

Kids & Co Dragons Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspector	Marie Thompson
Setting address	St. Georges Hall, Kendale Road, Bridgwater, Somerset, TA6 3QE
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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*.

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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

Kids & Co Dragons Playgroup is run by a parent committee. It opened in 1992 and operates from a single storey building in Newtown, Somerset. The playgroup is registered on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. A maximum of 26 children may attend the playgroup at any one time. There are currently 72 children aged from two and a half to five years on roll. The playgroup is open Monday to Friday from 9am to 12pm and every afternoon, except for Tuesdays, from 12.15pm to 2.45pm. The playgroup receives funding for free early education sessions for three- and four-year-olds. It supports children who are learning English as an additional language. The group employs five members of staff, all of whom hold relevant early years qualifications. The group receives support from the local authority.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

There are good systems in place to safeguard children's welfare and enable them to feel secure and happy at the playgroup. Staff have a strong desire to improve outcomes for the children that attend and evaluate the provision constantly. Overall, children are making good progress in most areas. Staff take time getting to know the children and their needs, ensuring they work closely with parents, carers and other professionals connected to the children.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- develop further the range of activities and resources available to provide children with rich and diverse learning and development opportunities across all areas of learning in the outdoor environment
- provide more opportunities for children to do things for themselves, for example, by placing water containers where children can find them easily and get a drink when they need one.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Staff have a good understanding of safeguarding and clear procedures for dealing with a variety of concerns. The records, policies and procedures are very well maintained and well understood by staff. Staff are vigilant and keep good records, including a visitor record, which effectively supports the welfare of children and enables them all to feel settled and secure at the playgroup. There are thorough

risk assessments in place to ensure all children play and learn in a safe environment. Accident and medication records and written consents further safeguard children. Activities and play resources are plentiful, age-appropriate and checked regularly to ensure they are safe for use.

There have been vast improvements to the setting since the last inspection. The pre-school is keen to continuously improve and evaluates the provision constantly. Staff use their skills to ensure that children's contributions are valued and use good plans that note children's interests and activities they enjoy. Children benefit from positive interaction from staff who extend children's learning through skilled questioning, for example. Consequently, children are developing strong skills in a caring environment where they are offered a wide range of experiences. The room is divided into different areas of learning and children make choices about what they play with as toys and resources are easily accessible. They are in good condition and provide a wide range of learning experiences. Staff sensitively respond to children's individual requirements and developmental needs and visual timelines and pictorial visual aids ensure that all children are able to follow the daily routines in the setting. This effectively supports inclusion of all children. The playgroup respects the diversity of the children and their families. Children explore various cultures through a range of activities, such as cooking and tasting foreign foods and taking part in art and craft projects to celebrate festivals.

The staff team is a key strength in the setting. Staff participate in various training opportunities and they have used the knowledge and experience they gained to good effect. This has a positive impact on outcomes for children. Children are making good progress as staff take time to know them and their needs, ensuring that they work closely with parents, carers and other professionals connected to the children. Parents and carers are welcomed warmly into the setting at the beginning and end of each session. Children's learning at home is enhanced by the provision of simple activities, such as number and colour recognition, that the children and parents can do together. Informative notice boards and newsletters keep parents informed of events at the setting and invite their involvement. For example, they are invited to open days, sports day and on the annual pre-school trip. Parents express great satisfaction with the service they receive. The playgroup has established good links with other providers and local primary schools to which the children transfer. This results in children moving on to school with confidence. Staff also work closely with other agencies to ensure that they identify children's needs and work together to provide the best care and learning opportunities for each child.

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

Children settle quickly and happily at this welcoming and safe environment. They feel secure in the setting because staff create a calm and nurturing atmosphere, which promotes their feelings of trust. Staff frequently record children's achievements. They note their observational assessments against each area of learning and use this to plan for children's next steps in learning. Staff provide

regular opportunities for children to develop their skills through identifying activities in the plans that reflect children's requests and interests. Children are consistently engaged in a variety of play and learning experiences that interest them, such as role-play and painting. These include celebrations of some special events in the calendar, such as Chinese New Year and Diwali. The staff skilfully acknowledges children's achievements and give positive feedback on their ideas and questions, which promotes children's confidence. Staff are successful in developing children's concentration skills. They enable children to extend their play and learning for long periods by encouraging them to share their ideas and thoughts, through skilful questioning and discussion. This enables children to develop confidence as they feel valued.

Children enjoy access to outdoor play at each session. This area has undergone considerable refurbishment since the last inspection and allows children to play happily with balls and water play. However, the use of the outdoor area is not fully extended since there are not activities and resources that cover all six areas of learning. The pre-school has an allotment a short walk from the setting. Children and staff work diligently to maintain and cultivate the fruit, flowers and vegetables. They are very knowledgeable about the plants and use the magnifying glass to look at various insects and reference them on the informative posters on the fences at the allotment. This helps children learn about food and how it grows and to explore the natural world. They help to harvest the produce which is used for snacks and thoroughly enjoy sitting on the bench to have a snack or hot chocolate whilst enjoying their achievements. The snack time at playgroup is a very social occasion and staff and children sit together and chat enthusiastically. Children enjoy helping themselves to healthy snacks and develop their independence and motor skills by using safety knives to spread topping on their crackers and pouring their own drinks. However, during the session the water containers are not placed where children can find them easily and get a drink when they need one. This does not promote children's independence fully. There are good measures in place to ensure children learn how to keep safe. For example, when they go on walks they learn about road safety and stranger danger. Effective steps are taken to promote children's good health and children learn from adults the importance of good hygiene practices.

Children happily engage in a range of activities while chatting to staff and to one another about their experiences. They particularly enjoy taking part in activities alongside staff who encourage all of them to be actively involved and express their opinions. For example, children have great fun playing with the doctors set and bandaging the staff's hands. Staff skilfully ask questions, encourage comments when they read stories and support the children's mark making experiments. Children often discuss colours, shapes and quantities with staff during activities and build upon their counting skills effectively. They experience good opportunities to make connections with their local community. For instance, they visit the library and benefit from visits to the fire station and from the community policeman. This motivates them to become aware of their personal safety and engage in charitable events that support their knowledge and understanding of the world.

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	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

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	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