

# Saplings Pre School Playgroup

Beechwood Avenue, Bottisham, CAMBRIDGE, CB25 9BE

<b>Inspection date</b>	11/11/2014
Previous inspection date	17/03/2009

<b>The quality and standards of the early years provision</b>	<b>This inspection:</b>	3
	Previous inspection:	3
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 requires improvement

- Relationships between children and staff are warm and affectionate. As a result, children play happily and enjoy their time at pre-school.
- Staff have developed good partnerships with parents and the host school to ensure children's individual care and learning needs are appropriately met.
- Staff have a good understanding of safeguarding procedures and ensure children play in a safe and secure environment.

### It is not yet good because

- Documentation essential to the safe and efficient management of the pre-school is not well-organised enough to ensure it is easily available when required.
- Children do not always have the opportunity to become deeply engaged in their activities and or make decisions about their learning because routines are led by adults. Additionally, their access to the garden is limited by those routines, which affects the learning of those children who prefer to be outdoors.
- Children's independence and self-help skills are not promoted consistently during daily routines.

## 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
- scheduled more frequently where Ofsted identifies a need to do so, for example where provision was previously judged 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 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
- scheduled at the completion of an investigation into failure to comply with the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage.

The provision is also registered on the voluntary and compulsory parts of the Childcare Register. This report includes a judgment about compliance with the requirements of that register.

## Inspection activities

- The inspector observed the children during their activities indoors and outdoors.  
A range of documents were examined, including children's learning records, staff and committee suitability checks, some policies and procedures and the pre-school's self-evaluation.
- The inspector had discussions with the manager and representatives of the management committee.
- The views of parents were taken into account through discussion on the day and written comments.

## Inspector

Veronica Sharpe

## Full report

### Information about the setting

Saplings Pre School Playgroup is run by a voluntary management committee made up of parents of children at the pre-school. It opened in its present location in 1995 and operates from a single storey building situated in the grounds of Bottisham Primary School in Cambridgeshire. The pre-school is on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. It is open each weekday, except Wednesdays, from 9am to 12noon during school term times. On Wednesday mornings there is a pre-playgroup session for younger children accompanied by their parents or carers. The pre-school opens for afternoon sessions between 12.30pm and 3.30pm when there are sufficient children on roll. All children share access to an enclosed outdoor play area. There are currently 24 children aged from two to under five years on roll. The pre-school offers early years funding to eligible two-, three- and four-year-old children. There are four members of staff, two have childcare qualifications at level 3 and one is working towards a qualification at level 2. The pre-school is a member of the Pre-school Learning Alliance.

### What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- ensure that required documentation, including evidence of suitability checks, is well-organised and readily available

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

- improve the organisation of the sessions to create more flexible routines that increase children's opportunities to make their own decisions and sustain their play indoors and outdoors
- promote children's independence and self-help skills more effectively, for example, by enabling them to freely access drinking water.

## Inspection judgements

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

Staff have a suitable understanding of the areas of learning and how children develop. They demonstrate, generally, good teaching skills. For example, they encourage children to listen and watch a low-flying helicopter. However, staff tend to plan for the group, rather than for children's individual learning needs. This means that there is some

imbalance towards adult-led routines, such as group story time and tidy-up time, which break up the flow of the session. As a result, not all children get the time they need to become deeply involved in their activities and explore their environment independently. Nonetheless, children play happily because they have good relationships with staff and each other. They enjoy the activities planned by the adults, such as making sandwiches, and most join in with enthusiasm. Staff provide the youngest children with appropriate support during adult-led activities so they can complete them successfully. They interact well with the children and talk to them about their activities.

Children have some opportunities to explore the plentiful resources during periods of free-play. They open drawers to find dinosaurs, and help themselves to marker pens and paper. Children enjoy being creative with paint and develop their physical skills using large and small brushes. Staff introduce children to new experiences, such as ice cubes, and encourage the children to express in words how the ice feels. Children learn that print has meaning as they find their name cards to register their arrival. During group circle time most children listen with interest as a story is read out. They happily join in with songs and rhymes. As a result, their communication and language skills are appropriately supported, helping to prepare them for school. Staff set out puzzles appropriate for the ages of the children. They develop children's mathematical skills by talking to them about the size, colour and shape of the pieces. Practical activities, such as setting out the plates for snack, encourage children to think about quantity. Overall, children develop the skills they need for the next stage of their learning.

Staff collect information from parents about children's abilities and interests when they start at pre-school. They make regular assessments of children's development, including a progress check for children aged between two and three years. Staff are alert to any areas of delay and take steps to ensure children have the support they need. For example, they introduce sign language into story time for children who have speech and language difficulties. Parents are encouraged to contribute to their children's learning records and staff ask them about special people and events at home. This gives them suitable opportunities to share in their children's development.

