

# Play and Learn Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	115361
<b>Inspection date</b>	18 July 2007
<b>Inspector</b>	Sarah Morfett
<b>Setting Address</b>	Scouts' Hall, Mayplace Road West, Bexleyheath, Kent, DA7 4JB
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<b>Registered person</b>	T Mackin
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Integrated
<b>Type of care</b>	Sessional care

## ABOUT THIS INSPECTION

The purpose of this inspection is to assure government, parents and the public of the quality of childcare and, if applicable, of nursery education. The inspection was carried out under Part XA Children Act 1989 as introduced by the Care Standards Act 2000 and, where nursery education is provided, under Schedule 26 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.

This report details the main strengths and any areas for improvement identified during the inspection. The judgements included in the report are made in relation to the outcomes for children set out in the Children Act 2004; the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding; and, where nursery education is provided, the *Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage*.

The report includes information on any complaints about the childcare provision which Ofsted has received since the last inspection or registration or 1 April 2004 whichever is the later.

### The key inspection judgements and what they mean

*Outstanding: this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality*

*Good: this aspect of the provision is strong*

*Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound*

*Inadequate: this aspect of the provision is not good enough*

For more information about early years inspections, please see the booklet *Are you ready for your inspection?* which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk).

## THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE AND NURSERY EDUCATION

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

The quality and standards of the care are good. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are good.

### WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Play and Learn Pre-School is run by a private provider. It opened in 1993 and operates from a scout hall in a Bexleyheath, in the London borough of Bexley. A maximum of 24 children may attend the pre-school at any one time. The pre-school is open each weekday from 09.15 to 12.20 for 38 weeks of the year. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 25 children aged from two years to under five years on roll. Of these, 19 children receive funding for early education. Children come from a local catchment area. The pre-school currently supports a number of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and also supports a number of children who speak English as an additional language.

The pre-school employs five members of staff. Of these, three hold appropriate early years qualifications and one is working towards a qualification.

## THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

### **Helping children to be healthy**

The provision is good.

Children play in a bright, clean and well-maintained environment. Effective cleaning routines, such as wiping tables with anti-bacterial spray and keeping floors clean, mean that children benefit from a hygienic play area. There are strong systems in place to promote children's understanding of good hygiene practice. For example, easily accessible resources enable them to wash their hands after going to the toilet, before eating and after messy play activities. Tissues are readily available and children are reminded to wipe their noses. Details of the group's sickness policy are communicated effectively, therefore, children who are infectious are kept at home and consequently the risk of cross infection is greatly reduced.

There are secure systems in place for recording accidents and medication. Staff follow good procedures for the recording of accidents and have access to a suitable procedure for recording medication should it be required. Parents give written permission for the procedures which require them such as emergency medical advice and treatment. Therefore, children's health and well-being are fully promoted.

Children have ample opportunities to be active. They are offered a good balance of physical activities through well thought out planning. Access to large equipment, such as a climbing frame, slide, bikes, balls and space hoppers, means children are using large motor skills well. Organised games inside like obstacle courses and parachute games help children learn how to control their bodies. Therefore, their physical development is promoted well.

Children learn to make healthy choices about what they eat. For example, each day at the snack bar they are offered a range of food which helps them to understand what is good for them. For example, they can choose from banana, raisins and apple, and are offered a drink of either milk or water. Children can help themselves to a drink throughout the session as a jug of water is always available. Therefore, they begin to learn the benefits of a healthy diet.

### **Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe**

The provision is good.

Children play in a bright and welcoming environment. They are cared for in a large hall which is set up with a wide variety of activities. These are inviting and offer them balance and challenge. Furniture, toys and equipment are well maintained and in good condition. For example, all toys conform to current safety standards, broken toys are discarded or put to one side for mending and effective cleaning routines are followed. The facilities are in very good condition and safety is well maintained both inside and out. Therefore, children can make the most of their time in the group.

