

Curry Rivel Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	142947
Inspection date	19/09/2008
Inspector	Jeff Plumb
Setting address	c/o Curry Rivel Primary School, Church Street, Curry Rivel, Langport, Somerset, TA10 0HD
Telephone number	07753449459
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Type of setting	Childcare on non-domestic premises

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 report includes information on any complaints about the childcare provision which Ofsted has received since the last inspection or registration whichever is the later, which require Ofsted or the provider to take action in Annex C.

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.

Description of the setting

Curry Rivel Playgroup opened in 1980. A registered charity it is managed by a Board of Trustees. In September 2008 it moved into a classroom integral to Curry Rivel Primary School located in the centre of the village. The classroom has a suitable kitchen area and toilets, appropriate for young children. The playgroup serves the local area and many children go on to attend the on-site primary school. There are 16 children aged from two to four years on roll, and they are all in receipt of funded nursery education. The setting supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The playgroup opens five days a week during school term times. Sessions are from 09.00 to 12.00 Monday to Friday. An additional session is run from 13.00 to 15.00 on Mondays and Wednesdays to aid settling in younger children. There are six regular staff members and one part-time member of staff. The supervisor has relevant NVQ qualifications at both level 3 and level 4. Four other members of staff have suitable academic qualifications for working with young children, and the remaining two are working towards NVQ level 2. The setting receives support from the local authority.

Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Curry Rivel Playgroup provides very effectively for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). Planning, based on outstanding assessment of what the children enjoy doing with additional challenge built in, ensures that the children make good progress. Resources are put out to encourage children to make independent choices, but on rare occasions when children take time to decide what they want to do staff dive in too quickly and make decisions for them. On these occasions their independent choice making is impeded. The learning environment is stimulating and clean and safe. The outdoor play environment raises children's curiosity, develops their imagination and promotes their physical development exceptionally well. Activities for the children are exciting, challenging and fun. Communication with parents about what their children learn in the playgroup is good, but the staff do not sufficiently involve the parents in the planning of the learning activities for their children. The supervisor has a very good understanding of the strengths and areas for improvement within the setting. There is constant improvement based on a robust action plan to improve the learning for the children who attend the playgroup.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- involve parents in the planning of the learning activities for their children so as to have a greater understanding of what motivates and encourages the children to best progress with their learning
- give the children increased opportunities to take time over making decisions for themselves independently and carrying out even more tasks for themselves than they do at present

The leadership and management of the early years provision

Robust child protection procedures and thorough risk assessments ensure that children are well protected and kept safe. The outdoor space shared with the Foundation Stage within the school is checked regularly to make sure that there are no unsafe surfaces. When appointing new staff rigorous recruitment and vetting procedures are adhered to. The supervisor implements an excellent monitoring and evaluation system to regularly check on the quality of provision and to ensure improvements are made as required. It is non-threatening, based on trust, and ensures an immediate response to identified areas for development. For example, a recent observation of children working on the date of the month and the day's weather revealed that the session was too long and that three-year-olds in the group lost concentration. The supervisor will now sit down with the whole staff team and discuss how this session at the start of the day can be improved. A detailed action plan implemented since the last inspection has resulted in the issues of concern identified at that time being successfully addressed, but there is room for further improvement to promote children's independence in learning.

The supervisor is committed to continued professional development of herself and the staff team to benefit the learning of the children. Staff members are currently on a course to hone their observation skills of how children learn and to use this to improve their planning. Communication with parents is good. Effective use is made of a whiteboard displayed in the classroom to inform parents of what is planned for their children at the start of each day. The supervisor is accessible to talk with parents at the start and end of each session. However, parents are not sufficiently involved in the planning of the learning activities for their children. Parents are asked about what interests their children have and what their children enjoy, but insufficient use is made of this information when planning activities to promote their children's learning. There is a very good partnership emerging between the leadership of the playgroup and the Foundation Stage leader within the primary school. Although the inspection occurred too early in this new and exciting development to evaluate its impact, it is already evident that the children benefit enormously from the use of school resources. Partnerships with other professionals, such as the Yeovil Opportunity Group for Children with Learning Difficulties, are effective and improve the inclusion of children with language difficulties in learning activities with their peers.

