

Holy Apostles Playgroup

Holy Apostles C of E School, Battledown Approach, Cheltenham, Gloucestershire,
GL52 6QZ



Inspection date

Previous inspection date

13 October 2015

21 June 2012

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
	Previous inspection:	Outstanding	1
Effectiveness of the leadership and management		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment		Requires improvement	3
Personal development, behaviour and welfare		Requires improvement	3
Outcomes for children		Requires improvement	3

Summary of key findings for parents

This provision requires improvement. It is not yet good because:

- The provider does not have robust systems in place to ensure that volunteers and practitioners are suitable for their role. Although all staff hold a required Disclosure and Barring Service check, the provider does not follow their own recruitment procedures and does not always interview or take up verified references for all staff.
- The manager does not make good use of supervision and training to support staff to improve their personal effectiveness. This has an impact on the quality of teaching and outcomes for children.
- The quality of teaching is variable and some activities do not capture children's interest or provide a good level of challenge. As a result, children do not always show high levels of involvement in what they are doing or make the best possible progress.
- Staff do not always organise the day well to enable children to follow their interests and make choices about what to do. For example, children often move from one whole group activity to another. At these times children become distracted and unsettled.
- The provider does not make effective use of self-evaluation to accurately identify areas of the provision that require improvement.

It has the following strengths

- Staff provide plenty of opportunities for children to play outside in the fresh air. This promotes their physical well-being. Children learn about the natural world. For example, they enjoy playing in the 'mud kitchen', watering the vegetables they helped plant and recycling food waste to use as compost.
- Parents speak highly about the provision. Staff provide parents with regular information about their child's development. They organise opportunities for parents to find out about the routines of playgroup. This sharing of information enables parents to support learning at home.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

	Due Date
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ improve recruitment practice to ensure that robust and rigorous procedures are followed to ensure the suitability of those employed to work with children 	23/11/2015
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ improve supervision, mentoring and training for all staff to improve the quality of teaching and outcomes for children 	23/11/2015
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ make better use of information about individual children's developmental stage to plan activities that provide challenge, capture children's interest and help them make good progress. 	23/11/2015

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

- promote better outcomes for children by ensuring that self-evaluation accurately identifies improvements to be made
- review the organisation of the day to improve the length of whole group activities and so that children can make more choices about what to do to enable them to make the best possible progress.

Inspection activities

- The inspector observed children and staff indoors and outdoors.
- The inspector carried out a joint observation with the manager.
- The inspector spoke to staff about their understanding of child protection, safeguarding and first aid.
- The inspector spoke to parents and took account of their views.
- The inspector sampled documentation, including policies and children's records.

Inspector
Sarah Holley

Inspection findings

Effectiveness of the leadership and management requires improvement

The provider and manager do not fully implement all statutory requirements. Overall, safeguarding is effective. Staff demonstrate that they know what they must do if concerned about a child's welfare. However, the provider does not always follow their own recruitment procedures before appointing staff to fully assess their suitability. The manager involves parents, staff and children in reviewing the provision and makes some improvements, for example, the development of the 'mud kitchen'. However, she has not used this process to effectively prioritise areas for improvement, such as addressing the variable quality of the teaching. This has an impact on the progress children make. She has built useful links with staff at nearby schools. For example, she arranges visits, which help children feel comfortable about these surroundings in preparation for the move to school when the time comes.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment requires improvement

Most staff are well qualified. However, the quality of teaching is variable. Staff play alongside children in the 'mud kitchen', such as by encouraging them to make pretend dinner and to count and sort cooking utensils. This encourages children to use their imagination and develops their mathematical skills. Staff captured children's interest during a story making activity, for example, through using puppets. However, at other times teaching is less effective. Although staff supervise children well outdoors, they do not provide a great deal of challenge through their interactions. As a result, although children are generally happy, they are not especially involved in their learning. Staff do not organise resources well indoors for children to extend their own learning. For example, the home corner is packed away before morning snack time. Staff do not always organise whole group activities well. For example, not all children can see the books or hear the staff easily during some story times, and they lose interest.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare require improvement

Staff help children's developing confidence in their own abilities. For example, they show children how to change their shoes and encourage older children to take care of their own personal needs. Staff are kind and welcoming to children new to the setting. They offer plenty of cuddles and reassurance to help children settle. This promotes children's emotional well-being. Children generally behave well, and are polite and welcoming to visitors. However, children often become more disruptive when they are asked to sit for extended periods, such as snack times and 'mat time', and learning is lost.

Outcomes for children require improvement

Children are generally meeting the expected levels of development that are typical for their age. Overall, children gain the skills needed for their future learning.

Setting details

Unique reference number	510068
Local authority	Gloucestershire
Inspection number	826226
Type of provision	Full-time provision
Day care type	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Registers	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register, Voluntary Childcare Register
Age range of children	2 - 4
Total number of places	24
Number of children on roll	40
Name of provider	Holy Apostles' Pavillion Groups Committee
Date of previous inspection	21 June 2012
Telephone number	01242 526858

Holy Apostles Playgroup registered in 1994. It is located in Cheltenham, Gloucestershire. It opens 9am to 3pm Monday, Tuesday and Friday and 9am to 12 noon Wednesday and Thursday, term time only. The provider receives funding to provide free early years education to children aged two, three and four years. There are 8 members of staff; 7 of whom have relevant childcare qualifications between level 2 and level 6, the manager holds Early Years Professional Status.

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