

Inspection of Birdwell Playgroup

Birdwell J&I School, Sheffield Road, Birdwell, Barnsley, South Yorkshire S70 5XB

Inspection date: 11 December 2023

Overall effectiveness	Outstanding
The quality of education	Outstanding
Behaviour and attitudes	Outstanding
Personal development	Outstanding
Leadership and management	Outstanding
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is outstanding

At Birdwell Playgroup, children are highly engaged in activities. These take place indoors and outside as children decide where to play. They lead their own play and share well with their friends. Children demonstrate exemplary behaviour. They take each other's hands to show them how to tidy up, and children helpers pour drinks for everyone at lunchtime.

Staff have created a playgroup rich in language. There are core books that children have embedded in their learning. For example, children discuss where a snake lives. They answer 'an underground house', showing their understanding of 'The Gruffalo' story. There is a buzz of energy and excitement at the playgroup. Children chop vegetables in the mud kitchen while working together to create a big bowl of cabbages and potatoes. They discuss with staff where vegetables come from. Other children 'stomp' dinosaurs over bridges and roll balls down gutters while staff embed understanding about prepositions, using words such as 'on', 'under' and 'through'. This is a focus of the bespoke curriculum.

Children enjoy experiencing the forest-school environment. They build a sleigh for Santa and take risks carrying large branches and planks of wood. Children find woodlice and discuss where insects live. They are extremely confident and talk to visitors about how much they love forest school and explain when they need to line up. Children are very positive about learning. Leaders and staff support children to thrive in their development. They work highly effectively with professionals and parents.

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

- Leaders implement a bespoke curriculum which is weaved through the whole playgroup. Even new staff use focus areas throughout activities and reinforce key vocabulary. The curriculum is clearly sequenced. Highly ambitious leaders explain why children need to develop fine motor skills, for example to support writing and putting coats on. All staff understand the intention of the curriculum. It is consistent and securely embedded throughout the playgroup.
- There is a culture for a love for books. Children pick up sticks, saying 'it's Stickman'. Staff sing songs throughout the day, singing 'chop chop' when cutting the bananas. Children are motivated to use language through the literacy provided. They demonstrate high levels of concentration during stories shared at group time.
- Children are confident and eager to talk. Staff ask questions to develop children's thoughts. They share knowledge to build understanding. In the woods, children find pine cones and staff explain how the little seeds grow.
- During forest-school activities, children take risks, working with friends to carry

extra large branches. Staff explore mathematics concepts by asking which is the 'biggest'. Children experience awe and wonder of the world as creatures are found and staff discuss habitats.

- Children are highly engaged with activities throughout the day and their behaviour is exemplary. They are consistently focused on learning. During group times, children concentrate and find objects that rhyme. They wait their turn and encourage each other.
- Independence skills are very strong. Children demonstrate this when they serve themselves snacks. They put their own coats on and get their friends their wellies. Children know how to keep themselves safe by holding the blades of the scissors when tidying up. Staff reinforce the safety messages. Children know how to look after themselves and when it is important to wash their hands.
- Children challenge themselves and experiment with objects. They roll balls down the pipes and work out how to pour the water down the cascading brook. Staff create a language-rich environment. They share new words with children, such as 'rivers' and 'streams'. Staff facilitate learning and tailor activities to highly motivate children's development.
- Children demonstrate high levels of resilience. For example, when the wooden plank does not fit on the obstacle course, children say it is broken before moving it to a safer place for walking on. Staff encourage children to work out how to fix the obstacle course. The development of children's gross motor skills is a focus of the curriculum.
- Staff fully engage with children. They are highly knowledgeable about the curriculum, including how children learn. The bespoke curriculum is highly embedded. Staff know why they have certain resources and activities available to support children's progress. This impacts on children, and their development is continuously progressing.
- Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are fully supported. Systems are in place to ensure intervention is sought for children swiftly. Staff swiftly support children struggling with changes in the daily routine, such as lunchtime. Staff give children hugs when needed and help with their emotions, ensuring children can return to their activities throughout the day.
- Parents sing the praises of staff and the playgroup. They are really happy and fully involved with their child's development. Parents are given information which helps them continue children's learning at home. They share feedback and support the playgroup's improvement plan through fundraising for new resources.
- Leaders and managers are passionate about children achieving the best outcomes. They are very reflective of practice. Leaders adapt where required to maintain the high standards. Children's opinions influence change. Staff feel fully supported, and this ensures their well-being is high.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders create a safeguarding culture at the playgroup where safety is the highest

priority. Staff are highly knowledgeable about signs and symptoms of possible abuse to be aware of. They know to refer and report to the designated safeguarding leader. They are confident to refer or report information themselves, if they feel appropriate action has not been taken. Leaders know the importance of reporting to the local authority designated officer if there is an allegation against staff. They are aware of local issues, such as county lines and the signs to be aware of, including who to report to.

Setting details

Unique reference number	302823
Local authority	Barnsley
Inspection number	10301375
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	2 to 4
Total number of places	36
Number of children on roll	41
Name of registered person	Corson, Debra
Registered person unique reference number	RP512148
Telephone number	01226 350790
Date of previous inspection	26 January 2018

Information about this early years setting

Birdwell Playgroup registered in 1993. The playgroup operates from rooms within Birdwell Junior and Infant School in Birdwell, Barnsley. The playgroup employs seven members of childcare staff, of whom five hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 1 or 3 and two have honours degrees. The playgroup opens Monday to Friday during term time. Sessions are from 9am to midday and from midday to 3pm, and a lunch club is available. The playgroup provides funded early education for two- and three-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Laurafay Muranka

Inspection activities

- This was the first routine inspection the playgroup 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 deputy manager, manager and inspector completed a learning walk together of all areas of the playgroup and discussed the early years curriculum.
- Children spoke with the inspector during the inspection.
- The inspector talked to staff at appropriate times during the inspection and took account of their views.
- The special educational needs coordinator spoke to the inspector about how they support children with SEND.
- The inspector observed the quality of education being provided, indoors and outdoors, and assessed the impact that this was having on children's learning.
- The inspector observed the interactions between staff and children.
- The inspector carried out joint observations of group activities with the manager.
- The inspector spoke to several parents during the inspection and took account of their views.
- The inspector looked at relevant documentation and reviewed evidence of the suitability of staff working in the playgroup.

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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