

Inspection of Lordswood under 5's playgroup

Play hut, Ballens Road, Lordswood, Chatham, Kent ME5 8PG

Inspection date:

10 February 2022

Overall effectiveness

Inadequate

The quality of education

Inadequate

Behaviour and attitudes

Inadequate

Personal development

Inadequate

Leadership and management

Inadequate

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

Outstanding

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is inadequate

Children are at risk of harm because the leadership and management team cannot demonstrate that all those involved in the playgroup have been suitably checked to fulfil their role. This is a breach in requirements and compromises children's safety even though committee meetings are not held when children are present in the playgroup.

Children do not have a curriculum that challenges and extends their learning and development. The quality of interactions between staff and children is poor. Staff do not make the most of moments to build on what children are interested in or what they know. Consequently, children do not remain focused or engaged and wander from one activity to another. This has a negative impact on children's emotional well-being and their ability to make progress in their learning. Staff fail to put ambitious plans in place to help those children who are struggling in some areas of their learning and development. This impacts on some who need more support, particularly for those children with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

Despite the weaknesses, most children arrive at the playgroup happy and ready to play. Children enjoy what they have chosen to do from the variety of resources and activities available to them. They are keen to explore the well-resourced outdoor area. For example, they enjoy looking for bugs or making their own 'potions' in the 'mud kitchen'. They enjoy experimenting and discovering. For example, they notice what happens when they mix paint in the water tray, or use ink to make colourful pictures.

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

- The leadership and management team has failed to record information regarding criminal records checks made for members of the committee. Although this compromises children's safety, members of the committee do not work closely with the children. Therefore, the risk to children is minimised. The leadership team has informed Ofsted of who is on the committee, so that suitability checks can be carried out.
- The leadership and management team do not demonstrate the capacity to support and improve the quality of education in the playgroup. Staff do not have regular supervision to enhance their professional development. The manager's understanding of how the curriculum is sequenced is weak. This does not help staff improve their understanding of how to help children learn.
- Staff do not fully understand the intent or purpose of some activities to support children's learning effectively. The content of the curriculum is poor and does not improve the children's abilities or recognise their interests. Often, activities

lack challenge and children do not maintain focus or engage fully. This does not help children make progress in their learning.

- Staff do not have a clear focus for the activities they plan. Their weak knowledge and poor planning do not help children build on what they already know. Not all staff know the children or what they are capable of. Consequently, this does not help children gain the skills they need for their future learning, such as when they go to school.
- Most staff have an adequate knowledge of their key children. They gather some information about the children's care needs when they start at the playgroup. However, this knowledge is not shared widely with other members of staff. At times, this compromises children's well-being as staff do not know children well enough to support their needs.
- Communication with parents is weak. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, parents have never been into the playgroup. The impact of this on parents' understanding of what their children learn has not been adequately considered by the leadership team. Parents are not given strategies or specific advice to help children improve at home. There is no contact between staff and the other settings children attend. This does not provide staff with adequate information to build on children's experiences in these settings.
- Staff do not recognise when some children need extra help or specific interventions to support their learning and development. For instance, the manager recognises that some children's speech and communication skills need improving. However, there are no specific activities planned to help them gain the skills they need. Staff interactions with children are not consistently good and do not fully develop or extend children's language skills.
- At times, the environment becomes very noisy. Staff do not model good practice to support children's listening skills or respectfulness. For example, they talk over one another and the children during group times. Staff do not notice when children's over-exuberance and shouting is distressing to younger children in the group. This does not support children's well-being and self-confidence or their emotional development.
- Children benefit from a large and well-resourced outdoor area. This promotes children's physical skills well. Children can climb, run, ride and clamber in the interesting and stimulating environment. Children challenge their skills, such as when they climb the trees. They delight in exploring beneath the leaves and logs to find bugs and worms. They enjoy role play as they pretend to make fires with sticks and 'cook' on a campfire.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are not effective.

The leadership and management team do not record details of criminal records checks for members of their committee. This means children's safety is not assured. However, the staff have an adequate understanding of child protection and wider safeguarding issues. They know how to report their concerns and how to follow procedures if they are worried about a child. There are good systems in

place to ensure staff are suitable to work with children during their recruitment and induction. However, the key-person system is not robust enough to ensure all children's needs are adequately met. This does not support children's emotional well-being.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

	Due date
record and maintain details of the criminal records check for members of the committee, in line with requirements	01/03/2022
ensure all records are accessible and readily available for inspection	01/03/2022
improve arrangements for staff supervision and professional development, to help improve their knowledge and understanding of how children learn and to support children's positive behaviour	01/03/2022
improve staff practice so they can demonstrate the skills and knowledge to deliver a curriculum tailored to the needs of the children	31/03/2022
provide a range of stimulating and interesting activities that fully meet individual children's needs, focusing on what they need to do next to make good progress	01/03/2022
strengthen the key-person system, so that all children's individual needs are fully known, and to keep children safe	01/03/2022
provide parents with information about their children's progress, so they can support their learning and development at home	01/03/2022

provide children with rich opportunities to support their communication and language skills, to support their development across all areas of learning	01/03/2022
ensure staff obtain an accurate understanding of children's learning, interests and special educational needs and/or disabilities, and use this to plan relevant experiences for children.	01/03/2022

Setting details

Unique reference number	103823
Local authority	Medway
Inspection number	10108389
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register
Day care type	Full day care
Age range of children at time of inspection	2 to 4
Total number of places	30
Number of children on roll	61
Name of registered person	Lordswood Under 5's Playgroup Committee
Registered person unique reference number	RP904744
Telephone number	01634 867386
Date of previous inspection	12 March 2015

Information about this early years setting

Lordswood under 5's playgroup opened in 1976 and is in Chatham, Kent. The playgroup is open Monday to Friday from 9am to 3pm, term time only. They provide funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children. The playgroup employs 11 members of staff, 10 of whom hold appropriate early years qualifications, from level 2 to level 6. The manager has a level 6 qualification with early years professional status.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Alison Martin

Inspection activities

- This was the first routine inspection the provider received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the provider and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the provider.
- The manager joined the inspector on a learning walk and talked to the inspector about their curriculum and what they want their children to learn.
- The inspector spoke with children, staff and parents during the inspection and took account of their views.
- The inspector observed the quality of education being provided, indoors and outdoors, and assessed the impact this was having on children's learning.
- The inspector carried out a joint observation with the manager of a group activity.
- The inspector looked at relevant documentation and reviewed evidence of the suitability of staff working in the nursery.

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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