The quality and standards of the early years provision

Children make good progress across all areas of learning and development because they are provided with a range of exciting activities. Planning is based on observations of what interests the children and they are involved in making decisions about what they want to do. For example, some children wanted their interest table to focus on learning about different types of chocolate whilst others wanted the focus to be learning about tortoises. In a very sensitive way staff enabled the children to vote and a consensus was reached with a focus on chocolate. Staff used this opportunity to emphasise that it is important to adopt a healthy lifestyle and that eating chocolate is for special occasions. Additional

challenge is always built into all activities to extend the children's learning.

Children are encouraged to adopt safe practices and to develop independence. They are allowed to spread butter on their crackers at break time using a real knife, but assistants' eyes are on them to ensure that this activity is safe. They are given healthy snacks and excellent use is made of the playground to promote their physical fitness as they ride toy tractors and 'trikes'. Their physical development is excellent. The children are very clear about how to play safely outdoors. However, on rare occasions staff move too quickly and take over from the children and this impedes their independence; for example, pouring water for a child and carrying it to his table rather than allowing him to do it for himself, or too quickly helping a child reach a decision about whether to ride on a tractor or a 'trike'.

Staff promote children's understanding of money very effectively through visits to local shops and the post office to purchase items. Resources are freely accessible, all risk assessed, to enable children to make independent choices when engaged in construction activities. Fun, enjoyment and energy are evident during free play activities using large cardboard boxes which contribute effectively to children's mathematical development as they discover how many of them can climb inside. The joy on their faces is a picture of sheer delight. Many activities promote children's language skills, which are good. They express their ideas through structured 'circle time'. Staff really listen to the children. For example, based on their knowledge of the children's comfort toys staff plan a sensory tasting opportunity of making and eating porridge for their toys during the planned 'Goldilocks' story. Children initiate play for themselves and in a safe environment are allowed to get very messy, which they love doing as they explore the texture of sand and pretend pasta! They are competent in the use of computers as they match shapes using a 'Bob the Builder programme'. Their curiosity is aroused and their imaginations fired as they play pirates on a large pirate ship outdoors.

The classroom base used for the playgroup is a stimulating and exciting learning environment. Parents say, 'Our children love coming to playgroup because of the exciting new room and we are happy that they are in the right place'. However, they would appreciate being more involved in the planning of their children's learning activities as they feel they have so much to offer. They go on, though, to say that they appreciate the day-to-day assessment of their children and can use this feedback in their homes to promote their children's learning further. This is a very significant strength of this successful playgroup.

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

Overall effectiveness

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?	2
How well does the provision promote inclusive practice?	2
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement.	2

Leadership and management

How effectively is provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	2
How effective is the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement?	2
How well does the setting work in partnership with parents and others?	2
How well are children safeguarded?	2

Quality and standards

How effectively are children in the Early Years Foundation Stage helped to learn and develop?	2
How effectively is the welfare of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage promoted?	2
How well are children helped to stay safe?	2
How well are children helped to be healthy?	2
How well are children helped to enjoy and achieve?	2
How well are children helped to make a positive contribution?	2
How well are children helped develop skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being?	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

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

Annex C: complaint/s made to Ofsted

This section of the report includes details of any complaint/s made to Ofsted when:

- we took action for the provider to meet the requirements of the Early Years Register; or
- we asked the provider to take action in order to meet the requirements of the Early Years Register; or
- the provider had already taken any necessary action to meet the requirements of the Early Years Register.

We will not report on any complaint where the provider met the requirements of the Early Years Register or did not require any action by Ofsted or the registered provider.

Detail of the complaint/s

There have been no complaints made to Ofsted since the last inspection.

The provider is required to keep a record of complaints made by parents, which they can see on request. The complaints record may contain complaints other than those made to Ofsted.