

Elm Ridge Methodist Pre-School Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspector

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Type of setting

Childcare on non-domestic premises

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Introduction

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Description of the setting

Elm Ridge Methodist Pre-School Playgroup is a committee run facility which has been operating for approximately 25 years. It operates from two rooms in the church hall which is set in the grounds of Elm Ridge Church. The premises are situated in the West End area of Darlington. The facility serves the local and surrounding areas.

The setting is registered on the Early Years Register to care for no more than 26 children in the early years age group, of these, none may be under 2 years at any one time. There are currently 25 children on roll, of these, seven children are in receipt of funding for early education. The provision operates each weekday, term time only, from 9.15 am until 12.15 am. Children attend for a variety of sessions.

There are currently four members of staff employed to work directly with the children, all of whom have a level 3 qualification. The manager has a level 4 childcare qualification. The group receives support from the local authority.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children are happy and settled in this welcoming and safe environment. They enjoy a excellent balance of activities indoors and outdoors each day, and are making good progress towards the early learning goals. The setting demonstrates a strong commitment to inclusion, ensuring all children feel included and valued. Effective partnerships are well established with parents and other professionals to ensure children are fully supported. Overall, there are good systems for self-evaluation in place, consequently the capacity to maintain continuous improvement is good.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- update the systems to evaluate the service provided to ensure that plans for the future are prioritised and well targeted to bring about improvement and better outcomes for children.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The setting provides a safe and welcoming environment for children to play and learn. The whole staff team complete regular risk assessments for both indoors and outdoors. All staff have had recent safeguarding training to at least a level one, consequently they demonstrate a good awareness of signs and symptoms of abuse. They have a secure understanding of the safeguarding children policy and

know what action to take if they were concerned for a child's well-being. All staff have an appropriate first aid qualification ensuring children receive appropriate care in the event of an accident. Staff deployment is exceptional across the whole of the setting, ensuring children are supervised at all times and enabling them to access the outdoors whenever they want.

The layout of the large hall enables children to move around with ease. Children have a wonderful time playing with the toys and activities that staff set up each day. Staff also provide additional resources in low-level storage units so that children can independently help themselves. The whole of the setting, both indoors and outdoors is a number and print rich environment. Outdoor provision is a clear strength of the setting with children being able to access all areas of learning in exciting and interesting surroundings. An inclusive environment ensures that children have their individual welfare needs effectively met and that they achieve well. For example, the setting is able to identify children's need for additional support and work effectively with parents and outside agencies to provide the support needed. The children are encouraged to learn about their own culture and aspects of the wider world. Good quality resources and the celebration of different festivals further support this knowledge. The dedicated manager and staff work very well as a team, promoting good quality care for all the children. They are aware of the setting's strengths and areas for improvement. However, other forms of self evaluation need updating. The setting demonstrates a strong capacity to continually improve as they have addressed the previous action and recommendations from the last inspection improving outcomes for children.

A strong partnership with parents benefits all the children. Parents are kept very well informed about the provision through regular newsletters and notice boards keeping them up to date with any necessary information. In addition, parents access policies, procedures and daily plans and activities their child are involved in. Events throughout the year enable parents to participate further such as attending coffee mornings. Parents comments at inspection are highly positive stating that they are very happy with the care and learning their children receive. Children are often reluctant to leave and eagerly show parents what they have been doing and some even re-enact 'the Bear Hunt' they have done. The setting has forged good links with the local school; consequently children are very well supported in their transition to school.

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

Children are happy and settled in this setting and demonstrate a strong sense of belonging. They form positive relationships with the staff and their peers and so feel safe and secure. The key worker system works effectively and children happily separate from their parents and settle quickly at their chosen activity. They are exceptionally well behaved and know what is expected of them because boundaries are consistently and kindly applied by staff. Children make good progress in their learning and development as staff plan activities that challenge and excite them. Comprehensive observational files of each individual child are used to inform planning. Staff track children's development and identify their next

steps in learning. Parents are involved in their child's learning and development through daily chats and the sharing of observation files. The team ensures that there is a good balance between adult-led activities and those the children choose for themselves.

Staff effectively promote children's communication skills as they use different questioning techniques that encourage children to think for themselves. Children are confident and chatty, talking about what they are doing during their play. They are developing a strong love of books and use books independently as well as having stories read to them. Children relish being outdoors, they enthusiastically dig for worms, pour water into their buckets using the large water butt and make dens from the crates and plastic guttering pipes. They develop good manipulative skills as they have a great time mixing the different coloured rice together. They are beginning to develop skills for the future as they show an interest in how things work as they concentrate for long periods of time joining sections of the train track together. Children receive very good opportunities to learn about information technology. For example, they use torches, metal detectors and megaphones as well as simple programmes on the computer. Children have lovely opportunities to develop their creativity and imagination. For example, they enjoy painting snow drops, carefully cutting up straws and making their own creations using a wide range of recycling materials. Children learn about the wider world as they celebrate festivals from their own culture and that of others, for example, Diwali and Easter.

Children are developing an understanding of healthy lifestyles. They are provided with varied and nutritious snacks that includes a good range of fresh fruit and vegetables. Children chat together as they eat and drink. They are able to independently help themselves to water throughout the session meaning they remain hydrated. Children receive good opportunities to develop their physical skills as they run, jump and ride their scooters outdoors. Children learn about keeping safe within the setting. They take part in regular fire drills which ensures they learn about how to evacuate the building safely.

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	1
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	1
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

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
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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	1
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	1
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	1

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