

Inspection of Sutton St James Playgroup

Bells Drove, Sutton St James, Spalding, Lincolnshire PE12 0JG

Inspection date: 4 December 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

Children come into the playgroup in the morning excited for their day. They have good bonds with staff, who greet them with a warm welcome as they arrive. Staff create a calm and nurturing space for children where they joyfully participate in singing sessions with staff. Children show that they feel proud and have a sense of belonging. For example, staff praise them for their drawings and display these attractively on the artist board for everyone to see. Staff teach children how to stay safe and the potential consequences of their actions. For example, when children do not sit on chairs correctly, staff remind them to sit down or, they might fall.

Staff create an atmosphere of 'awe and wonder' that in turn contributes to children having a positive attitude to learning. Staff introduce children to ice and salt and encourage them to share the resources. Children show an obvious interest as they explore cause and effect to see what happens when they pour salt onto the ice. Staff ask children to talk about what they see happening, valuing their opinions and asking children what the ice feels like. Staff support children with special educational needs and/or disabilities well. They are proactive in recognising concerns and supporting these children, creating individualised support plans to help them progress in their development.

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

- The acting manager is knowledgeable and committed to providing children and families with the best possible experiences and opportunities. She provides staff with regular supervision meetings to discuss with them how to continually improve their practice. One example of this, staff have identified they have a higher number of children with communication and language delays since the COVID-19 pandemic. As a result, staff have attended training and inputted different strategies, such as focus groups and family picture books, to encourage children's speaking skills.
- Staff provide children with opportunities to learn through adult direction. Examples of this include a welcome time and making play dough as a group. However, occasionally, during some group times, staff do not manage to maintain all children's interests. This results in some children becoming distracted and limits their learning experience during this time.
- Children thoroughly enjoy outdoor play. Staff sit alongside children as they pour water into the sand and encourage children to notice how this changes the texture. When provided with opportunities, children show a good deal of curiosity and creativity in their play. However, occasionally staff are keen to move children on to the next activity or routine, such as snack time which interrupts the learning that is happening.
- Staff prioritise communication and language development in their curriculum.

They join in and play alongside the children. Staff listen and respond, modelling language and repeating new words and phrases. They question children, allowing them time to think and respond to gauge their understanding and to challenge and extend their thinking. For example, when exploring ice, staff praise the children when they use vocabulary, such as 'freezing' and 'melting'.

- Staff provide activities to help children develop their physical skills. Children copy staff and have fun listening to instructions, singing and doing exercises as they move their bodies in different ways. They develop their small muscles, as well as hand-eye coordination when they carefully peel off the back of shape stickers and make pictures.
- Staff reinforce their expectations of children's behaviour, such as being respectful and polite. For example, when children want to get past a chair they say, 'Excuse me please'. Staff promote children's confidence and self-esteem as they praise them for good manners.
- Staff support children's health and well-being. They encourage children to have regular access to the outdoor area to learn in the fresh air. Furthermore, staff encourage good hygiene procedures, such as asking children to wash their hands after coughing into them, to help tackle the spread of infections.
- The acting manager and staff allocate additional funding thoughtfully to help improve outcomes for children. For example, children receive personal hygiene packs to help them learn the importance of oral hygiene and keeping themselves clean.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The acting manager and staff have a clear understanding of their role in keeping children safe from harm. They know how to recognise the signs of abuse and neglect, and the procedure to follow if they are concerned about a child's welfare. Regular safeguarding training ensures staff are fully up-to-date with current practice. Children are supervised well, and staff are appropriately deployed to meet children's individual care and learning needs. Staff regularly communicate with colleagues if they are leaving the room briefly. Headcounts are carried out to make sure the correct staff-to-child ratio is adhered to when children choose to play inside and outside.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- support staff to maintain children's attention during group time activities and avoid them becoming distracted
- support staff to enable children to fully explore during their play without interruption to their learning.

Setting details

Unique reference number	253629
Local authority	Lincolnshire
Inspection number	10307840
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register, Voluntary Childcare Register
Day care type	Full day care
Age range of children at time of inspection	2 to 4
Total number of places	24
Number of children on roll	36
Name of registered person	Sutton St James Pre-School Playgroup Committee
Registered person unique reference number	RP904700
Telephone number	01945 440000
Date of previous inspection	14 March 2018

Information about this early years setting

Sutton St James Playgroup registered in 1992 and is located in Spalding, Lincolnshire. The playgroup employs six members of childcare staff and three relief members of staff. Of these, five hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3. The playgroup opens Monday to Friday, during term time. Sessions are from 8.30am until 3pm. The playgroup provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector
Sharon Alleary

Inspection activities

- This was the first routine inspection the provider received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. 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 and the inspector completed a learning walk together of all areas of the playgroup and discussed the early years curriculum.
- The inspector talked to the staff at appropriate times during the inspection and took account of their views.
- The inspector spoke with the acting manager about the leadership and management of the playgroup.
- The inspector observed the quality of education being provided indoors and outdoors and assessed the impact on children's learning.
- The inspector carried out joint observations with the manager.
- Parents shared their views of the playgroup with the inspector.

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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