

Little Angels Playgroup

Net Church, 95 East Street, Sittingbourne, Kent, ME10 4BL

Inspection date	14/11/2012
Previous inspection date	04/11/2009

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	
	Previous inspection:	
How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend		3
The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children		3
The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision		3

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This provision is satisfactory

- Children are secure and happy because staff are kind and caring, and a strong key person system supports their emotional needs well.
- Parents are included in their children's learning, and kept informed about progress. They have positive and trusting relationships with staff, and are welcomed into the playgroup.
- The indoor environment is set out with a good variety of resources that hold children's interest. Staff's observations of children's play enable them to provide activities based on their interests.

It is not yet good because

- Older children do not have sufficient opportunities to challenge themselves physically by climbing and running, due to the lack of challenging apparatus.
- Teaching techniques used by staff are not consistent. Sometimes activities are too directed by adults, and staff do not always ask open questions to help children to reason and think.
- The outdoor area does not reflect the range of activities available indoors, and resources do not cover all areas of learning to support children who learn better outside.

Information about this inspection

Inspections of registered early years provision are scheduled:

- at least once in every inspection cycle. The current cycle ends on 31 July 2016
- more frequently where Ofsted identifies a need to do so, for example where provision was previously judged as inadequate
- brought forward in the inspection cycle where Ofsted has received information that suggests the provision may not be meeting the legal requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage; or where assessment of the provision identifies a need for early inspection
- prioritised for inspection where we have received information that the provision is not meeting the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage and which suggests children may not be safe
- at the completion of an investigation into failure to comply with the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Inspection activities

- The inspector observed activities in main room and the outside learning environment and held meetings with the manager of the provision.
- The inspector took account of the views of parents and carers spoken to on the day.
- The inspector looked at a sample of children's assessment records and planning.
- The inspector checked evidence of suitability and qualifications of practitioners working with children.
- The inspector discussed the provider's self-evaluation and improvement plan.

Inspector

Cilla Mullane

Full Report

Information about the setting

Little Angels Playgroup is committee run and opened in 1984. It operates from the first floor above a church in Sittingbourne Kent. It has its own kitchen and toilet facilities upstairs. Children have access to a secure outdoor play area downstairs. It serves families from the local community and surrounding area.

The playgroup is registered on the Early Years Register. There are currently 44 children within the Early Years Foundation Stage on roll. The playgroup receives funding for

children aged two, three and four years.

The playgroup is open each weekday, term time only, from 9am to 4pm on Mondays to Thursdays, and from 9am to 12pm on Fridays. Children may attend a variety of sessions and may stay for a lunch club.

The setting supports children who speak English as an additional language.

The playgroup employs 10 staff. Of these, eight have relevant childcare qualifications and four are currently training. They receive support from an advisor from the local authority.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

To meet the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage the provider must:

- improve children's learning by a) supporting the child's own efforts and independence b) providing opportunities for children to find their own ways to represent and develop their own ideas so that activities are not over directed by adults and c) asking open-ended questions such as "How can we...?" or "What would happen if...?" to help children think for themselves.
- develop the educational programme for physical development by providing challenging outdoor equipment and activities, so that older children can work towards showing good control and co-ordination in large and small movements and enabling them to move confidently in a range of ways, safely negotiating space.

To further improve the quality of the early years provision the provider should:

- develop the outdoor area to provide opportunities for children to explore all areas of learning outside.

Inspection judgements

How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend

The atmosphere in the playgroup is busy, with staff supporting children in their chosen activities. Activities and resources generally provide children with experiences across all areas of learning. Adults use observations and discussions with parents to find out what interests children, and then consider these in their provision of activities, so children enjoy their play and make generally suitable progress.

Staff's teaching techniques are of variable quality. Sometimes children's communication and language is supported well, as adults introduce new vocabulary, such as 'scoop' and 'pour' as children play in the water tray. However, adults do not consistently use open-ended questioning to help children to think and reason, and conversations are cut short when staff do not show an interest in what children say. At times, children explore and initiate their own play. They carry water from the water tray and add it to the gloop and watch the mixture become runny. They draw adults into role-play in the home area, using the good resources there to develop their imaginations. Some teaching methods are less appropriate. Some staff hold children's hands to trace over letters to introduce writing skills, rather than enabling to make marks independently. Craft resources are freely available, and children enjoy designing their own creations. However, some art activities are over directed by adults, leading to end products which are all the same, and do not reflect children's creativity.

Children are settled and make friends. They have positive relationships with their peers. Adults interact warmly and kindly, praising and appreciating children's contributions, and building children's confidence. During a waterplay activity children share with their friends willingly, and are sociable. Children who speak English as an additional language are well supported and catch up with their peers.

The younger children gain coordination and balance riding on scooters, and steering the toy cars. However, older children are frustrated by the lack of challenging large apparatus, and try to find ways to challenge themselves physically and take risks, for example, by standing up on the rocker.

