

Inspection of Fleetville Community Playgroup

The Community Centre, Royal Road, St. Albans, Hertfordshire AL1 4LQ

Inspection date: 5 October 2023

Overall effectiveness	Good
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The quality of education	Good
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Behaviour and attitudes	Good
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Personal development	Good
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Leadership and management	Good
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Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good
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What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is good

Staff get to know the children very well at this welcoming playgroup. They are thoughtful about how to support children's well-being and development. Staff use the interests of children to engage them in learning. For example, as young children put toys in their mouths, staff consider how they can provide further sensory activities for children to experience. This helps children to notice the world around them. Children make good progress in their learning over time and during sessions attended. Quiet children watch the activities when they first arrive. Staff check in with them regularly to help support their emotional well-being. Children's confidence develops, and they are soon taking part in play.

Staff skilfully help children to make links to their home life, helping them to feel secure. They role play in a toy kitchen setting and pretend to cook, eat and drink. Children develop their physical skills as they explore what happens to different materials. They pinch and roll play dough to strengthen their finger muscles. They stretch their arms to make marks on a chalkboard with chalk. Staff offer paintbrushes and water, encouraging children to wash away the chalk. Children are able to explain that the drawing has 'disappeared', sparking their imaginations.

What does the early years setting do well and what does it need to do better?

- The committee provides good, valuable leadership. It ensures that committee members and staff are suitable to work with children and oversee the operations of the playgroup. This helps to keep children safe. The manager links with the committee and staff to develop the playgroup for the children.
- The staff team is well qualified and has strong knowledge of how children learn. Staff obtain detailed information about children's needs from parents and use this to plan a good range of opportunities that interest children. Staff are keen to develop their skills and knowledge specific to the children in their key groups.
- Staff play with children and are genuinely interested in what the children say and do. They provide good narration during play, so children hear a range of language. However, they do not always use these spontaneous discussions to encourage children to think of a range of answers to questions, to extend their learning.
- Staff support families in ways that benefit children's overall welfare successfully. For example, they work with parents to access specialist support and assessments to help pinpoint children's needs. Staff provide families with assistance when they struggle with what they need. They link closely with the local school so that children achieve a smooth transition and know what to expect when they move settings.
- Parents are very happy with the provision at the playgroup. They have noticed that their children have learned more language and grown in confidence since

attending. Parents receive regular updates about their children's learning, inspiring them to help their children to develop at home by, for example, reading books together. Parents report that staff help them to understand their child's feelings and development.

- Staff help to develop children's communication skills successfully. They speak clearly and help to extend children's vocabulary in meaningful ways. As children mix leaves and herbs, staff name the action 'stir' and the plant 'rosemary'. Staff also include mathematical terms such as 'full' and 'overflow'. Staff encourage children to listen for longer periods appropriate for their stage of development. For example, older, well-settled children pay attention and join in with actions and singing at group times. Younger children are able to explore sensory toys when their attention wanes.
- Children are developing a love of reading and books. They ask to read favourite familiar stories. Staff read with expression and interest, including the children in reciting familiar phrases. Staff carefully plan experiences that link to these stories, such as role play with props. This helps children recall their learning and understand how stories are structured.
- Children have good behaviour, and staff help them to learn how to take turns during play. For example, staff encourage children to take turns when they put balls down a gutter run. The children wait with anticipation for the balls to fall down the gutter and into the bucket. They squeal with delight and wait their turn to repeat the activity. This helps to develop children's social skills.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff keep safeguarding knowledge up to date. They regularly seek training and discuss current topics in meetings. Staff can describe the procedures to follow should they need to report a concern about a child to the designated officers and external agencies. They know how to identify if a child is at risk of abuse or neglect. The committee is aware of its responsibility and liaises with the designated safeguarding officers to help to ensure the welfare of children.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- help staff to include further opportunities for children to think about a range of possible answers to extend their learning.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY316171
Local authority	Hertfordshire
Inspection number	10295376
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register
Day care type	Sessional day care
Age range of children at time of inspection	2 to 3
Total number of places	24
Number of children on roll	22
Name of registered person	Fleetville Community Playgroup Committee
Registered person unique reference number	RP905668
Telephone number	07854400569
Date of previous inspection	7 December 2017

Information about this early years setting

Fleetville Community Playgroup registered in 2005. The playgroup employs eight members of childcare staff. Of these, four staff hold appropriate qualifications at level 3 or above, including two with a qualification at level 6. The playgroup opens from Monday to Thursday, term time only. Sessions are from 8.45am until 11.45am, with the option of a lunch club until 1pm. The playgroup provides funded early education for two- and three-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Elke Rockey

Inspection activities

- This was the first routine inspection the provider received since the COVID-19 pandemic. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the provider and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the provider.
- The manager joined the inspector on a learning walk and talked to the inspector about their curriculum and what they want the children to learn.
- The inspector talked to the provider and staff at appropriate times during the inspection and took account of their views.
- The inspector observed the quality of education being provided, indoors and outdoors, and assessed the impact that this was having on children's learning.
- The manager and the inspector carried out a joint observation of a spontaneous activity.
- The inspector spoke to several parents during the inspection and took account of their views.
- The inspector looked at relevant documentation and reviewed evidence of the suitability of staff working in the playgroup.
- Children talked with the inspector during the inspection.

We carried out this inspection 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.

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