

St Helens Playgroup

St Helens Church, St Helens Street,(Town), Ipswich, Suffolk, IP4 2LS



Inspection date

18 June 2015

Previous inspection date

9 March 2009

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	Good	2
	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		Good	2
The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision		Good	2
The setting meets legal requirements for early years settings			

Summary of key findings for parents

This provision is good

- Children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language are supported exceptionally well. Staff are extremely caring and embrace children's individual characters. They work closely with outside agencies, parents and each other to ensure that every child's individual needs are fully met.
- The key-person system is good and works well in practice. Key persons are very supportive. They know their children well and are proud of their achievements. As a result, children develop confidence and self-esteem and build good relationships with staff and their peers.
- A tracking system is in place, which clearly identifies if there are any gaps in learning and the stage that each individual child is working at. The managers monitor tracking to ensure that all children make progress and that planned activities support children's learning.
- Children are safeguarded well as all staff have a good knowledge of the signs and symptoms of abuse. They are fully aware of the procedures to follow should they have concerns about a child in their care.
- Parents are involved in their child's learning. Learning journeys and the next steps of children's learning are regularly shared. Staff provide parents with ideas of how to extend children's learning at home.

It is not yet outstanding because:

- The organisation of circle times does not always allow all children to fully participate.
- Due to the confines of the premises, children are not always entirely able to make choices about what they wish to play with.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- develop how to further promote children's choices within their play
- develop the organisation of circle times to enable all children to fully participate.

Inspection activities

- The inspector observed the quality of teaching and the impact this has on children's learning both indoors and outside.
- The inspector held a meeting with the manager and looked at relevant documentation, including evidence of the suitability of staff to work in the playgroup.
- The inspector spoke to parents and children and took account of their views.

Inspector

Becky Johnson

Inspection findings

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

Children make good progress in this wholly inclusive setting to prepare them in readiness for school. All staff use sign language and wear communication pictures and symbols to support language development and help children to speak to staff and their peers. Children are developing good imaginations. They pretend that the climbing frame is a 'den' and a 'bus'. They collect toys from around the room, place them inside the 'bus' and make play dough biscuits and sandwiches to eat at the park. Children enjoy looking at books to develop their literacy skills. They share books with their friends and listen as staff read a story, which is extended to talk about the different animals they can see. Children learn mathematical concepts as they play in the water. Staff talk to them about full and empty and help them to count the number of times it takes the small container to fill the large one. Children are generally well occupied and enjoy taking part in activities. However, circle times at the beginning and end of the day, are noisy and are not organised effectively to enable all children to easily join in. There is a book in the book corner with photographs of resources for children to choose from. However, this is not always easily accessible, as a result, children are not always fully able to make choices within their play. Children are supported well when they move to school. Staff meet with teachers and share information about children's individual preferences and their stage of development.

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

Behaviour is generally good. Staff deal with unwanted behaviour calmly and use clear explanations when children become upset or fractious with each other. They teach them to take turns and share. Children benefit from time spent outdoors. The playgroup has recently been awarded a grant to develop the outside area. Children now have access to a variety of outdoor experiences, such as playing on bridges and in willow tunnels, on beams and logs for balancing. There is an area for bicycles, a mud kitchen and a sand pit. Children are able to choose if they want to play outdoors and staff effectively manage this, despite access to outdoors being through the kitchen. Children are beginning to understand about healthy eating. Staff provide food, which embraces children's cultures. Dietary needs, such as the safe management of allergies, are dealt with well.

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

Staff are qualified and attend training to further their knowledge and expertise. They cascade what they have learnt to update everyone's knowledge and implement new ideas. This helps to improve children's experiences and move the group forward. This has a positive impact on children's learning. The managers have introduced peer monitoring and regularly observe staff as they work with the children. Although, this is a pack-away setting, staff make full use of the facilities available to them. For example, they use a patchwork tapestry to brighten the book corner and an alphabet banner is used to help children match the letter sounds objects start with, to the letter symbol.

Setting details

Unique reference number	251649
Local authority	Suffolk
Inspection number	871467
Type of provision	Sessional provision
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	2 - 4
Total number of places	22
Number of children on roll	34
Name of provider	St Helens Playgroup Committee
Date of previous inspection	9 March 2009
Telephone number	07507455185

St Helens Playgroup was registered in 1999. The nursery employs 10 members of childcare staff. Of these, five hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3 and three at level 2, including one with Qualified Teacher Status. The playgroup opens from Monday to Friday, term time only. Sessions are from 9.15am until 12.15pm. The playgroup provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children. The playgroup supports children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language.

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