

Inspection of Hexham Community Centre Playgroup

Gilesgate, Hexham, Northumberland NE46 3NP

Inspection date: 16 March 2020

Overall effectiveness	Good
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The quality of education

Good

Behaviour and attitudes

Good

Personal development

Good

Leadership and management

Good

Overall effectiveness at previous
inspection

Outstanding

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is good

Children are happy and safe in this friendly and welcoming playgroup. Staff have a lovely and caring nature, and children form strong relationships with them. Overall, children are motivated and engaged learners. Staff model positive relationships to children, who play well together. Children listen well to staff and each other. They play together happily and learn to share and take turns. Staff value each child. For example, individual children have their own 'special day'. This gives them the opportunity to bring in their favourite toys and books from home, and share their experiences with their friends. Staff have high expectations for children and provide them with nurturing support to help them to make progress. Children are eager to learn and behave well.

Staff offer children many opportunities to learn about the community around them. For example, they go to the local pet shop and train station, meet with older people and engage in special events in the local community. Older children visit the 'wild side' in the local park and work out how to make bridges to get across the stream. They happily solve problems together, using stones, sticks and pebbles to help them to get to the other side. Staff encourage children to take part in community initiatives. For instance, children used real tools to make pretend ducks and floated them down the river in the local 'duck race'. Children persevere during activities. They complete jigsaw puzzles and build with construction materials, trying hard until they succeed. Staff encourage children to develop their mathematical understanding very well when they play. For example, they introduce counting and positional language.

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

- Children access many activities that help them to develop their physical skills needed for later writing. They play with dough and push sticks into it, paint pictures and draw pictures of bridges. Staff offer children lots of opportunities to be creative and access art and craft materials. Children imaginatively build with bricks and large crates.
- Overall, staff plan activities that meet children's individual needs. They assess what children know and can do, and plan for what they need to learn next. However, younger children have less opportunities to explore and investigate when they play in order to enhance their natural curiosities.
- Children are offered fresh air and exercise each day. They enjoy nutritious snacks and drinks. However, staff miss opportunities to encourage children to develop their independence. For example, they often put children's coats, wellington boots and outdoor clothing on them, without allowing them to have a go themselves first. Additionally, some resources are out of reach for the younger children, meaning that, at times, they can not easily choose what they

would like to play with.

- Staff promote children's early literacy skills well. Children regularly listen to stories and cuddle up with staff to read their favourite book. Staff listen carefully to children and ask them meaningful questions. They encourage children to enhance their speech and language, and introduce new vocabulary as they play.
- The manager and staff work hard to support children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. They liaise with a range of other professionals to put plans in place to support children to reach their full potential.
- Staff have established very good links with other settings that children also attend. They frequently share information about children's care and development to provide consistency in their learning. Staff also meet with staff at the local school to moderate their assessments of children's development.
- Partnerships with parents are strong. Parents receive information about their children's development and progress. For example, they have daily discussions with staff and access an online assessment system. Parents speak highly of the setting and comment that they are very happy with the service provided. They remark that they choose to travel quite far to the playgroup because their children like it so much. Parents state that they wish their children never have to leave when the time comes for them to move on to the next stage of their education.
- The manager is committed to providing focused training for staff. For example, training is planned for staff to lead forest-school activities. Staff receive regular support from the manager and are happy in their roles. There are clear plans for the development of the playgroup. For instance, the manager has plans to enhance the opportunities children have to play and learn outdoors.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff have a good knowledge of the possible signs and symptoms of abuse. They understand the action to take if they have a concern about a child in their care. Staff complete thorough risk assessments of the premises to ensure that children are well protected. They are vigilant about safety and put in place a range of procedures to help keep children safe. For example, staff make sure that children wear high-visibility jackets on outings and encourage children to hold onto a 'walking rope'.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- extend the opportunities that younger children have to explore and investigate when they play to help them to become fully engaged in their learning
- encourage children to develop their independence and self-care skills further.

Setting details

Unique reference number	301798
Local authority	Northumberland
Inspection number	10117707
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register
Day care type	Sessional day care
Age range of children at time of inspection	2 to 4
Total number of places	40
Number of children on roll	33
Name of registered person	Hexham and Tynedale Community Committee
Registered person unique reference number	RP519472
Telephone number	07799 105667
Date of previous inspection	19 November 2014

Information about this early years setting

Hexham Community Centre Playgroup registered in 1991 and is situated in Hexham Community Centre, Hexham. It employs six members of childcare staff. Of these, five members of staff hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3 and one member of staff holds qualified teacher status. The playgroup opens during term time from 9.10am to 3.10pm, Monday to Friday. It offers an early morning session from 8.40am to 9.10am, on request. The playgroup also offers a holiday club on two mornings each week during the school holidays. It provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector
Melanie Vincent

Inspection activities

- Ofsted is aware of the challenges that Covid-19 is currently posing to those we inspect. During this visit, the inspector took into consideration the impact of any measures being taken to slow the spread of Coronavirus by the setting. This has included the effect these measures have had on the current attendance of the children and staffing arrangements.
- The inspector took part in a learning walk with the manager to discuss the early years curriculum and how the environment is organised.
- The inspector observed the quality of education during activities indoors and outdoors, and assessed the impact this has on children's learning. She accompanied staff and children on a visit in the local community.
- The inspector and the manager evaluated children's learning together.
- The inspector held a meeting with the manager. She looked at relevant documentation, including evidence of the suitability of staff working in the playgroup.
- The inspector spoke with staff and children during the inspection. She also spoke to parents and carers during the inspection and took account of their views.

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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