Daily risk assessments ensure that children's safety is promoted. For example, the staff check that the floors are free of trip hazards, exits are clear, sockets are covered and the outside area is free from hazards. Staff ensure the general safety throughout the session because they are vigilant and wipe up spills. Children learn about keeping themselves safe as they join in with the regular fire evacuation procedure. The group feel it is important to raise awareness of safety issues and include clear guidelines in the staff induction and any outings the children go on are thoroughly risk assessed. Therefore, children's safety is paramount.

Children's welfare and safety are promoted. The policy for the protection of children is detailed and informs staff and parents of the group's duty of care towards them. For example, it contains up-to-date information regarding the Local Safeguarding Children Board procedures, details of signs and symptoms of abuse and includes a procedure should an allegation be made against a member of staff. The group are committed towards training staff in current procedures. Therefore, children's well-being is safeguarded.

### **Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do**

The provision is good.

Children arrive with confidence. Each morning they are greeted warmly by the staff and settle quickly because a broad range of activities are set out invitingly for them. These cover all the areas of development and provide them with balance and challenge. For example, they play in the water learning about floating and sinking, express themselves through art and craft materials, develop imagination in the role play area and develop construction skills, building with bricks and Lego. Activities are well thought-out and the 'Birth to three matters' framework features strongly within the planning. This means that all ages of children are challenged according to their age and ability. Children are thoroughly engaged and occupied, therefore, they learn through the good play opportunities offered.

#### **Nursery Education.**

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff have a sound understanding of the Foundation Stage and plan a broad range of activities for children which help them to make progress through the stepping stones towards the early learning goals. Each activity has a clear learning intention and staff interact well with the children asking open-ended questions which make them think, such as 'how' 'what' and 'where'. Therefore, through the effective teaching methods the children make good progress. Children's personal development is discussed at regular meetings and the next steps in learning are identified for them. Staff include this in the planning to help move them forward. Staff clearly explain how the children are making good progress, however, observation and assessment records do not fully reflect this as no clear picture is built within the records to show what stage the children are at. Staff work well as a team and are committed to helping the children reach their own potential.

Children enjoy good learning experiences at the group. Their personal, social and emotional development is promoted well. They gain independence as they take themselves to the toilet and are given opportunities to pour their own drinks at snack time. They are encouraged to use conventions, such as 'please' and 'thank you' and develop a strong sense of themselves as a member of the community as they discuss their families with the staff. Children have access to a wide range of books, they learn to handle them carefully turning pages one at a time. They enjoy looking at the pictures making up their own story as well as joining in with group stories. Children attempt to write for a purpose as they mark make with the range of materials provided. For example, they ascribe meaning to marks in the home corner and a construction activity where they are encouraged to write lists or draw pictures of what they have built.

The children use maths language as they play. For example, they talk about 'floating' and 'sinking' in the water play. They count in various activities and show interest in construction, talking about shape and arrangements as they build. Children learn how to operate simple equipment as they play with V-Tech toys and calculators. They take an interest in living things as they plant flowers and vegetables in the outside area. Therefore, they are gaining knowledge and understanding of the world around them. Children enjoy many creative activities during

the session. They explore the textures of malleable materials, such as play dough, water and sand and express themselves through free painting. They build a wide repertoire of songs and enjoy singing at group time. They can clap out the syllables in their names helping them to learn about rhythm. Overall, the pre-school plan and provide a good range of experiences and play opportunities which help to prepare the children for school.

### **Helping children make a positive contribution**

The provision is good.

Children enjoy coming to the pre-school and are treated as individuals. Details of children's dietary requirements, medical needs, religion, language and emergency contacts are recorded. Therefore, the staff are able to cater for them as individuals. Children have access to an adequate range of toys and resources which reflect positive images of diversity, for example, in the books, puzzles, dressing up and dolls that they play with. However, the range and reflection of diversity is limited. The group are positive in their approach to developing this area. The group are committed to helping children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The staff are trained to implement Individual Education Plans and children with special needs are strongly supported.

