

Broadlands Bright Sparks Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	223502
Inspection date	24/10/2008
Inspector	Mike Best
Setting address	Broadlands Primary School (The Annexe), Prospect Walk, Tupsley, Hereford, Herefordshire, HR1 1NZ
Telephone number	01432 278249
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Type of setting	Childcare on non-domestic premises

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 report includes information on any complaints about the childcare provision which Ofsted has received since the last inspection or registration whichever is the later, which require Ofsted or the provider to take action in Annex C.

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).

Description of the setting

Broadlands Bright Sparks Playgroup opened in 1979 and operates from an annexe within Broadlands Primary School, which is located on the eastern side of the city of Hereford. The accommodation comprises of a large room set out for a range of different activities. Children's toilets, a preparation area, office and storage space lead off the main room. There is direct access to a secure sensory garden and hard-standing area from the main room and the setting makes regular use of a grassed area in the school grounds. There is suitable access to the setting for children, parents and carers with physical disabilities.

A maximum of 24 children may attend the playgroup at any one time. The playgroup is open each weekday from 08:45 to 15:00 during term time. There are currently 28 children from two to five years on roll. Of these, five children receive funding for nursery education. Children come from the local and surrounding areas and most children go on to attend the school. The playgroup supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those at the early stages of learning English as an additional language.

The playgroup employs five staff, three of whom hold appropriate early years qualifications to National Vocational Qualification Level 3 and above. The group is supported by a mentor teacher and a development worker from the local authority. The setting has a good working relationship with the adjoining primary school and staff maintain informal links with other settings in the area.

The setting is currently on the Early Years Register.

Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

The playgroup provides well for its children. As a result of good leadership and management the individual needs of all children, and their health, safety and welfare, are promoted effectively. They very much enjoy their time at playgroup and achievement is good. The partnership between the playgroup and children's parents and carers is good and there are effective links with the adjoining primary school. Children are well prepared for the next stage of their education and their lives in the community. It has good capacity for on-going improvement.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- increase the involvement of parents and carers in planning the next steps in children's learning
- develop formal self-evaluation arrangements that involve staff, parents and the wider community

The leadership and management of the early years provision

The manager provides good leadership and management. The staff team work well together and successfully promote the setting's aims and values. Staff regularly discuss children's progress and planning activities. However, formal arrangements for evaluating the setting's work in conjunction with parents and members of the wider community are not established, although training is being currently undertaken. Nonetheless, effective steps have been taken to address the issues raised in the last inspection report. All the required policies are in place; they are known to staff and implemented effectively. Areas for further improvement are identified and targets are realistic. Regular in-service training keeps staff up to date with latest initiatives and provision.

Day-to-day routines are well established and understood by everyone. Children attend a variety of sessions and there are effective arrangements in place for managing this. There are good partnerships with parents, who are very pleased with what is provided. They receive frequent information about events and new initiatives. Staff, parents and carers meet informally at the start and end of sessions and more formal meetings are arranged as necessary. Parents and other members of the community make a valuable contribution in helping the children to celebrate such events as the Chinese New Year. Children learn about the area and the different jobs people in the community undertake. Staff ensure that all children are included in every activity and draw promptly on outside expertise for children who need support with their learning.

Relationships between staff and children are very good. The relaxed yet purposeful atmosphere is reflected in the way in which children sustain their interest in and enjoyment of, activities. Risk assessments are undertaken and reviewed regularly. Safeguarding arrangements are met in full and the manager keeps a written record of the checks that have been carried out. Staff are deployed well, making effective use of their talents and expertise. The playgroup has made good progress since its last inspection and has a good capacity for further improvement.

The quality and standards of the early years provision

The quality and standards of the early years provision are good. Children achieve well and make good progress towards the goals expected for their age. The staff provide a good range of well-resourced and exciting activities for the children, catering effectively for children's different interests and stages of development. Children are encouraged to discuss what they are doing, practise what they already know and engage in new experiences in both adult-led and independent activities. There is good provision for children to develop in all the areas of learning. Staff carefully incorporate children's skill development into play activities. Through careful observations of children's development and progress, they provide activities that are at an appropriate level for the children and are aware of those who may need additional support or challenge. However, there is limited involvement of parents and carers in planning the next steps in children's learning.

Children are well involved in the tasks they are set and make good progress in developing their skills and knowledge. In the water tray, they observe that some objects float whilst others sink, that some vessels hold more than others and that the speed of a water wheel is directly related to the amount of water passing over it. Children are enthusiastic about making marks to 'write' down their ideas and painting pictures to represent themselves, their families and recent events. Staff provide plenty of opportunities for children to talk with each other and with adults. Since the last inspection, staff have increased their focus on developing children's listening skills, particularly in preparatory work on letters and sounds. As a result, children are correctly identifying and saying the initial sounds of their names. The outside areas provide a good range of experiences for children to develop their physical skills and to develop their learning in other areas in a larger space.

The playgroup pays good attention to children's health, safety and security. Registers are taken promptly at the start of each session and children are actively involved in checking the number present. Staff maintain regular routines and set a good example by ensuring that children wash their hands before eating and after using the toilet. Nappy changing is undertaken sensitively and hygienically, and records are carefully kept. Children are encouraged to eat healthy snacks and lunches, and staff actively promote the social aspect of mealtimes. Road safety is promoted through role play within sessions and is practised through regular walks around the locality. Children are encouraged to handle tools and equipment safely, with staff leading by example.

A wide range of visits and visitors support the provision for developing children's contribution to the community. Local people come into the setting to talk about their work, their interests and what happened in the past. Children visit local shops and the post office, and regularly take part in activities organised with the school. A recent teddy bears' picnic involved children from the playgroup, the school and members of the community in getting to know each other better.

Children behave well and treat each other with care and respect, because of the positive relationships and good standard of care. Consistent encouragement and guidance from staff help children to play well together, take turns and share well. Children develop their independence well from the time they start at playgroup. They become confident and feel secure because they are encouraged to take responsibility for themselves, the equipment they use and for getting along with others. Children know where equipment is kept and tidy away systematically at the end of each session. Children concentrate for increasingly longer periods of time and this is enhanced by older children working and playing alongside younger ones.

The playgroup provides a colourful and appealing place for children to learn and play. Children's work is celebrated in displays and photographs. They are well prepared for the next stage of their education.

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

Overall effectiveness

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?	2
How well does the provision promote inclusive practice?	2
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement.	2

Leadership and management

How effectively is provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	2
How effective is the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement?	3
How well does the setting work in partnership with parents and others?	2
How well are children safeguarded?	2

Quality and standards

How effectively are children in the Early Years Foundation Stage helped to learn and develop?	2
How effectively is the welfare of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage promoted?	2
How well are children helped to stay safe?	2
How well are children helped to be healthy?	2
How well are children helped to enjoy and achieve?	2
How well are children helped to make a positive contribution?	2
How well are children helped develop skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being?	2

Any complaints about the inspection or report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

Annex C: complaint/s made to Ofsted

This section of the report includes details of any complaint/s made to Ofsted when:

- we took action for the provider to meet the requirements of the Early Years Register; or
- we asked the provider to take action in order to meet the requirements of the Early Years Register; or
- the provider had already taken any necessary action to meet the requirements of the Early Years Register.

We will not report on any complaint where the provider met the requirements of the Early Years Register or did not require any action by Ofsted or the registered provider.

Detail of the complaint/s

There have been no complaints made to Ofsted since the last inspection.

The provider is required to keep a record of complaints made by parents, which they can see on request. The complaints record may contain complaints other than those made to Ofsted.