

Gloucester Road Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspection date	09/12/2010
Inspector	Melissa Cox
Setting address	59 Gloucester Road, Reading, Berkshire, RG30 2TH
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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

Gloucester Road Playgroup opened in 1974 and is a Committee run group. It operates from a self-contained building in the west of Reading, Berkshire. The playgroup has sole use of the whole building and there is a fully enclosed outside play area for outdoor play. The playgroup is open every weekday, during term time only from 9:00 am to 11:30 am and 1:00 pm to 3:30 pm, Monday to Thursday.

The playgroup is registered on the Early Years Register and both parts of the Childcare Register and receives funding for the provision of free early education to children aged two, three and four years. A maximum of 20 children may attend the setting at any one time. There are currently 42 children on roll in the early years range group. Children come from the local area. The nursery currently supports children with learning difficulties and also supports a number of children who speak English as an additional language. Children attend a variety of sessions a week.

The setting employs seven staff, all of whom hold relevant childcare qualifications. The playgroup works in close partnership with the Oxford Road Children's centre.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is outstanding.

The setting is exceptionally well managed and supported by a dedicated staff team. All children are making exceptional progress in their learning and development and excellent partnerships are established between parents and others to promote a very high standard of care. Staff recognise the uniqueness of each child and collaborate effectively to ensure all the children's needs are fulfilled. Ongoing evaluation shows the group has the capacity to continual improvement across all aspects of the setting. The setting has clear ideas of different ways to enhance the provision, for example, making the garden area more sustainable and staff are enthusiastic about the continuous development of the setting.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To further improve the high quality early years provision the registered person should consider:

- develop the outdoor area to increase children's awareness of sustainability

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Staff have a comprehensive awareness of safeguarding issues and ensure any concerns are prioritised and dealt with effectively. Effective procedures are in place for identifying any child at risk of harm and liaising with the appropriate child agencies. Arrangements for safeguarding children are robust, regularly reviewed, carefully managed, and understood by those who work with the children. Robust systems are in place with regard to recruitment and selection of staff and thorough procedures for vetting staff, ensure that children are cared for safely at all times. Clear, concise risk assessments are in place and children's safety is assured each day through the visual checks and assessment of risk that staff undertake. Fire drills are conducted frequently and carried out to ensure all children attending throughout the week become familiar with the procedures.

The environment is safe and conducive to learning. The large variety of resources and equipment that can be independently accessed by the children promotes their independence. Staff deploy themselves highly effectively in order to allow children to make choices about their play both inside and out of the setting. The resources within the setting compliment the activities and discussion that take place to develop children's knowledge of their local community and the celebrations of other cultures. Through the individual arrangements with each family, staff are gaining an excellent understanding of each child's background and needs. The setting works hard to narrow the achievement gap by ensuring appropriate support for all children and their families.

Children are achieving in all areas as a result of the exceptional organisation of the educational programme which is rich, varied and imaginative. All staff have an excellent understanding of the learning and development needs of every child. They combine this with every child's interests and abilities and use these to ensure inspirational and innovative teaching is provided which motivates each child. High quality observations are rigorous and the information gained is used very effectively to guide planning. Children are able to independently access all resources to support and enhance their own play, both indoors and outside, and they do so with confidence.

Systems to monitor the provision are rigorous and effective. Through effective self evaluation, liaison with local early years professionals, regular staff meetings and an ongoing training programme, the dedicated team of staff develop and address priorities for improvement. Children, parents and staff are fully involved in the process and this demonstrates their ambition and drive to continually improve this high quality provision for young children. Staff liaise closely with the local health visitor and the area inclusion officer, as well as childminders and nurseries children may also attend to ensure a consistent approach to each child's care and education. Staff and children are taking well-considered steps to ensure resources and the environment are fully sustainable with excellent plans to develop the unused areas of the garden.

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

The children enter the setting with incredible enthusiasm and excitement. Their motivation levels are high throughout the session as they move around the setting with direction and purpose. They demonstrate high levels of confidence and flourish in the child orientated and stimulating environment. Even those who have recently started are settled and are becoming independent and motivated in their learning. There are many firm friendships within the group and children demonstrate their skills in cooperating with each other through play. Children demonstrate kindness and tolerance, and flourish in an environment of mutual respect. Relationships are very strong at all levels and children show care and concern for their friends with older children supporting younger members of the group and inviting them to be part of their play.

All children are confident with the adults in the setting and give clear instructions as they join in with child initiated play. Children play a dynamic role in their learning and frequently offer their ideas and respond to challenges set by staff and each other with enthusiasm. Through routines of the day children are developing high levels of independence as they are encouraged to manage their self care skills and prepare their own snack. The skilled staff team provide excellent support and a good level of interaction, successfully promoting children's language, vocabulary and understanding. Staff use open ended questions effectively to help children think for themselves and solve problems. For example, during a baking activity, staff encourage children to use problem solving in a everyday situation as they measure the ingredients into a bowl and make salt dough for decorations. All children are listened to and valued by the staff, enabling them all to make a positive contribution within the group.

Experienced staff complete regular observations on children and each child's key person collates these to provide a record of children's development. Parents are encouraged to contribute to children's learning journeys and some add comments and observations of children's progress at home. Learning journeys are illustrated with photos and indicate the areas of learning covered in free play and planned activities, providing staff with clear systems to ensure all areas are covered. Staff have a secure knowledge and understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage and continuously plan activities that interest and motivate children's learning to ensure each child reaches their full potential. Children with English as an additional language and additional needs make exceptional progress.

All children show a strong sense of security. Projects and planned activities, as well as sensitive reinforcement by staff ensure that children learn about their personal safety in the setting as well as in the local community. All children are developing an excellent awareness of how to keep themselves safe as they competently use a variety of small tools and equipment such as rolling pins, scissors and cutters and have good regard to the safety rules of the group. Children have many opportunities to communicate and share their thoughts during circle time sessions and on a one to one basis. They discuss the things they like doing, their family and their interests. Staff ensure that regular visitors to the group, allow the children to

share these experiences with their peers, for example, one child introduces his new baby sister to the group and a student includes the children in her celebration of Eid. Children play purposefully and co-operatively within the role play area, re-enacting the Nativity scene.

Children are skilful in their use of early technology and enjoy early mark-making in a variety of media. Opportunities to problem solve are abundant and children independently sequence and match resources. The use of the sand timer helps children develop a good sense of time and is a visual aid to know when to start the tidying up routine or prepare for home time. Children have access to a positive range of reading materials and clearly enjoy story times. They are developing a strong love of books and use books independently as well as having stories read to them. Older children are beginning to write recognisable letters and words and they are able to sound the letters in their own and friend's names or type them on a keyboard. Children play a full and active roll in their learning, supported by staff who ensure they are equipped with the skills they will need for future learning.

Children's health and welfare is successfully promoted. Children enjoy daily access to the innovative outdoor play area which extends and compliments their learning whilst actively promoting their curiosity and imagination. The use of the outdoors is dynamic and children freely move inside and out to experience different opportunities which ensures they are well equipped with the fundamental skills needed for a successful future.

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?	1
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	1

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	1
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	1
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	1
The effectiveness of safeguarding	1
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	1
The effectiveness of partnerships	1
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	1

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
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Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	1
The extent to which children feel safe	1
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	1
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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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