

Inspection of Sparrow Playgroup

Ascension Hall, Michaelson Avenue, Torrisholme, Morecambe, Lancashire LA4 6SF

Inspection date: 2 October 2019

Overall effectiveness	Good
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The quality of education	Good
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Behaviour and attitudes	Good
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Personal development	Good
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Leadership and management	Good
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Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Outstanding
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What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is good

Friendly and attentive staff offer children and their families a very warm welcome to the playgroup. Children arrive happy and eager to join in with activities. They demonstrate high levels of security and self-assurance. For example, they are confident to explore the environment and are entirely unfazed by new visitors to the playgroup. Staff show high expectations of children, providing many ways for them to be independent. For example, children enjoy finding their names from the board as they arrive and then posting their name label in the postbox to self-register. The atmosphere within the playgroup is calm and purposeful. Children become deeply engaged in their play and participate in wonderful conversations with staff or enjoy developing their own ideas independently. However, the timing and organisation of some group activities are not always well considered. Staff provide superb support for children's language and communication skills. They respond swiftly to signs of emerging gaps in children's learning. This means that targeted support is implemented without delay. Staff working with children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are committed and passionate about ensuring that all children are included.

What does the early years setting do well and what does it need to do better?

- There is a clear strong team spirit among the long-standing and well-established staff team. Morale is high and staff feel supported and highly valued by the manager. Good priority is placed on ensuring staff's workloads do not have a negative impact on practice. Training is targeted well. For example, staff reflect on their own practice to identify areas in which they feel they would benefit from training. This contributes well to staff's teaching skills.
- The whole team contributes to processes of self-evaluation, including seeking the views of parents and children, to make ongoing improvements to the playgroup. However, current processes for self-evaluation do not provide the manager with in-depth evaluations of all areas of practice in order to identify precise and targeted improvement plans.
- Overall, staff have a good knowledge of the curriculum and they implement all areas of learning well. They use their good knowledge of children to decide what they need to learn next. This helps to keep children motivated to learn. However, due to the routine of the session, staff gather all children at set times for group activities such as circle time. This results in children's play being interrupted unnecessarily and their learning not as well supported.
- Support for children's communication skills is a distinct strength. Staff offer a wonderful narrative as they play with children. For example, they take care to speak clearly and at a good pace. Staff introduce new vocabulary, which children then go on to use in their own play. Staff ask questions to check children's understanding and encourage them to recall their previous learning.

- Children use a range of skills outside in the well-resourced garden area. They use their imaginative skills to make 'hot chocolate' in the mud kitchen, where they use their small-muscle movements to dig, scoop and pour. Children recognise numerals and confidently use numbers in their play, due to staff's good teaching and implementation of planned activities.
- The curriculum for children with SEND remains ambitious and meets their needs very well. Staff determinedly engage children in activities and support them where necessary to be involved and included. Key persons work very closely with parents and involved professionals to thread information and advice into individual planning.
- Partnership working is excellent. Parents are kept well informed about their children's progress and are regularly invited to share information about children's learning at home. Parents speak highly of the playgroup. They comment positively on the progress their children have made since starting and how much they enjoy attending.
- Children have superb opportunities to learn about people, families and communities beyond their immediate experience and understand what makes them unique. Interesting displays showing a diverse range of people and family dynamics help provide a talking point for children and a reference for staff during play. Children enjoy visits from parents to talk about their family traditions and cultures, and to share traditional foods for children to try.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The manager and staff have firm knowledge and understanding of the safeguarding and child protection procedures to help protect children's safety and welfare. Staff are highly trained in safeguarding and regularly revisit safeguarding matters during staff meetings. This helps to ensure their ongoing vigilance. Staff are alert to children's safety and ensure that they play in a safe and secure environment. Accidents are managed well and staff follow legal requirements in relation to record-keeping and notifying Ofsted. The manager employs secure recruitment processes to ensure the suitability of staff and committee members.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- strengthen systems for self-evaluation so that precise and targeted priorities are identified, to help drive development even further and raise the quality of provision to an outstanding level
- focus more precisely on arrangements for group activities so that children are able to find a natural conclusion to their play, and learning is supported to the very highest levels.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY366291
Local authority	Lancashire
Inspection number	10109892
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register
Day care type	Sessional day care
Age range of children	2 to 4
Total number of places	32
Number of children on roll	43
Name of registered person	Sparrow Playgroup
Registered person unique reference number	RP908334
Telephone number	01524 833 165
Date of previous inspection	19 May 2014

Information about this early years setting

Sparrow Playgroup registered in 2008. The playgroup is situated in Morecambe, Lancashire and is open during term times on Monday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday. Sessions are from 9.30am to midday and 12.30pm to 3pm. Eight staff work at the playgroup, all of whom hold relevant early years qualifications. The playgroup receives funding to provide free early education for two-, three-, and four-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Katie Sparrow

Inspection activities

- The inspector completed a tour of the premises with the manager and held discussions about the early years provision and meeting children's needs.
- A joint observation was carried out and the inspector took account of the manager's evaluations.
- The inspector held discussions with staff, children and parents at appropriate times during the inspection.
- The inspector looked at a sample of the playgroup's documentation. This included suitability checks on staff and safeguarding policies.
- A meeting was held between the inspector and the manager to discuss leadership and management arrangements.

We carried out this inspection under sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006 on the quality and standards of provision that is registered on the Early Years Register. The registered person must ensure that this provision complies with the statutory framework for children's learning, development and care, known as the early years foundation stage.

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