

Hexton Village Playgroup

St Faiths Centre Church, Hexton, Hitchin, Hertfordshire, SG5 3JN



Inspection date

14 December 2016

Previous inspection date

5 February 2013

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	Good	2
	Previous inspection:	Good	2
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

- The well-qualified team of staff demonstrate good teaching qualities. They provide children with suitable challenge to help them achieve their next steps in learning. For example, children have plentiful opportunities to learn how to use tools safely as they cut using scissors and slice vegetables with a knife.
- The positive relationships between staff and effective deployment help the smooth running of the playgroup. Staff are organised and work cooperatively to enable the seamless flow of activities they offer to children.
- Children are skilful communicators who become animated as they talk about their home experiences. Staff show a genuine interest in what children have to say and provide them with time to engage in meaningful discussion. Children learn to listen and value the contributions others make.
- The key-person system is managed effectively by staff to help children build secure attachments and promote their well-being. Staff work closely with parents to help children overcome their common fears and quickly build their levels of confidence.
- Parents are very happy with the care staff provide and describe the playgroup as an extension of their family. They appreciate the focused attention children receive as part of a small group and say that they would highly recommend the playgroup to others.

It is not yet outstanding because:

- Although the manager has introduced a system for tracking children's progress, this is not yet refined enough to inform more-rigorous analysis of the impact of teaching and intervention for different groups of children.
- Occasionally, staff do not gather as much detail as possible from parents about children's learning at home when they start at the provision, in order to focus their early planning precisely on children's next steps.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- refine the tracking of children's progress, in order to inform more-rigorous analysis of the impact of teaching and intervention for different groups of children
- seek more-detailed initial information from new parents about their children's learning to further support accurate assessments of children's starting points.

Inspection activities

- The inspector observed the quality of teaching during activities indoors and outdoors, and assessed the impact this has on children's learning. She spoke to children at appropriate times throughout the inspection.
- The inspector completed a joint observation with the manager and held discussions with all members of staff.
- The inspector held a meeting with the manager. She discussed self-evaluation and looked at a range of documentation, including policies, improvement plans, notes from staff supervision meetings and children's learning records.
- The inspector took account of the views of parents through discussions on the day, reviews from the playgroup's website and written feedback.
- The inspector saw evidence of the qualifications and suitability of all persons working on the premises and other documentation in relation to the safeguarding and welfare requirements.

Inspector

Rachel Pepper

Inspection findings

Effectiveness of the leadership and management is good

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Staff have a good knowledge of child protection and are aware of the signs that may indicate a child is at risk of harm. They know where to access the telephone numbers to make a referral. The manager values the ongoing support of an early years adviser. This enables her to support continuous improvement and gain clarification as needed on the requirements. Supervision meetings are used well to identify the needs of staff and help maintain their good quality practice. Staff welcome the views of parents to continually improve the service they provide. For example, following past feedback, the opening hours of the playgroup have been extended to correspond with the times parents drop older siblings at the nearby school. The manager uses effective methods to source information about children's progress from the other settings they attend. This helps to promote children's continuity of care.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good

Staff provide a good balance of adult-led and child-chosen activities across each week. They regularly observe children and get to know them well. They use this information to inform their planning and support children's continued progress. Children embrace the interesting range of experiences on offer and revel in staff's regular praise for their achievements. Staff suggest narratives for children's play. Children enjoy dressing up with friends, trying on a range of outfits and accessories, such as scarves and floppy hats. They make pretend stew for dinner, preparing a selection of seasonal vegetables. Staff demonstrate how tools work and provide children with materials to ignite their creativity. Children concentrate as they assemble a robin out of card. They use scissors to cut legs for their bird and glue to affix the different components. Children proudly compare their finished designs to the robins that are regular visitors to the playgroup garden.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare are good

Staff give children clear expectations and gentle reminders to promote their good behaviour. They encourage children to consider and respect each other's differences. For example, they talk about how other children may have different musical taste or choose alternative ways to do things. Children learn about foods that are good for them, that help to make them strong or give them more energy. Staff sensitively correct children and provide them with explanations to improve their learning. For example, they talk about the size of the human brain and why their heart rate increases after physical exercise. Children have many opportunities for high-energy play. They move around objects at speed as they ride scooters outdoors and jump high as they take part in action songs.

Outcomes for children are good

Children are working comfortably within the range of development typical for their age. They follow instruction well, confidently express their preferences and are keen to do things independently. Early literacy and mathematical development are effectively promoted. Children develop pencil control and show good levels of concentration as they draw and copy words staff have written. They solve problems and recognise numbers in the environment. Children gain the essential skills that they need in readiness for school.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY298449
Local authority	Hertfordshire
Inspection number	1064674
Type of provision	Full-time provision
Day care type	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Registers	Early Years Register
Age range of children	2 - 4
Total number of places	12
Number of children on roll	9
Name of registered person	Hexton Playgroup Committee
Registered person unique reference number	RP911466
Date of previous inspection	5 February 2013
Telephone number	01582 881481

Hexton Village Playgroup opened in 1983 and was registered in 2004. It is managed by a voluntary committee. The playgroup employs four members of childcare staff, of whom all hold an appropriate early years qualification at level 3. The playgroup opens Monday to Friday during term time only. Sessions are from 9am to 12.15pm with an optional lunch club until 1.15pm. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The playgroup provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

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