak. Learning has not brought about change to ensure the playgroup is complying with their legal duties.
- The information gained from parents when children first start the playgroup is not always sufficiently detailed to support their learning effectively. This means planning is sometimes less well targeted in the first few weeks children attend.

It has the following strengths

- Teaching is good. Staff use their knowledge of children's individual interests effectively to plan stimulating activities and experiences. Consequently, children make good progress in the time they attend playgroup.
- Staff have a good understanding of how to promote children's communication skills. They consistently speak with children using words they will understand and allowing them time to consider their responses. In this way, all children, including those speaking English as an additional language, are beginning to talk with their friends and staff alike.
- Parents speak highly of the staff and the progress that children have made at the playgroup. Parents are well informed of children's daily activities by viewing learning journals online. This gives them ideas for learning activities to be repeated at home.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- ensure training and support received by staff is used effectively to inform action plans and bring about rapid change to the practices of the playgroup.

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

- review the way information is gathered about children's starting points and consider extending this to enable staff to more effectively plan their learning opportunities from the beginning.

Inspection activities

- The inspector observed activities in both the inside and outside learning environments.
- The inspector held meetings with the manager, deputy manager and the chair of the committee.
- The inspector and manager took part in a joint observation.
- The inspector took the views of parents into account.
- The inspector looked at children's learning journals, planning documentation, evidence of suitability of practitioners working within the setting, the provider's self-evaluation form and a range of other documentation.

Inspector

Jacqueline Baker

Inspection findings

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

Teaching is good. Staff skilfully join in with children's play, encouraging them to try things for themselves and find solutions to problems. For example, children learn how to carefully fit magnetic trains together and pull an impressive number of trucks around the track. This demonstrates their good hand-eye coordination and perseverance in their chosen tasks. Staff plan exciting activities for children, such as visits by local fire fighters. This encourages children to talk about their experiences and learn about those who are important in the local community. Staff track children's progress effectively and where necessary, find ways to help those who need more support in making good progress. However, the information gained from parents about what children know and can do when they first start is not always sufficiently detailed. As a consequence, there is a potential delay in staff being able to plan effectively for individual children's interests. Children are well prepared for their moves to nursery and the next stage of their learning because staff teach them about routines, how to listen carefully and begin to be independent.

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

Children's overall safety is compromised because of the committee's weak understanding of safeguarding procedures. In this instance, the need for suitability checks to be carried out for committee members. However, the manager has been diligent in ensuring staff working with children have been vetted to determine their suitability for their roles. Staff working with children get to know families well and build effective relationships with each one. As a result, children are well supported as they learn to settle at playgroup and separate from parents for the first time. Children soon learn routines of the day, such as handwashing before snack or registering themselves when they arrive by putting their photograph in the appropriate place. Staff give consistent messages about behaviour and because of this, young children are learning to share, take turns and play happily with one another. Staff promote healthy eating at playgroup, which results in parents packing fruit or savoury food for children to enjoy.

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

The committee has a poor understanding of their responsibilities under the Early Years Foundation Stage. They have failed to notify Ofsted of changes to their members and have not carried out background checks for those individuals. This is a breach in the requirements. Although, they have no contact with children in the playgroup at the present time, it nevertheless poses a safeguarding concern. This is exacerbated by the length of time persons unknown to Ofsted have been holding responsible positions on the committee. Advice about how to rectify the situation has been ignored by the committee and messages from training sessions attended by staff have also resulted in this non-compliance for some months. Monitoring of the setting is, therefore, weak and the benefit of training in these matters has not been maximised by those leading the playgroup. However, staff have successfully undertaken professional development opportunities with

regards to children's learning. Staff also have a secure understanding of safeguarding procedures. Partnerships with other providers are in place to support children's overall learning and well-being.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY390532
Local authority	Cambridgeshire
Inspection number	859277
Type of provision	Sessional provision
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 5
Total number of places	25
Number of children on roll	80
Name of provider	Soham Playgroup Committee
Date of previous inspection	14 January 2010
Telephone number	07789316851

Soham Playgroup was registered in 2009. The playgroup employs eight members of childcare staff. Of these, five hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3. The playgroup opens from Monday to Friday, term time. Sessions are from 11.45am until 2.45pm, and on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays from 9am until 11.30am. The playgroup provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children. The playgroup supports children who speak English as an additional language.

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