

Bobtails Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspection date	02/11/2011
Inspector	Alison Reeves

Setting address	8 Roydon Road, Stanstead Abbots, WARE, Hertfordshire, SG12 8EZ
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Type of setting	Childcare - Non-Domestic

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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*.

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.

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Description of the setting

Bobtails Playgroup re-registered in 2010 following a change of premises. It operates from an annexe at St Andrews School in Stanstead Abbots, Hertfordshire. Children have access to an outdoor area. It is open each weekday from 9am to 12 noon during term time.

The setting is registered on the Early Years Register and the compulsory part of the Childcare Register. A maximum of 30 children may attend the setting at any one time. There are currently 31 children aged from two to three years on roll, attending various sessions. The setting supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and children who speak English as an additional language.

There are eight members of staff working with the children, including the manager, most of whom have relevant Early Years qualifications. One is training at level 3 and one has a foundation degree.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is outstanding.

Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage make excellent progress in this exceptional setting. They are recognised as unique individuals and are very well supported by the highly dedicated and enthusiastic staff. Policies and procedures are implemented extremely well to promote children's welfare and safety. The stimulating environment is highly successful in most aspects. Relationships with parents make a significant contribution to children's learning and those with other providers are very well established. Self-evaluation is embedded and demonstrates abundantly the commitment to further developing practice to promote increasingly improved outcomes for all children.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To further improve the high quality early years provision the registered person should consider:

- enhancing visual displays to promote greater understanding of diversity and reflect the wider world
- improving systems for observation, assessment and planning to better reflect the close monitoring and rapid progress made by children.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children are expertly safeguarded and very well protected in the setting because staff have excellent understanding of national and local systems for recording and reporting child protection issues. Detailed policies and procedures covering all

aspects of safeguarding are clearly understood and implemented consistently and very effectively. This means that children's safety and well-being are ensured. Staff make very effective use of up-to-date risk assessments to support them in ensuring all areas used by children are safe. For example, the daily check enables them to monitor all aspects of the premises and organise swift repairs, keeping hazards to a minimum. This means that children and their families are able to move safely and freely around the building.

Staff have an outstanding level of knowledgeable in relation to the Early Years Foundation Stage and are highly effective in using their knowledge to support children in their learning. Staff frequently attend an extensive range of workshops and courses to ensure their knowledge remains up to date and that they have the skills and expertise to support children in making rapid progress. The environment is well organised and accessible to the children. A wide variety of stimulating and interesting activities are made available at each session, meaning that all children are able to thrive and make choices about how they learn. The environment successfully reflects the local community but there is less emphasis on the wider world in displayed materials, although books and resources are used well during sessions. The setting is dedicated to self-evaluation, using a number of effective strategies to identify strengths and areas for development. As a result, clear action plans, drawn up by the staff team, detail the priorities for improvement and the way forward. Consequently, a shared vision of ambitious and highly appropriate targets are set and consistently met, bringing about sustained improvements. Recent training on 'Every Child a Talker' is being supported with a scheme that involves families in promoting language and communication.

The staff team form close working relationships with parents and carers. They obtain useful information about each child that enables them to establish starting points and build on these over time. Parents have regular opportunities to engage with staff as volunteers at sessions, at the monthly coffee morning and at consultations, in addition to the friendly exchanges when bringing and collecting their children. Parents have plenty of praise and a high regard for the setting, saying they feel fully included, welcome and involved in their child's education. These partnerships contribute significantly to meeting specific needs. Effective relationships with other settings and professionals involved with the children are very well established. This enables staff to provide continuity in children's education and supports children in smooth transitions to new settings. Staff deliver high quality tailored support to children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. They are solution focused, adapting activities to ensure barriers to learning can be overcome. Policies, including those on equality, are reviewed annually and support staff effectively in meeting the needs of every child.

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

Children show a strong sense of security as they interact with staff. Their consistently good behaviour demonstrates their understanding of what is expected of them. They fully understand that their careful movements, kindness and sharing help to keep themselves and others safe. Children are responsible and show

maturity as they undertake tasks, such as tidying away resources or sounding the horn to alert others to spaces at the snack table. Children are eager to help and communicate this well. Children show a very good awareness of a healthy lifestyle. They make healthy choices about what they eat and drink and engage wholeheartedly in active play indoors and outside. Staff promote very effective hygiene routines to minimise the spread of infection and cross-contamination. The child-size sinks within the main room mean children can be independent in undertaking these tasks. Staff organise walks around the school grounds, and the upcoming outing is a repeat of the previous highly successful ice skating excursion. This ensures fun physical play is well planned for.

Children are making rapid progress in their learning and development. They are enthusiastic and show excellent levels of concentration. Children are effective communicators and use language well to express their thoughts, ideas and feelings. Use of pictorial symbols and signing supports early communication effectively. Emergent writing is supported well and children are keen to use what they know, writing their names or initial letters on their pictures or making lists as part of role play. The book area is well used by children, who confidently retell familiar stories, including lots of detail and explanation for what appears in the pictures. Children show an excellent level of mathematical knowledge as they use numbers in their play and organise resources according to categories. Children use the computer mouse with skill and readily explain the programmes they are using.

Excellent use is made of the outdoor environment. Children are able to explore and interact with the natural world; they explain where the leaves on the ground have come from and show wonder at the colours and way they blow in the breeze. Staff frequently observe children and use what they see to determine future planning. The current systems are quite complex, involve lots of recording and some duplication, and staff are looking at making this a more manageable and streamlined process. Nevertheless, staff know children extremely well and use their assessments to plan future sessions that continue to address the needs of individuals and inspire and interest the group as a whole. Consequently, children are making very good progress towards the early learning goals in all six areas of learning. Children's behaviour is exemplary in the setting because staff give clear explanations, set appropriate boundaries and provide support for every child. Children are confident and self-assured, showing respect for themselves and others. They learn about other cultures and beliefs as they celebrate festivals, and use resources that reflect positive images of the wider world. Inclusion is given high priority, and as a result children can participate fully in the life of the setting.

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?	1
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	1

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	1
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	1
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding	1
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	1
The effectiveness of partnerships	1
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	1

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
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Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	1
The extent to which children feel safe	1
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	1
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	1

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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