The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children

A good key person system supports children's emotional wellbeing well. Staff have introduced 'welcome boxes' in which children have favourite toys from home, and photographs of their families. Children are comforted and reassured when adults open their boxes and chat about the contents.

Children are occupied and supported, and generally play well together. Adults are kind and positive, acting as good role models. They help children to understand simple rules, and at group time, children talk about not fighting or biting, saying 'please' and 'thank you'. Sometimes the playgroup routine leads to unrealistic expectations of behaviour. For example, at lunchtime children are expected to stay still and wait, and are asked not to touch their plates.

Children are not always encouraged to act independently at snack time, although sometimes they are helped to cut up fruit and vegetables. Adults hand the bowl of fruit around, rather than children helping themselves for example, with tongs. Children put their plates on the side, but do not wash up.

Children learn about the benefits of playing in the fresh air as they have daily

opportunities to play in the garden. However, the apparatus there, such as a small slide, does not challenge the older children. Snacks are sometimes healthy and children are offered small amounts of fruit and vegetables. However, sometimes the availability of sweet and chocolate biscuits gives them mixed messages regarding healthy eating.

A variety of resources are accessible to the children, and they freely choose toys and initiate their play. Adults generally support their play, getting down to children's level. The home area is very welcoming, with a good variety of resources, so that children are enabled to role play and use their imaginations. However, the outdoor area is not exciting, and does not cover all areas of learning and does not reflect the range of resources available indoors.

Children's transition to local schools is eased as reception teachers visit the setting so that children can get to know them. Furthermore, the playgroup has extended the idea of the 'welcome boxes' so that children can take familiar objects to school with them to help them settle.

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

Adults are generally vigilant towards children's safety, although risk assessments do not always identify hazards such as aerosols left in the toilet area. Staffs' knowledge of child protection issues and procedures is good, and their suitability to work with children has been checked. A careful check is kept on which children have been taken downstairs to the garden. Children need to cross the landing to use the toilets, and adults supervise them carefully. However, this means that children cannot look after their personal needs independently, and they are not afforded privacy in the toilets.

The manager and staff make suitable use of self-evaluation to improve the playgroup. Recent improvements have benefited the children and parents. For example, the environment has been redesigned to better support children's play and choice. Parents' consultations have been introduced to keep them better informed of children's progress. The system to monitor children's progress and identify any gaps in their learning enables staff to offer extra support where needed, although some adults' records are more complete than others.

Through appraisals, the manager supports staff's professional development, and sets targets to help staff improve their practice. Basic important training such as child protection and first aid is updated, and a member of staff is soon to attend training to work with children with special educational needs.

Information shared with parents is generally clear and relevant, although some are less sure what staff are currently working on with their children. Lots of information is shared during parent consultation meetings. Parents benefit from this because their children's progress is explained. Staff find out useful details of children's interests and abilities at home which they can then build on and support. Parents appreciate the friendliness of

staff, the useful starter pack and communication books, and feel their children are happy and make progress. Contact with local schools enables children to become familiar with their teacher.

What inspection judgements mean

Registered early years provision

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	Outstanding provision is highly effective in meeting the needs of all children exceptionally well. This ensures that children are very well prepared for the next stage of their learning.
Grade 2	Good	Good provision is effective in delivering provision that meets the needs of all children well. This ensures children are ready for the next stage of their learning.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	Satisfactory provision is performing less well than expectations in one or more of the key areas. It requires improvement in order to be good.
Grade 4	Inadequate	Provision that is inadequate requires significant improvement and/or enforcement. The provision is failing to give children an acceptable standard of early years education and/or is not meeting the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. It will be inspected again within 12 months of the date of this inspection.
Met		The provision has no children on roll. The inspection judgement is that the provider continues to meet the requirements for registration.
Not Met		The provision has no children on roll. The inspection judgement is that the provider does not meet the requirements for registration.

Inspection

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under Sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006 on the quality and standards of provision that is registered on the Early Years Register. The registered person must ensure that this provision complies with the statutory framework for children's learning, development and care, known as the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Setting details

Unique reference number	126986
Local authority	Kent
Inspection number	775049
Type of provision	Full-time provision
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	2 - 5
Total number of places	24
Number of children on roll	44
Name of provider	Little Angels
Date of previous inspection	04/11/2009
Telephone number	05601526623

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Full-time provision is that which operates for more than three hours. These are usually known as nurseries, nursery schools and pre-schools and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. They are registered on the Early Years Register and pay the higher fee for registration.

Sessional provision operates for more than two hours but does not exceed three hours in any one day. These are usually known as pre-schools, kindergartens or nursery schools and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. They are registered on the Early Years Register and pay the lower fee for registration.

Childminders care for one or more children where individual children attend for a period of more than two hours in any one day. They operate from domestic premises that are usually their own home. They are registered on the Early Years Register and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Out of school provision may be sessional or full-time provision and is delivered before or after school and/or in the summer holidays. They are registered on the Early Years Register and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. Where children receive their

Early Years Foundation Stage in school these providers do not have to deliver the learning and development requirements in full but should complement the experiences children receive in school.

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