

Southery Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	254267
Inspection date	19/11/2009
Inspector	Sheelagh Barnes

Setting address	Westgate Street, Southery, Downham Market, Norfolk, PE38 0PA
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Type of setting	Childcare on non-domestic premises
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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

Southery Playgroup opened in 1972. It operates from one room, in an annex adjacent to Southery Primary School, situated in the village of Southery, Norfolk. It is registered on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. A maximum of 16 children may attend the playgroup at any one time. The playgroup is open each weekday from 9.00am until 3.00pm for 36 weeks of the year. All children share access to the primary school's playground for part of their session time. There are currently 22 children from two to under five years on roll. Of these, eight children receive funding for nursery education. Children come from the local catchment area. The playgroup employs three staff. Of these, two hold appropriate early years qualifications and one is working towards a qualification. The setting is able to support children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those with English as an additional language, although, none are currently on roll. It would be possible for disabled parents or children to access the setting with some support.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

The provision at Southery Playgroup is good and meets the needs of children effectively. Children are kept safe because welfare arrangements are rigorous and fully meet requirements. The provision promotes inclusive practice, equality and diversity well. Good leadership ensures that children from all groups are involved in all activities. They make good progress because staff are sensitive to their needs and organise a wide range of carefully planned activities. The capacity to improve still further is good.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- increase opportunities for strenuous physical activity and to extend children's knowledge and understanding of the world through development of the outdoor area.
- ensure that assessments are kept consistently, in line with the playgroup's new policy, so that there is a consistently regular review and summary of each child's progress in all six areas of learning for the Early Years Foundation Stage.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Leadership and management of the early year's provision is good. The setting leader demonstrates good levels of enthusiasm. She is well supported by other team members, who work together cooperatively and harmoniously to make sure

that the setting runs smoothly on a day to day basis. The careful attention paid to planning everything that happens throughout a session means that everyone is clear about their roles and responsibilities. All are clearly committed to improving outcomes for children and have high expectations for children's learning and for their welfare. They demonstrate this, for example, through their commitment to continued professional development and particularly through their determination to develop their understanding and practice in delivering the Early Years Foundation Stage framework. The setting leader knows the strengths and areas for development well as she is continually reflective and has recently evidenced this in a carefully and accurately completed self-evaluation form. As a result, she has identified that opportunities for children to work and play outdoors, which are currently limited by the accommodation and facilities, need to be improved and extended. Consequently, plans have been made for improvement and discussions started with the host school to try to develop the use of the outdoor area further.

It is evident from the thorough way in which the setting leader and staff have responded to the recommendations from the previous inspection that there is no complacency. As a result, these recommendations have been met comprehensively. All the required policies now meet requirements in full and documentation shows full regard to current legislation, standards and guidance, in order to promote the welfare, care and learning of the children. Comprehensive health and safety and risk assessment procedures are followed and safeguarding arrangements are good. There are logs which allow for the recording of accidents and incidents and to ensure children's medical needs are met should they be required, though this is rarely the case. A system for checking on how well children are doing has been developed so that there is a learning journey booklet for each child. These journals are developing well and contain good and useful information on most areas of learning. They clearly show the good progress children are making in personal and social development, mathematical development and communication skills. This approach is not yet in place for all areas of learning, however, and new guidance is not yet being followed consistently to ensure a full and regular record of all children's achievements. There is relatively more limited information on some aspects of physical development, for example, which reflects the satisfactory, but more limited opportunities, for this aspect of learning.

The leader has a good understanding of how young children learn, of how to plan more formally for their learning opportunities and to organise the setting so that children progress well and are happy and well cared for. It is evident from the responses to the playgroup's questionnaires that staff are popular with parents and children and that partnerships with parents are strong. Parents are unanimous in expressing the view that their children are happy to come to the pre-school. They are included well in any special events that are planned. They receive good quality information about the work of the setting and know their children will be cared for well.

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

Activities are carefully and conscientiously planned each week to provide interest and enjoyment for the children. This is further enhanced by the opportunities for children themselves to make their own choices and suggestions about an activity or a topic theme. For example, one child's interest in dogs resulted in several of the children working together to build a large kennel from plastic blocks, which they were then able to use to act out their own animal stories. Longer term planning ensures that, over time, activities are provided that allow children to experience all areas of learning both indoors and outdoors. However, opportunities for physical development and to develop knowledge and understanding of the world are limited because of the restrictions of the outdoor area. Consequently, experience in these areas of learning relies on additional detailed and careful pre planning, such as arranging a walk for children to collect autumn leaves.

Staff get to know the children very well, particularly their likes and dislikes and record their observations of what children know and can do against the criteria of the Early Years Foundation Stage framework in order to establish gaps and next steps in learning. They use these observations and assessments to clearly identify learning priorities in planning, although, assessments have yet to be consistently regularly completed for all areas of learning. Children progress well because they enjoy the interesting and relevant things they are given to do. In addition, they are happy in the setting and feel safe and well cared for.

There is a key worker system which means that there is always someone on hand with a detailed knowledge of individual children. A great deal of time is spent indoors where children are encouraged to choose from an interesting range of activities. They are delighted to try out digging in a tray of compost, painting, making and decorating small items, or learning about floating and sinking in the small water tray. Learning opportunities are presented to children through a range of activities, sometimes chosen by the children themselves. They develop their mathematical skills by measuring and comparing, such as when building towers and their artistic skills are extended by making and decorating bottles with feathers and glitter. They sing songs and rhymes to develop counting skills. Their speaking and listening and creative skills are also developed well when they enjoy dressing up as different characters in the role play area. Children also learn about how they can keep babies healthy and safe by acting this out in the home corner. Speaking and listening skills are extended successfully by good quality questioning and conversations with adults, as they work alongside children on a craft activity, or play with sand, water and compost. Children enjoy books and having stories read to them. Children's understanding of religions and cultures is suitably developed as they share stories and make crafts to celebrate a range of festivals. Lots of first hand experiences to help out others and take responsibility ensure that children's contribution to the community is good. They look after themselves, each other and resources. Their awareness and adoption of a healthy lifestyle is promoted well by opportunities to make their own choices about the healthy snacks and drinks. They spread their own healthy toppings on crackers, for example, with studied concentration and carry out hygiene routines well. Nevertheless, limited chances

for physical activity within the setting inhibit this area of their development, so that it is satisfactory, rather than good, as a whole.

Providing for the good welfare of children is of central importance to the ethos of the setting. The setting leader is particularly proud of the trusting and caring relationships that are formed. Adults consistently apply a positive approach to promoting good behaviour, with rewards and sanctions that are known well to the children. As a result, children behave well. Rigorous routines to ensure safety, health and hygiene are adhered to by everyone. Staff have suitable qualifications in food hygiene and health and safety. Areas for food preparation are kept spotlessly clean and children replicate this at snack times. They use equipment safely and conduct themselves sensibly around the setting.

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

How effectively is the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	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	3
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
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The provider confirms that the requirements of the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are:	Met
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