

Inspection of Fittleworth & District Playgroup

School Lane, Fittleworth, Nr Pulborough, West Sussex RH20 1JB

Inspection date: 4 May 2023

Overall effectiveness

Inadequate

The quality of education

Inadequate

Behaviour and attitudes

Inadequate

Personal development

Inadequate

Leadership and management

Inadequate

Overall effectiveness at previous
inspection

Inadequate

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is inadequate

Since the previous inspection, there has been ineffective monitoring to ensure steps are in place to drive improvement so that all children receive consistently good-quality care and education. Despite this, children are happy and settle quickly. They have positive relationships with their friends. They seek out others to negotiate play ideas and use sand timers to learn about turn taking to share resources.

Staff set up a variety of toys and equipment so children can make choices about where they want to play. They delight in being outdoors and confidently demonstrate physical skills. However, children receive variable learning experiences. This is because activities do not have clear intentions to precisely identify what children need to learn, to meet their development needs. For example, at times, very able children tend to wander and become bored. They engage in behaviours such as sitting on chairs and falling off them to attract the attention of staff. This is because staff do not adapt the activities on offer to provide sufficient opportunities to extend children's knowledge and ensure they are deeply engaged.

Children who require extra help to catch up do not all receive the consistent intervention work necessary to help them in their development. It is not clear how well development plans and strategies are understood and implemented by other staff when a child's key person is absent, to ensure plans remain effective and help all children reach their full potential.

There is a lack of attention to detail in how activities are implemented. Despite the promotion of language being a key priority, story times are uninspiring. Staff play a pre-recorded story to all the children on a laptop. This does not capture their attention sufficiently, and some lose interest and wander off. Children are told multiple times to sit down and turn around to listen to the story, despite there being multiple distractions and noise levels that make it difficult for children to listen, focus and concentrate. As a result, they become restless.

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

- The provider does not monitor the playgroup closely enough to ensure they have clear oversight and governance of how the provision is operating to drive improvement. They fail to identify issues with the manager that directly impact on the quality of care and education. Furthermore, applications for individuals connected to the registration are not monitored closely enough to ensure steps are taken in a timely manner to assure their suitability. As a result, actions are not in place to address the weaknesses in both safeguarding and welfare and

learning and development.

- The manager is clear about what children need to learn and why. She identifies key priorities for the curriculum based on recognising the lasting impact the pandemic has on children's development. However, staff do not have the same secure understanding of how to plan and implement an effective curriculum. They place too much emphasis on activities but do not have a clear intent for what they want children to learn. At times, experiences are poorly executed and learning opportunities are lost. This is because staff fail to consider wider aspects that affect the success of experiences, and they do not take steps to address this. For example, older children who attempt to practise using scissors are not shown how to hold them correctly, to develop their fine motor skills. Staff give confusing messages to children by praising them, despite not modelling how to use scissors for their intended purpose.
- Staff do not receive the training, coaching and support they need to understand and fulfil their roles and responsibilities in full. For example, junior staff are allocated key children despite having limited knowledge of the areas of learning. Supervision arrangements do not ensure that staff receive the precise support they need to carry out their roles competently. Key persons have not received the sufficient guidance to help them complete the progress check for their key children at the age of two. As a result, staff do not have the professional support to help them understand how to deliver a broad and balanced education to children and report on their findings for formal assessments.
- The special educational needs coordinator has a good knowledge of the children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who need extra help to catch up. However, the quality of support children receive is variable. There are inconsistencies between key persons working directly with their key children. Furthermore, there are no clear contingency arrangements for taking responsibility for what will be delivered to children in the key person's absence in line with the individual development plans. For example, clear plans are not in place to support children with their individual learning when their key person is absent.
- Children enjoy being with their friends during sociable mealtimes. However, behaviour starts to deteriorate, and children start to get up and wander from dinner tables. This is because children have to wait for an excessive amount of time to receive their lunch and pudding. Furthermore, children are not given regular opportunities to practice their independence skills. Staff often complete simple tasks for children despite them showing they are more than capable of carrying these out for themselves.
- Parents and carers speak very highly of the playgroup. They comment that they receive really good support and feedback about their children. They highlight the strong partnerships they have with the manager and the good relationships their children have with staff.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are not effective.

Not all staff have a robust understanding of how to keep children safe. Despite completing safeguarding training and regular updates during staff meetings, the provider has not monitored staff closely enough to assure themselves that gaps in knowledge have been addressed consistently. As a result, some staff are not clear about safeguarding issues. This includes bruising protocols for babies and signs that may indicate children and families are at risk of extremism or radicalisation. Furthermore, some staff are unsure about who they would report concerns to if they were worried about the conduct of an adult who works with children. Despite this, the manager follows safe recruitment and vetting procedures to ensure staff who have access to children are suitable. She also ensures the premises is checked daily so that it is safe, secure and suitable for children to access.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

The provision is inadequate and Ofsted intends to take enforcement action.

We will issue a Welfare Requirements Notice requiring the provider to:

	Due date
ensure all staff improve knowledge of safeguarding issues and know how to refer allegations against a colleague in line with local procedures	22/05/2023
ensure all staff receive effective training and coaching so they have a clear understanding of how to fully meet all aspects of their roles and responsibilities	22/05/2023
ensure key persons are equipped with the knowledge and skills to precisely meet the needs of children who need extra help to catch up	22/05/2023
implement effective arrangements to notify Ofsted of new trustees in a timely way so suitability can be assured.	22/05/2023

To meet the requirements of the early years foundation stage and Childcare Register the provider must:

	Due date
--	----------

take action to implement a clear, sequenced curriculum, where the intent for what children need to learn is precisely considered first and builds on what children know and can do	01/07/2023
plan and implement stimulating and purposeful learning that supports the needs of all children, and adapt experiences to provide sufficient challenge for the most able to enhance their learning to the highest level	01/07/2023
ensure all key persons receive support in how to complete the progress check for children aged two, so they can accurately report their findings to parents and professionals	01/07/2023
consider ways to improve the quality of interactive activities, including story times, reducing distractions and noise levels to help children maintain concentration and focus	01/07/2023
improve the way staff manage meal routines, to provide children opportunities to be independent and minimise excessive waiting times.	01/07/2023

Setting details

Unique reference number	113489
Local authority	West Sussex
Inspection number	10269874
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register, Voluntary Childcare Register
Day care type	Sessional day care
Age range of children at time of inspection	1 to 4
Total number of places	31
Number of children on roll	41
Name of registered person	Fittleworth and District Playgroup Committee
Registered person unique reference number	RP522724
Telephone number	01798 865 777
Date of previous inspection	1 December 2022

Information about this early years setting

Fittleworth & District Playgroup registered in 1992. It is managed by a voluntary committee. The playgroup operates from premises next to the primary school in Fittleworth, near Pulborough, West Sussex. The playgroup is in receipt of funding for the provision of early years education for children aged two, three and four years. The playgroup is open Monday to Friday, during term time only, from 8am until 3.45pm. A team of seven staff work with the children. Of these, six hold appropriate early years qualifications above level 3, including the manager, who is qualified to level 5.

Information about this inspection

Inspector
Sherrie Nyss

Inspection activities

- The inspector discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with the provider and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the provider.
- The inspector observed the interactions between children and staff and assessed the impact of teaching on children's learning.
- The manager completed a learning walk and joint observations with the inspector to explain the nursery's curriculum and assess the quality of teaching.
- Staff spoke to the inspector about their role, knowledge of their key children, training opportunities and the procedures they follow to keep children safe.
- Parents were invited to share their views about 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.

If you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk

This publication is available at <https://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2023