

Soham Playgroup

Soham Childrens Centre, Weatheralls School Site, Pratt Street, Soham, Ely,
Cambridgeshire, CB7 5BH



Inspection date

20 May 2016

Previous inspection date

12 November 2015

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	Good	2
	Previous inspection:	Inadequate	4
Effectiveness of the leadership and management		Good	2
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment		Good	2
Personal development, behaviour and welfare		Good	2
Outcomes for children		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents

This provision is good

- Self-evaluation is embedded in practice at the playgroup. Staff, committee and parents collaborate their ideas to inform targeted action plans for improvement. This has been especially effective in identifying ways to strengthen the committee knowledge and has helped them to begin to work as one to improve the provision.
- Staff value the opportunity to develop their knowledge and skills. They attend training which is well targeted in helping them improve outcomes for children and continually reflect on their learning to bring about change. Ultimately, children's good progress is evidenced due to staff's enhanced awareness and understanding.
- All staff demonstrate a good awareness of how children learn through play. Teaching is consistently good and supports all children to develop the skills of an independent and inquisitive learner.
- Support for children who have special educational needs or disability is especially strong. Staff working with individuals are skilled in their roles and enable children to access play and learning to suit their individual needs. Partnerships with outside professionals are highly effective and contribute to the good practices for sharing information between everyone concerned.
- Staff are particularly skilled at providing a nurturing environment where children thrive and grow in confidence. Strong and trusting emotional bonds are evident between staff and children who play and learn happily together.

It is not yet outstanding because:

- Although partnerships with parents are good, current strategies to engage them with children's learning at home have been less successful.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- strengthen partnerships with parents and find innovative ways to encourage them to share information about their children's learning at home.

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 deputy manager and committee members. She looked at relevant documentation, such as the playgroup's self-evaluation and evidence of the suitability of staff working in the playgroup.
- The inspector spoke to a small number of parents during the inspection and took account of their views.

Inspector

Jacqueline Baker

Inspection findings

Effectiveness of the leadership and management is good

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Staff are knowledgeable about child protection issues and how to report their concerns. Since the last inspection, the committee has embraced their responsibilities and has taken steps to ensure that all individuals are suitable for their roles. Background checks have been carried out and Ofsted has been informed of all members. Furthermore, the committee have undergone training to improve their knowledge of the early years requirements and are proactive in supporting the manager to monitor practice. Recruitment procedures for staff are robust and ensure only the best are employed at the playgroup. Professional management systems are in place and are effective in enhancing teaching, knowledge and skills of all staff. The manager is diligent in her monitoring of children's progress. Gaps in development are quickly identified and those at risk of falling behind are supported effectively to bring about swift improvements.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good

Children thoroughly enjoy playing and learning at playgroup. They confidently find their own toys and demonstrate good concentration skills as they engage in their chosen activities. Staff are skilful and use a variety of strategies to effectively promote children's learning as they play alongside. Children learn to work things out for themselves and are encouraged to keep trying with their chosen task. When gentle guidance is needed, children learn quickly. For example, children watch and listen carefully to staff and are soon able to successfully fit different components together to build toy flowers. Children play with dough and in doing so develop coordination and manipulation skills by using tools, such as cutters and rolling pins. Children communicate well with friends and staff. When necessary, appropriate professional help is sought by staff to ensure all children are able to convey their wants and needs successfully. Those learning English as an additional language benefit from effective strategies implemented by staff. This has been the result of recent targeted training to address recommendations from the last inspection.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare are good

Children are happy and secure at the playgroup. Staff know them exceptionally well and this has a very positive impact on children's general well-being. Behaviour is very good and children respond well to the gentle reminders and guidance consistently given by staff as they play and learn. Children learn to keep themselves from harm when they play outside. For example, children are encouraged to wear sunhats in hot weather and take care when playing with bats and balls. Nutritious snacks are promoted by staff and help children to develop a good understanding of healthy lifestyles.

Outcomes for children are good

Children thoroughly enjoy their experiences at playgroup. They learn to leave parents for the first time, become more independent and make new friends. Children particularly appreciate the freedom to explore new toys and activities. They are inquisitive, busy and keen to learn. When the time comes, children have the skills needed to move confidently to nursery.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY390532
Local authority	Cambridgeshire
Inspection number	1033264
Type of provision	Sessional provision
Day care type	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Registers	Early Years Register
Age range of children	2 - 4
Total number of places	25
Number of children on roll	39
Name of registered person	Soham Playgroup Committee
Registered person unique reference number	RP528796
Date of previous inspection	12 November 2015
Telephone number	07423810688

Soham Playgroup was registered in 2009. The playgroup employs 10 members of childcare staff. Of these, nine hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 2 and 3. The playgroup opens term time only from 9am until 11.30am on Monday, Wednesday and Friday. Additionally between Monday and Friday the playgroup opens between 11.45am until 2.45pm. The playgroup provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

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