

# The Oak Centre Activity Group

Inspection report for early years provision

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**Unique reference number** 226919  
**Inspection date** 17/03/2011  
**Inspector** Susan Andrews

**Setting address** Bendbow Rise, Braunstone, Leicester, Leicestershire, LE3  
1QA

**Telephone number** 0116 2221099 or 0116 2221014

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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

The Oaks Centre Activity Group was registered in 1992. It operates from The Oaks Centre in the North Braunstone area of Leicester. The centre is a single-storey building that can be easily accessed by all children. Outdoor play facilities are not currently available.

A maximum of 16 children may attend the playgroup at any one time. The setting is registered on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. It is open each weekday, during term time from 9:15am to 12:15pm.

There are currently 16 children aged from two years and six months to three years and six months on roll. Children come from the local community. The playgroup supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and also children who speak English as an additional language.

The setting employs five staff. Including the manager, all childcare staff hold appropriate National Vocational Qualification Level 3 childcare and first aid qualifications.

## The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children have fun, settle well and respond positively to staff who listen to children and show a real interest in their welfare. The required documentation, policies and procedures are in place and are regularly reviewed. Staff have a good awareness of the welfare and learning requirements specified in the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage. However, observation and assessment is at an early stage of development and self-evaluation and reflective practice are in the process of being established. The playgroup fosters good relationships with parents and provides children with a safe, welcoming and inclusive environment for their care, play and learning.

## What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- develop further, the ongoing observation and assessment systems to identify what children are learning and use these to plan, more effectively, for children's next steps in their development
- develop further, the existing self-evaluation and reflective practice methods to more effectively identify areas to drive improvement and celebrate success
- improve opportunities for children to experience outdoor play activities.

## **The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision**

Overall, there are good arrangements to safeguard children from harm. The playgroup has policies and procedures in line with current national and local guidance, so staff are able to safely manage children's care. For example, staff recognise the signs and symptoms of abuse and know what to do if there are concerns about a child, or if allegations are made about a staff member. Robust staff recruitment and appraisal procedures are in place. This helps to ensure children are constantly supervised by vetted, suitably qualified and experienced staff. Required records are kept and contain all relevant contact, care and health details for individual children. Written parental authorisation is obtained to seek medical treatment in the event of an emergency and to administer any medication. All staff hold first aid qualifications and can respond appropriately should a child have an accident or become unwell whilst at the playgroup. Comprehensive risk assessments are conducted and reviewed and children begin to learn about their own safety. For example, the staff involve them in regular fire evacuation exercises. Therefore, they are familiar with procedures to be followed, should a real emergency occur. Some strengths and weaknesses within the provision are identified. However, self-evaluation and reflective practice systems are not fully developed which compromises the setting's capacity to drive improvement.

The playgroup promote diversity and provide an inclusive environment with toys, resources and equipment to reflect culture, gender and disability. Good links are established with specialist support workers, local schools and other agencies. This ongoing approach aids continuity of care and helps take account of children's individual needs and experiences. Staff forge good relationships with parents, share information and update them regarding their children's activities and well-being. Parents are kept fully informed about the setting's policies and can access and contribute to their child's learning journeys. Parents indicate that they value the close links they have with their child's key person. They state that staff are kind, approachable and say that their children are settled and happy at the playgroup.

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

Children are safe and enjoy the time they spend at the playgroup. Staff ensure no unauthorised person can gain access to children in their care, as they vigilantly monitor arrival and departure. Children are well supervised as good arrangements keep them safe, supported by comprehensive and regularly reviewed risk assessments.

Children are provided with a range of activities and resources that spark their interest and encourage them to explore, be imaginative and creative. They discover the natural world around them as they plant, tend and watch flower seeds

grow. They take steps to become independent learners through self-initiated activities. They choose toys and equipment for themselves, for example, books, role play, puzzles, threading toys and enjoy art and craft activities. Staff also engage children in lively conversation and adult-led activities, such as song and story sessions and movement to music. Children count numbers, borrow books from the library and look at letters, words and pictures in books. They recognise labels around the room and know their name on displayed artwork.

Observation and assessment strategies are in place but are not yet fully effective. This limits staff's ability to accurately assess children's stages of development or to extend learning by planning effectively for what they need to do next. Diversity and inclusion is promoted through a good range of activities, toys, books and equipment that provide positive images of culture, gender and disability. Staff work well in partnership with parents and other agencies. This helps ensure children with special educational needs and/or disabilities, or those with English as an additional language, are able to achieve their full potential.

Staff encourage children to understand about their own health and to follow appropriate hygiene procedures in their daily routine. For example, they wash their hands after using the toilet and before eating. Children are offered clear explanations by staff to help them understand why this is important. Opportunities for children to play in the fresh air are not currently available. However, they are able to exercise in the large hall, for example, to dance and move to music or play with balls and hoops. Healthy eating is promoted and nutritious snacks are provided, such as, apples, pears, bananas, grapes and cucumber. Milk and fresh drinking water are readily available, therefore, children remain well hydrated.

The playgroup operates a consistent, positive approach to behaviour management with much praise and encouragement. For example, staff tell children, 'well done' and say, 'that is kind of you to share', to build children's self-esteem. Children respond positively as staff gently ring sleigh bells, which tells children it is time to put away the toys and sit on the carpet. Clear explanations are given, so that children know what is expected of them and understand how their behaviour affects themselves or others. For example, older children help younger ones as they sit together and look at a book, turning the pages. Consequently, children behave well, play together harmoniously and have fun.

## 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

<b>How well does the setting meet the needs of the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?</b>	2
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	2

### The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	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

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

<b>Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	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	2
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

The provider confirms that the requirements of the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are: Met