Priory Park Playgroup
Almond Road, St. Neots, Cambridgeshire, PE19 1DZ

Inspection date: 23 November 2015
Previous inspection date: 16 June 2011

The quality and standards of the early years provision

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<th>The quality and standards of the early years provision</th>
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Summary of key findings for parents

This provision is good

- Staff are deployed effectively and work particularly well together, which means the organisation of the playgroup is good. Staff provide a relaxed, fun and homely environment where children behave well and each child is respected and valued.

- Teaching across the playgroup is consistently good. Children show they are interested and motivated to play and learn. Staff's accurate assessments of children ensure that any need for early intervention is identified promptly and additional support is sought.

- The playgroup is well established within the community. Parents speak very positively about the care and education their children receive and the guidance they receive to support their child's learning at home.

- The highly experienced and longstanding playgroup staff team shows a strong commitment to providing a good provision. There is a shared vision of how to continue to drive improvement and respond to the needs of children and their families.

- Children enjoy playing with a wide range of good quality toys and materials. Activities are based on children’s interests and the environment supports their independent play and learning well. This means children settle quickly and make good progress.

It is not yet outstanding because:

- The evaluation of teaching is not always rigorous enough to clearly identify specific areas for improvement for individual staff.

- Staff sometimes overlook opportunities to extend children's mathematical development further.
What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- strengthen the evaluation of staff teaching so that specific areas for improvement for individuals can be identified and supported through targeted professional development
- make the most of every opportunity to extend children's mathematical understanding to help children achieve the best possible progress.

Inspection activities

- The inspector observed the quality of teaching during activities indoors and outdoors, and assessed the impact this has on children's learning.
- The inspector completed a joint observation with the playgroup manager.
- The inspector held a meeting with the playgroup manager.
- The inspector looked at relevant documentation, discussed self-evaluation and viewed evidence of the suitability of staff working in the playgroup.
- The inspector spoke to a small selection of parents during the inspection and took account of their views.

Inspector

Ruth Patel
Inspection findings

Effectiveness of the leadership and management is good

The manager and her team effectively review the overall quality of the playgroup and identify areas for further improvement. Safeguarding is effective. Thorough recruitment procedures ensure that staff are suitable to work with children. Staff have a good awareness of how to keep children safe and ensure their welfare. The manager provides good support through staff supervision. She makes good use of their individual skills to enhance the care and teaching children receive. The progress of different groups of children across the playgroup is well monitored. As a result, any gaps in learning are effectively addressed. The playgroup establishes good partnerships with external agencies. Appropriate interventions are secured and children quickly receive the support they need to improve their outcomes.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good

Staff know the children very well. They gather information about children's capabilities when they start at the setting and use this information to plan appropriate activities for them. They complete short and long observations to devise children's next steps in learning. These are known by all staff and consistently followed through as part of the weekly key-person activity. Staff effectively promote children's communication and language skills, modelling new words and encouraging children to describe what they see. While sharing books and reading stories, the children begin exploring letters and sounds. Children explore colour through activities, such as marble painting and collage. They demonstrate an understanding of how things work as they direct remote controlled cars in different directions.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare are good

Staff understand each child's needs and ensure these are consistently met. Children respond warmly to the caring staff and build secure bonds with them. Staff are good role models. They play alongside children, helping them to understand how to share and take turns. They praise positive behaviour which boosts children's self-esteem. As a result, children behave well and learn to be kind to each other. The thoughtfully planned playrooms create an enabling environment for children where they can develop their independence. Good hygiene practices are promoted through everyday routines. Snacks are nutritious and children learn to independently manage their lunchboxes. Children freely access the outdoor area for the majority of each session. Their physical development is promoted well as they balance, climb and use wheeled toys.

Outcomes for children are good

Children are confident, happy and settled in this welcoming playgroup. Staff provide a stimulating environment for the children to learn in. All children make good progress from their starting points, including those in receipt of funding. All children develop the skills and attitudes needed to prepare them well for the eventual move to school.
Setting details

Unique reference number 221743
Local authority Cambridgeshire
Inspection number 854593
Type of provision Full-time provision
Day care type Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children 2 - 5
Total number of places 41
Number of children on roll 99
Name of provider Priory Park Early Years Centre Committee
Date of previous inspection 16 June 2011
Telephone number 01480 375136

Priory Park Playgroup was registered in 1979. The playgroup employs 15 members of childcare staff, 13 of whom hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3 or above, including one at level 5. The playgroup opens from Monday to Friday during term time. Sessions are from 9am to 3pm. 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, disabled children and those with special educational needs.

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