

Inspection of Soham Playgroup

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

Inspection date: 17 January 2020

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	Good
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What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is good

Children arrive at playgroup full of enthusiasm. They settle quickly and eagerly join in with the activities. Staff know the children well and develop warm and affectionate relationships with them. Children engage in a broad range of well-planned activities that reflect their individual interests. For example, some children's recent experience of cold weather has led to activities where children learn about colder climates, such as the Arctic. Staff skilfully build on what children already know and extend their language skills. Children discuss photographs of snowy weather with staff and explore the properties of ice. They consider what penguins look like and match pictures with small-world figures.

Children behave well. They are kind and caring in their interactions with others. Staff are good role models and praise children warmly when they help with daily tasks, such as tidying away the toys. This enhances children's self-esteem and gives them a sense of pride in their achievements. Children enjoy frequent outings into the community. They learn where their friends live and visit the church and local shops. Staff invite people into the playgroup, such as the local dentist and police officer. Children readily access resources that help them learn about other communities, such as books that teach them how Traveller families live.

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

- The dedicated and experienced staff work well together. They are caring and attentive, and have a good understanding of children's individual needs. Children demonstrate that they feel safe and secure at playgroup. Staff are quick to respond when children need additional help. They have good links with other agencies that help them to support children, such as the children's centre.
- Staff place high importance on developing children's interest in literacy. They encourage children to choose books for themselves and have daily story times. Staff read skilfully, and ignite children's interest by introducing puppets and props. Children listen attentively to stories about polar bears and excitedly speculate on who the bear's friends might be. Children who are learning English as an additional language do not have enough opportunities to hear and use their home language in order to boost their confidence in speaking English.
- Overall, children's health is promoted effectively. Children have many opportunities to be physically active. They enjoy energetic activities, such as riding tricycles and using the school climbing frame. Staff teach children about the importance of good hygiene habits. However, children do not have consistent messages that encourage them to make healthy food choices. For example, snacks and lunches sometimes lack fresh, nutritious ingredients.
- Parents are very complimentary about the staff. They say they find them friendly and approachable. Staff work hard with parents to involve them in their

children's learning. They post information about daily activities online and arrange regular meetings to discuss children's progress. Staff encourage parents to become involved in the playgroup. For example, parents accompany children on their community visits.

- The management committee offers strong support to staff. They and the manager monitor staff's well-being and provide good opportunities for regular training. Staff say they feel valued and listened to. They benefit from frequent team meetings where they share ideas and enhance their teaching practice.
- Ofsted does not currently hold the necessary information to complete suitability checks on some management committee members. The nominated person, who is also the manager, has taken appropriate steps to ensure there is no impact on children's welfare. The committee members affected are required to send their information to Ofsted to enable these checks to be completed.
- There is an excellent relationship with the on-site nursery and primary school, which most children will move on to. Children join in school activities and explore the school grounds. They meet their new teachers so there are familiar faces to greet them on their first day at nursery.
- Staff's deep knowledge of children helps them to provide experiences that promote children's good progress across the curriculum. They have high expectations of what children can achieve, and carefully plan for what children need to learn next. They use their assessments of what children already know to expand their horizons and prepare them for the next stage of their learning, including starting school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff undertake regular safeguarding training. They have a confident understanding of the signs of child abuse and the procedures to be followed if they believe a child is at risk. The management committee and the manager have secure procedures for staff recruitment. Children are supervised well and the setting is safe and secure.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

To meet the requirements of the early years foundation stage, the provider must:

	Due date
provide Ofsted with the necessary information about committee members to enable suitability checks to be carried out.	07/02/2020

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

- extend opportunities for children who have English as an additional language to use and hear their home language
- enhance the consistency of messages given to children about healthy and less-healthy food choices.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY390532
Local authority	Cambridgeshire
Inspection number	10062125
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register
Day care type	Sessional day care
Age range of children	2 to 3
Total number of places	25
Number of children on roll	21
Name of registered person	Soham Playgroups Windmills Under Fives
Registered person unique reference number	RP528796
Telephone number	07423810688
Date of previous inspection	20 May 2016

Information about this early years setting

Soham Playgroup registered in 2009. The playgroup employs 10 members of childcare staff. Of these, eight hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3. The playgroup opens term time only from 8.45am until 2.45pm on Monday, Wednesday and Friday. The playgroup provides funded early education for two- and three-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Veronica Sharpe

Inspection activities

- The manager showed the inspector around the playgroup. She explained how the playgroup is organised and how she and staff plan the curriculum for children.
- The inspector spoke with a number of parents and took into account their views.
- The inspector observed children and their interactions with staff. She and the manager carried out a joint observation of a planned activity to evaluate the quality of teaching.
- The inspector had a meeting with the manager and the chair of the management committee. She looked at management processes and checked essential documents, such as suitability checks for staff.

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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