

Sparks

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspection date 28/04/2010
Inspector Elaine Douglas

Setting address Stoberry Park Primary School, North Road, Wells,
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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).

Children only attend this setting before and/or after the school day and/or during the school holidays. The judgements in this report reflect the quality of early years provision offered to children during those periods.

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

Sparks is run by a parents' committee. It opened from its current premises in 2007 and operates from open plan rooms, with adjacent toilets, in a purpose-built building. Children have access to the school's secure, enclosed, outdoor play area. It is situated within the grounds of Stoberry Park School, in Wells, Somerset. The club is open each weekday from 8am to 8.45am and from 3.15pm to 6pm term time only. There is a holiday play scheme which operates from 8am to 6pm for selected weeks during the holidays.

The group is registered on the Early Years Register and both the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. A maximum of 32 children may attend the group at any one time. There are currently 13 children in the early years age range on roll, some in part-time places. The group provides care for children up to 11 years. The group currently supports a number of children with special educational needs. There are six members of staff, four of whom hold a level 3 early years qualification.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is satisfactory.

Sparks makes satisfactory provision for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Children generally enjoy their time at the setting and spend their time purposefully engaged. The group provides a fully inclusive learning environment, where resources are effectively deployed to meet the needs of the children. Children are safeguarded through satisfactory policies and regulations are met, although not all of the group's own procedures are implemented. Most documentation is in place and available for inspection. The partnership with parents, the school and other agencies is the strength of the setting, and ensures that, overall, children's needs are effectively met. Self-evaluation is beginning to help staff to identify some areas for development, to ensure continuous improvement.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- review the implementation of the setting's policies with particular regard for increasing the number of staff with a current paediatric first aid certificate to ensure one is available in the absence of the first aider, signposting the first aid equipment and regularly reviewing the recording of risk assessments
- regularly conduct observations of children's achievements and ensure these are updated consistently in order for each child's learning journey to take a personal path and inform planning
- develop the handwashing procedures to ensure children obtain a good understanding of healthy hygiene practices and how these contribute to good

- health
- update the child protection policy to ensure that it refers to the Local Safeguarding Children Board
- ensure that all documentation is available for inspection with particular regard to staff qualifications

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children are safeguarded through satisfactory procedures and supervision. All staff have undergone appropriate checks to ascertain their suitability to work with children. Four staff hold relevant childcare qualifications. However, evidence was not available for all staff qualifications at the inspection. Medication, accidents and incidents are all recorded appropriately. All the required policies and procedures are in place. However, not all of the group's procedures are implemented. For example, the first aid policy states that the equipment will be clearly signposted along with a list of first aiders, and risk assessments have not been reviewed and recorded recently. Only one member of staff holds a current first aid certificate, which does not ensure that a person holding a current paediatric first aid certificate will be present in her absence. Parental consent is obtained for seeking emergency advice or treatment. Good fire safety risk assessments are carried out and appropriate equipment installed. The designated person has a sound awareness of child protection issues and is booked onto training to update her knowledge.

The good partnership with parents and others helps to ensure that children's individual needs are met, along with any additional support needs. Policies and procedures are available in several languages. The setting provides a very flexible service and welcomes parents to settle the children in. Parents receive regular newsletters with additional information, including future plans. Strong links with the school and the special educational needs coordinator ensures consistent, appropriate care. Parents receive regular feedback through daily discussions and have opportunities to provide feedback on the provision through questionnaires. This is used effectively. For example, snacks have been improved to ensure they are healthy and nutritious.

The staff use self-evaluation to identify their strengths and some areas for development. For example, they have set actions to extend the equipment for the youngest children, to improve the assessments and to update the staff appraisals. The setting now keeps a log of any complaints, as recommended at their previous inspection. However, the child protection policy still does not refer to the Local Safeguarding Children Board, which was also raised, although information on child protection for parents does refer to the board. They also ensure that good staff to child ratios are maintained, and staff are deployed effectively to safeguard and promote children's welfare, which was raised as an action at the last regulation visit. The manager attends provider networks to discuss good practice.

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

Children are relaxed and purposefully engaged at the setting. They have good opportunities to make choices and select from the wide range of resources, both inside and outside. Children enjoy the varied space outside, where they play with sand and water, climb, balance, and play team games. Inside, children relax on the large settee to watch television or read books. The suite of computers are enjoyed by all ages and controlled to ensure only appropriate access to the Internet. Children's creativity is developed through good access to craft materials and adult led activities. For example, children paint paper plates to represent a ladybird and a butterfly, while another creates their own abstract picture. Satisfactory systems are in place to observe children and track their progress. Staff use post-it notes and photographs but there are inconsistencies in the amount of observations and the tracking of progress to inform planning effectively.

Children make a positive contribution because staff create an environment where children are confident, independent and included. Staff engage in children's activities and encourage them to be involved. Children develop a sense of belonging as they have their own building and are able to decorate and organise it themselves. Children engage in conversations with each other and with the staff; they are confident communicators and express themselves appropriately. Children celebrate a range of festivals, which develops their knowledge of other cultural groups, and fosters a positive image of themselves and others.

Children develop a satisfactory awareness of some safe and healthy practices. They regularly practise the emergency evacuation procedures and generally behave in ways which keep them safe. Healthy snacks are available for children to choose from and drinks are available at all times. Children have daily opportunities to enjoy fresh air and exercise. Tissues and paper towels help to prevent cross contamination and protect children from illness. However, although children wash their hands after using the toilet, they do not wash them before eating their snack, when many of them have been outside.

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?	3
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	3

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

How effectively is the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	2
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding	3
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	3
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	3
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Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	3
The extent to which children feel safe	3
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	3

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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