

St Andrews Playgroup

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



Inspection date

24 November 2015

Previous inspection date

3 July 2015

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
	Previous inspection:	Inadequate	4
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:

- Not all activities are resourced well enough to excite and extend children's learning. There are limited opportunities for children to self-select their own resources and continuous play provisions do not provide children with sufficient challenge.
- The assessment of children's learning is not always used to plan suitability challenging experiences for children.

It has the following strengths

- The committee have worked exceptionally hard to make the required improvements since the last inspection to bring about positive changes.
- Parents speak positively about the playgroup. They report that they are well informed; they know who their child's key person is and are provided with opportunities to continue their child's learning at home.
- The committee and designated person for safeguarding have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities so that they can support the staff team effectively. As a result children are protected.
- Procedures for managing the performance of staff have been developed to include peer observations and these are used as part of staff supervision. As a result less confident staff have been provided with mentors to help them improve their practice.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

	Due Date
■ review and improve the planning and presentation of activities within the learning environment, in order to encourage children to explore and investigate and develop their own ideas	29/03/2016
■ continue to develop staffs knowledge of assessment of children's learning so that it can be used effectively to plan suitability challenging experiences.	29/03/2016

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

- consider how the learning environment can provide a range of positive images which reflect and value the diversity of children's experiences.

Inspection activities

- The inspector observed activities in the playroom and the outdoor area.
- The inspector carried out a joint observation with the manager.
- The inspector spoke to members of staff and children at appropriate times during the inspection.
- The inspector took account of the views of the parents whose children currently attend the playgroup.
- The inspector looked at children's records, planning documentation, evidence of the suitability of staff working in the playgroup and a range of other documentation, including policies and procedures.

Inspector

Lesley Barrett

Inspection findings

Effectiveness of the leadership and management requires improvement

Since the last inspection the committee have worked very hard to improve their knowledge and understanding of their role. They have attended training to improve their knowledge of robust recruitment procedures and their responsibility towards safeguarding to ensure that they can guide the staff team effectively. There is a wide range of relevant policies and procedures in place to positively support the operation of the playgroup. However, the manager does not lead the staff team effectively. There are weaknesses in monitoring the quality of the provision. Resources provided in areas such as the story area, role play and craft areas are limited and lack sufficient challenge for children. There are also limited opportunities for children to self-select their own resources and the range of positive images which reflect and value the diversity of children's experiences are minimal.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment requires improvement

The quality of teaching is variable. Most staff are perceptive and skilful in how they support children to extend and develop their play. They make good use of spontaneous activities; for example a cardboard box with its paper packing is used as a fun learning experience for children. They play a memory game and discover what they can find hidden amongst the paper. The children enjoy listening to stories and join in with the rhyming words or familiar phrases supporting the development of their language skills. However, some staff do not have an adequate knowledge of the assessment process to enable them to plan effectively for children's next steps in learning. Staff working with children with additional needs have a clear understanding of their role and work effectively with other agencies. Regular 'let's play together sessions' are planned and include the involvement of more able children who can model good language and turn-taking skills to help the development of those children with additional needs.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare require improvement

Most children arrive happily at the playgroup and show that they are familiar with the routines as they recognise their own name and self-register. The effective deployment of staff means that all children can be given appropriate support as required, particularly those who take a little longer to settle. Children behave well. Staff provide gentle reminders about what is expected of them, so that children can understand what they need to change in the way they behave. Children play well alongside each other and in most cases can share and cooperate with other children. Children are provided with opportunities to play outside during the session where they can increase their physical skills and take part in fun messy play activities. For example; they enjoy looking for things buried in the soil and staff encourage them to count how many things they have found.

Outcomes for children require improvement

Children are developing some valuable skills in readiness for starting school. They are learning to become independent in self-help skills such as using the toilet independently and dressing themselves for outdoor play with little adult support.

Setting details

Unique reference number	251641
Local authority	Suffolk
Inspection number	1032808
Type of provision	Sessional provision
Day care type	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Registers	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register, Voluntary Childcare Register
Age range of children	2 - 5
Total number of places	24
Number of children on roll	43
Name of provider	St Andrews Playgroup Committee
Date of previous inspection	3 July 2015
Telephone number	01502 530511

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.

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