Children behave well at the pre-school. Self esteem and confidence is built through lots of praise and encouragement. Strategies according to age and stage of development are employed and staff are positive role models saying 'please' and 'thank you' to children. They follow the staff's example, therefore they learn to be polite and respect each other. Parents are well informed of the care their children receive because they enter into written agreements when they first start. A good range of written information is provided for them detailing the aims for their children. The staff spend time chatting to them at the beginning and end of the session letting them know how the children have been. Therefore, good relationships are developed.

The partnership with parents is good. The pre-school display information about the Foundation Stage curriculum, therefore the parents are involved in the children's education. Parents report they feel included in their children's education and are aware how they move forward and make good progress. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered through the range of activities planned within the Foundation Stage, through discussion with staff and through participating in activities which help them understand about the world around them.

### **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

Children are happy and settled in the well-organised environment. Space is utilised well and they move around freely and independently selecting from a good range of activities which promotes their learning experiences. Staff are deployed well, therefore, they enhance their learning opportunities. Most of the staff hold an appropriate childcare qualification and one member of staff is working towards one. Robust recruitment and vetting procedures ensure all staff who work with the children are suitable to do so.

The registration certificate is displayed and the necessary records are well-maintained and shared with parents. For example, the record of attendance is marked daily and records arrival and departure times and policies for lost or uncollected children contain clear guidance for staff and parents. The group have developed a sound procedure for the recording of complaints and contact details for Ofsted are displayed for parents should they require them. A good range of policies and procedures make up the group's operational plan which underpins the smooth running of the pre-school, therefore, children's health, safety and well-being is promoted.

Leadership and management is good. The leader has clear aims for the group and together with the staff team is pro-active in helping children move forward. Regular meetings are held to assess and discuss the children's progress. The leader welcomes staff input at these meetings where they talk about the Foundation Stage planning and discuss children's next steps in learning. Frequent monitoring and evaluation is used to assess the effectiveness of the curriculum. Staff are supported well as they are able to access regular training opportunities. They are committed to keeping themselves up-to-date with current regulations and through good relationships with the local Early Years department they continually improve their practice. Overall, the setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

### **Improvements since the last inspection**

At the last inspection the pre-school were asked to ensure that children had access to fresh drinking water at all times. During this inspection a jug of fresh water and cups are within easy reach for them. This means they can help themselves when they are thirsty. The group were also asked to review the way group story times were managed. The staff all sit together with the children and behaviour is managed well. Therefore, story time is effective for all ages of children. They were also left an action to ensure at least one member of staff who was first aid trained was present at all times. The group now have three members of staff who hold current certificates, therefore, someone is present at all times and can act in an emergency should this be required.

At the last nursery education inspection the pre-school were left two key issues to address. They were asked to develop the children's opportunities to recognise numbers and promote their understanding of addition and subtraction. They have developed maths well within the range of activities they provide; staff use appropriate maths language. Therefore, children's understanding of many maths concepts is developed well. They were asked to provide greater opportunities for the children to select craft materials. There is a table where a wide variety of craft materials are available; therefore, the children are able to express themselves freely.

### **Complaints since the last inspection**

Since the last inspection there have been no complaints made to Ofsted that required the provider or Ofsted to take any action in order to meet the National Standards.

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.

## **THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE AND NURSERY EDUCATION**

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The quality and standards of the care are good. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are good.

## WHAT MUST BE DONE TO SECURE FUTURE IMPROVEMENT?

### **The quality and standards of the care**

To improve the quality and standards of care further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- continue to develop the range of resources which reflect diversity

### **The quality and standards of the nursery education**

To improve the quality and standards of nursery education further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- develop the system used to record children's achievements to show clearly how they are making progress.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Complaints about Ofsted Early Years: concerns or complaints about Ofsted's role in regulating and inspecting childcare and early education (HMI ref no 2599)* which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)