

Merry-Go-Round Under 5's

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	146799
Inspection date	01/11/2011
Inspector	Anne Sheldon
Setting address	Hartsfield JMI School, Clothall Road, Baldock, Hertfordshire, SG7 6PB
Telephone number	01462 896322
Email	
Type of setting	Childcare - Non-Domestic

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2011

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).

Please see our website for more information about each childcare provider. We publish inspection reports, conditions of registration and details of complaints we receive where we or the provider take action to meet the requirements of registration.

Description of the setting

Merry Go Round Under Fives is run by a voluntary management committee. It registered in 1989 and operates from one room in a purpose-built mobile classroom situated in the grounds of Hartsfield JMI School in Baldock, Hertfordshire. The preschool is registered on the Early Years Register to care for a maximum of 22 children over two and under five years of age, at any one time. There are currently 49 children on role. The nursery is in receipt of early years funding. It is open each weekday during term-time and sessions are from 8.45am to 11.45am and from 12.30pm to 3pm. In addition, there is a lunch club available which runs from 11.30am to 12.45pm. All children have access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

The pre-school serves the local community and surrounding areas. It currently supports children with special educational needs and children who speak English as an additional language. The pre-school employs nine members of staff all of whom are appropriately qualified. In addition, there are a further two members of staff who run the lunch club.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is inadequate.

The needs of the children are not met because four legal requirements are not fully met. This limits the effectiveness of measures to safeguard the welfare of children. Children are not safeguarded because the required documentation relating to recruitment of staff is not in place and staff are not all familiar with procedures to follow to keep children safe. Risk assessments are not reviewed and do not assess the whole preschool environment. Detailed observations and assessments of children take place but planning for children does not always identify the appropriate next steps for children.

Self-evaluation processes are ineffective in identifying key weaknesses in the provision that impact on children's welfare.

Overall, the early years provision requires significant improvement. The registered person is given a Notice to Improve that sets out actions to be carried out.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To comply with the requirements of the EYFS the registered person must take the following action by the specified date:

- improve the record of the risk assessment to include when it was carried out and the date of any reviews 15/11/2011
- implement effective systems to ensure that the individual needs of all children are met by leading and 15/11/2011

- encouraging a culture of reflective practice and self-evaluation that will improve the quality of provision for all children across the Early Years Foundation Stage
- ensure that there are effective procedures in place for maintain records of information used to assess staff suitability including the unique reference numbers of Criminal Records Bureau disclosures obtained and the date on which they were obtained 15/11/2011
 - improve all staff's knowledge of the procedures to be followed in the event of an allegation of abuse against a child, member of staff or a volunteer 15/11/2011

To improve the early years provision the registered person should:

- improve the use of observations and assessments to identify learning priorities for each child in all learning areas and plan activities to ensure follow children's particular interests and takes account of their individual learning needs.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children's safety is compromised because effective procedures are not in place to record staff Criminal Record Bureau disclosure details. Not all staff have a sound knowledge of how to respond appropriately to safeguarding concerns. Daily checks are carried out covering specific aspects of the indoor and outdoor environment and assessed hazards are minimised. Risk assessments are carried out for each outing. However, there are no risk assessment records covering the indoor and outdoor provision. These are all breaches of the welfare requirements and put children at risk. The provider has committed an offence by failing to notify Ofsted of changes to the management committee. This is a specific legal requirement in the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage. Ofsted does not intend to prosecute on this occasion.

A self-evaluation process has been started, but is in its early stages. Areas have been identified for improvement but overall it fails to identify the weaknesses of the setting as it does not use robust and challenging quality criteria. The staff team have not as yet evaluated all their practices. As a result, the limited plans for improvement have failed to raise standards of practice or address the key issues.

Relationships with parents and carers are valued. The parents are kept fully informed of their children's progress and of the planned activities and events in the setting and so can be fully engaged in supporting their children's learning. For example, notices and regular newsletters provide useful information for parents. Time is spent with parents talking to them about what their children have done at nursery and parents are consulted. Parents comment that their children are "very happy and settled" in the preschool. Effective partnerships with the on-site and other local schools fully supports children's transitions. Excellent relationships with other agencies and professionals, such as, speech therapists mean that children

with special educational needs receive the support they need to make progress. Individual support is offered to children who speak English as an additional language. Parents share key words in their home languages and staff encourage these children to develop their vocabulary introducing them to new words and reinforcing them regularly through the day. As a result, children are building skills in their use of English. Children's understanding of diverse cultures is fostered through the celebration of a wide range of festivals. Children are respected and valued as individuals and are beginning to learn how to respect each other's differences

A good range of varied resources are available to support children's learning and development in all six areas. They are well laid out and labelled, so that children can access them and make informed choices. Effective use is made of two safe outdoor play spaces with a broad range of challenging equipment.

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

Children are happy and well settled in this warm and caring preschool. They receive a high level of individual attention from the staff team. This together with the key worker system fosters a sense of belonging for the children. Children are generally making good progress towards the early learning goals in all six areas. Regular observations and assessments are carried out and next steps are identified for the children. The next steps documented do not always correspond with the Early Years Foundation Stage next steps. However, overall activities observed are appropriate to the stage of children's development. Changes are made to activities in the afternoon to accommodate younger learners, for example, planned activities generally follow topics rather than children's interests. There is a good mix of adult and child-led activity and of indoor and outdoor play. Children are curious and interested and excited about learning. The development of communication, language and literacy is effective. Children have many good opportunities to recognise letters and words and are developing a love of books. The development of mathematical skill is fostered throughout the day and good use is made of routine activities to count, estimate and problem solve. However, there are very few observations of mathematical development and documentation of next steps for children does not often include this area of development. Children enjoy using the new computer and experimenting with a drawing programme, proudly showing off their printed drawings.

Children learn to adopt a healthy lifestyle. They have access to fresh air every day as they make good use of the two outdoor play areas. They participate in a range of activities which contribute to their physical health and fitness and are learning that exercise can be fun. Children develop self-confidence in their physical skills as they use a varied range of challenging outdoor equipment on a daily basis. Through discussion and some activities children are learning how to stay healthy and about personal care routines. For example, children learn about the importance of washing their hands before eating or after going to the toilet. Healthy eating is promoted at snack time when children are offered a selection of fresh fruit and water or milk. Children are encouraged to bring in healthy food

choices for lunchtime.

Behaviour is good. Children know the daily routine well and anticipate activities. They respond well to the sound of a bell which reminds them it is time to tidy up. Good manners are encouraged as are turn taking and sharing.

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?	4
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	4

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	4
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	4
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	2
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding	4
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	4
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
--	---

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	2
The extent to which children feel safe	4
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

Any complaints about the inspection or report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

