

Hartwell Pre-School Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspector Anne Gladstone

Setting address Hartwell Community Centre, School Lane, NORTHAMPTON,
NN7 2HL
Telephone number 07522924733
Email Hartwellplaygroup@live.co.uk
Type of setting Childcare - Non-Domestic

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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under Sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006 on the quality and standards of the registered early years provision. 'Early years provision' refers to provision regulated by Ofsted for children from birth to 31 August following their fifth birthday (the early years age group). The registered person must ensure that this provision complies with the statutory framework for children's learning, development and welfare, known as the *Early Years Foundation Stage*.

The provider must provide a copy of this report to all parents with children at the setting where reasonably practicable. The provider must provide a copy of the report to any other person who asks for one, but may charge a fee for this service (The Childcare (Inspection) Regulations 2008 regulations 9 and 10).

The setting also makes provision for children older than the early years age group which is registered on the voluntary and/or compulsory part(s) of the Childcare Register. This report does not include an evaluation of that provision, but a comment about compliance with the requirements of the Childcare Register is included in Annex B.

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Description of the setting

Hartwell Pre-School Playgroup opened in 1991 and operates from the community centre in a village close to Northampton in Northamptonshire. The group have access to the main hall, a kitchen, and toilets. All children use the adjacent park and playing field for outdoor activities. The group is open on Monday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday from 9.15am to 3.15pm and on Tuesday from 9.15am to 11.45am. Children can attend for various sessions. The group is open for 38 weeks of the year.

A maximum of 24 children may attend the playgroup at any one time. There are currently 34 children attending who are within the Early Years Foundation Stage. The playgroup is registered on the Early Years Register and on both the voluntary and the compulsory parts of the Childcare Register. There are 25 children who receive funding for early education. Children come from a wide catchment area.

The playgroup employs seven members of staff. Of these, four members of staff, including the play leader hold appropriate early years qualifications. The playgroup receives support from a qualified teacher and the local authority. They are a committee run group and have been accredited under the Pre-School Learning Alliance scheme.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children make good progress in their learning and development in this warm and caring playgroup. Adults know individual children well and have a good understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage. Children are safe and secure and their needs and well-being are thoughtfully supported. Overall staff promote children's learning through effective planning and resourcing to ensure children are suitably challenged. Partnerships with parents and the local school are a key strength and are significant in ensuring children's needs are met. Regular evaluation by the staff identifies strengths and priorities for development to ensure good outcomes for children.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To further improve the early years provision the registered person should:

- consolidate observation, assessment and planning to identify the value of planned activities to ensure all children are suitably challenged by the learning experiences provided
- review organisation of snack time to ensure adults' time is effectively used with children to support their learning.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children are well safeguarded in the playgroup because there are effective policies and procedures in place. There are robust procedures which ensure staff are suitable and well qualified to work with young children. Children are carefully supervised and staff are fully aware of their responsibilities with regard to safeguarding. Regularly updated risk assessments ensure that children are safe and resources are suitable and well maintained.

The environment is managed thoughtfully by staff who are knowledgeable about the Early Years Foundation Stage. The learning environment is well planned, accessible and meaningful. For example a quiet, comfortable area has been created where children can relax or read. This enables children to make good progress in their learning and development. Children are offered a diverse variety of experiences because resources used are relevant and managed well. Staff are generally well deployed which means that children are able to interact with interested adults to develop their ideas most of the time.

The playgroup is aware of its strengths and weaknesses through ongoing evaluation of practice. The staff team and the committee make ambitious plans to improve the provision and therefore children's outcomes. The ongoing development of the outdoor area is a good example of this. The playgroup has acted on recommendations from their previous inspection and from the Local Authority audit to ensure continued improvement.

Parents and carers are welcomed and valued in this playgroup. Very good partnerships with parents are fostered to ensure children's needs are effectively met. Information about individual children is actively sought to ensure they progress from their starting points towards the Early Learning Goals. Children's achievements are regularly shared with parents informally and through documentation such as individual learning journeys. The playgroup maintains close links with the local school and with local childminders. This ensures continuity for children between settings, particularly with respect to transition.

The playgroup has a commitment to offer the best experience possible to each child. They implement an equal opportunities policy as well as policies for Special Educational Needs and inclusion. This ensures that every child is carefully considered and supported. Staff are sensitive to children's individual needs, adapting experiences to give children equal opportunities to access play and learning.

The quality and standards of the early years provision and outcomes for children

Children enjoy being in the playgroup and feel safe and secure. Adults get to know individual children well and use this knowledge to promote their learning, development and well-being. Children's contributions and achievements are

consistently valued, for example children enjoy seeing photographs of their play which are on display. Children are well safeguarded because procedures are carefully followed and children are encouraged to play and interact safely.

Children are making good progress towards the Early Learning Goals. They are offered a range of planned and purposeful activities, covering all areas of development. Children participate enthusiastically and often become deeply involved in play. They follow their ideas to explore and be creative. Adults sensitively support their learning through discussing ideas, following their lead, challenging their thinking and playing alongside them. Children are developing good language and communication skills, including mathematical language. They have opportunities to explore books, have conversations with adults and each other and use mark making materials freely. Children are able to think critically and ask questions because they are offered open ended activities and resources. For example, a large cardboard box becomes an imaginary pirate ship. Children develop good skills for the future through the use of equipment, such as cameras and computers. Children's knowledge and understanding of the world is developing well. They are introduced to new and exciting experiences such as visits by local paramedics. Adults regularly observe the children. Their progress and achievements in all areas of development are well understood, enabling staff to identify next steps. This information is carefully documented, pictorially and in writing in children's individual learning journey folders. The observation, assessment and planning cycle is not fully consolidated in order to identify the value of planned activities to ensure all children are suitably challenged by the learning experiences provided.

Children's healthy lifestyles are promoted through being able to play and learn outdoors. They use the enclosed outdoor area and other activities such as nature walks in the local area are frequent. A range of healthy snacks such as fruit are offered. Children are encouraged to follow routines such as hand washing. This helps children to develop their awareness of keeping healthy.

Children's behaviour is very positive as adults take care to develop respectful relationships with them. Staff are clear in their expectations and model appropriate behaviour. Children's confidence and self-respect is developed and supported because adults praise and celebrate their achievements. Adults place importance on each child's needs and their emotional well-being. Children are also learning to have positive attitudes to diversity. Adults provide interesting experiences of other cultures and beliefs such as celebrating a range of festivals.

Annex A: record of inspection judgements

The key inspection judgements and what they mean

Grade 1 is Outstanding: this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality

Grade 2 is Good: this aspect of the provision is strong

Grade 3 is Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound

Grade 4 is Inadequate: this aspect of the provision is not good enough

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

How well does the setting meet the needs of the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?	2
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	2

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	2
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding	2
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	2
The effectiveness of partnerships	2
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	2

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

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Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	2
The extent to which children feel safe	2
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	2
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	2

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Annex B: the Childcare Register

The provider confirms that the requirements of the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are: Met

The provider confirms that the requirements of the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are: Met