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

Children settle well on their arrival at this small and friendly pre-school. They have formed close relationships with the staff, which promotes their emotional well-being. Each child is allocated a key person, who takes responsibility for communicating effectively with parents to ensure children's individual care needs are known and met. Flexible settling-in procedures enable new children to move from home into the setting with confidence. Staff invite families to visit and offer a weekly session where younger children meet each other prior to their starting at pre-school. The vast majority of children move on to the on-site nursery. There are good arrangements to ensure children are well-prepared for their move. For example, they visit the school and get to know their new teachers during the summer term.

Children learn good behaviour because boundaries set are simple and consistent. Staff

explain expectations clearly and reinforce children's understanding of kind and caring behaviour by being good role models. They support younger children to share and take turns and offer positive praise. As a result, children cooperate well with each other and are kind and considerate. Staff help children develop a sense of responsibility as they encourage them to tidy away their toys and help with setting the table at snack time. Children benefit from a healthy selection of fresh fruit for their snack. Planned activities, such as making sandwiches, teaches children to use utensils, such as knives, safely. Staff discuss healthy choices with the children to develop their understanding of foods which are good for them. Staff respond to children's requests for drinks, which ensures they remain hydrated. Children do not develop their self-care skills consistently because staff do not enable them to undertake some useful practical tasks for themselves. For example, they are not able to satisfy their own thirst by helping themselves to fresh drinking water.

Children have daily access to outdoor areas, where they have good opportunities to develop their physical skills. Staff support children as they explore the climbing equipment and encourage them to play ball games. However, staff take the children out as a whole group for a set period of time towards the end of the session, rather than according to children's preferences. This limits children's outdoor learning opportunities, especially those who learn better outside. For example, children are excited to be outside and initially spend their time in exuberant exercise. When they are ready to explore other learning opportunities, such as, sand, leaves and digging, it is time to go back inside.

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

The newly elected management committee shows an enthusiasm for its new role and members are consolidating their knowledge of the Early Years Foundation Stage. Policies and procedures have been appropriately updated to reflect and support current practice. These are easily available to parents so they know about the pre-school's principles. The committee are developing an operational plan to ensure continuity during future changes of committee. However, not all essential documentation is well-organised to support the safe and efficient management of the pre-school. For example, evidence of Disclosure and Barring Service checks were not easily available. Most of these were provided at the end of the inspection, but only after a diligent quest by one of the committee members. The pre-school has had a long period of staff stability without any need for recruitment. However, the committee has sought guidance and has appropriate procedures in place to ensure the suitability of any future staff member.

Children are protected from neglect and abuse because staff have a good understanding of child protection issues. Staff attend safeguarding training regularly, and the designated person for child protection refreshes her advanced training annually. Written policies and procedures help the new committee members understand their responsibilities to ensure children's safety. Staff understand the need for confidentiality and implement procedures limiting the use of mobile telephones and cameras. The building is safe and secure because staff check the identity of visitors and keep external doors locked. The manager adequately monitors the performance of staff through regular meetings and annual

appraisals. The experienced staff show an enthusiastic approach to their work and as a result, children enjoy their learning. Professional development is appropriately supported by the management committee. For example, one member of staff is working towards a childcare qualification. All staff attend mandatory training, such as first aid and child protection, to promote children's health and safety. Staff and children carry out safety procedures, such as the fire drill, which helps children learn to keep themselves safe.

Staff monitor children's progress towards the early learning goals effectively through regular assessments. This helps to ensure all children achieve their expected level of development and identify any gaps in learning. The manager and her staff evaluate their practice adequately and implement changes that benefit the children. They have recently collected the views of parents, and these are beginning to feed into the self-evaluation process. Relationships with parents and carers are friendly and supportive. Staff provide verbal feedback to parents on collection and provide good information about activities and events through notices and newsletters. Parents speak warmly of the staff and feel their children are safe and secure. They comment favourably about the small, homely environment and say their children are happy. Close links with the school-run nursery help to achieve continuity of care and learning when children move on. There are sound links with other professionals to support children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, such as speech and language specialists.

### The Childcare Register

The requirements for the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are **Met**

The requirements for the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are **Met**

## 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	Requires improvement	The provision is not giving children a good standard of early years education and/or there are minor breaches of the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. We re-inspect nurseries and pre-schools judged as requires improvement within 12 months of the date of inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	Provision that is inadequate requires significant improvement and/or enforcement action. 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 monitored and inspected again within six months of the date of this inspection.
Met		There were no children present at the time of the inspection. The inspection judgement is that the provider continues to meet the requirements for registration.
Not met		There were no children present at the time of the inspection. 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	221814
<b>Local authority</b>	Cambridgeshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	876365
<b>Type of provision</b>	
<b>Registration category</b>	Childcare - Non-Domestic
<b>Age range of children</b>	0 - 17
<b>Total number of places</b>	16
<b>Number of children on roll</b>	24
<b>Name of provider</b>	Saplings Pre School Playgroup Committee
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	17/03/2009
<b>Telephone number</b>	01223 813226

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## Type of provision

For the purposes of this inspection the following definitions apply:

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, which are usually the childminder's 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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