

# Playmates II

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	EY280880
<b>Inspection date</b>	09 July 2007
<b>Inspector</b>	Ann Coggin / Karen Marie Tervit
<b>Setting Address</b>	55-57 Murray Street, Hartlepool, Cleveland, TS26 8PQ
<b>Telephone number</b>	01429 272500
<b>E-mail</b>	childcare-nursery@yahoo.co.uk
<b>Registered person</b>	Playmates Private Day Nursery Ltd
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Integrated
<b>Type of care</b>	Full day 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?

Playmates originally opened in 1993 with the new neighbourhood nursery Playmates II opening in 2004 and is operated by Playmates Private Day Nursery Limited. It operates from a converted shop with five rooms spread over two floors and is situated in the centre of Hartlepool. Under three's share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area and the pre-school use the roof top garden. The nursery is open each weekday from 07.30 to 18.00 all year round apart from bank holidays.

The nursery is registered to care for a maximum of 80 children at any one time. There are currently 127 children on roll; of these, 22 children receive funding for nursery education. There are systems in place to support children with learning difficulties and disabilities and children who have English as an additional language.

The nursery employs 23 staff who work directly with the children, 16 have appropriate early years qualifications with two staff working towards a qualification and two staff furthering their qualifications. The nursery employs a cook and a housekeeper. The nursery receives support from the local authority early years department.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

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

The provision is good.

Children's health is promoted effectively within the nursery by staff, they consistently follow procedures and practices that meet the needs of all children. Staff offer support and guidance and this helps children gain an understanding of hygiene routines and become increasingly independent in personal care. For example, they know washing hands stops germs spreading. Excellent procedures, such as staff wearing disposable aprons for nappy changing, washing hands after each nappy change and a good standard of hygiene throughout the nursery ensures high levels of hygiene are maintained to prevent the spread of infection. Procedures are in place for the recording of accidents and the administration of medication. The sick children's policy ensures that children are protected from cross infection as parents know that the nursery does not accept poorly children. Any child becoming ill are kept comfortable until they can be collected by their parents. All parents receive a list of illnesses with their exclusion period.

Staff provide a good range of physical play experiences for all children which means even the youngest children are developing positive attitudes to physical exercise. They enjoy walks to the local play area and the park and benefit from the use of the outdoor play areas which are accessible from all the activity rooms. Pre-school children freely access the rooftop garden where equipment for them to balance, climb and jump is available and children use these with enthusiasm and enjoyment.

Children benefit from a healthy diet and enjoy fresh fruit at snack times. Meals are varied, nutritious and enjoyed by the children. Younger children are offered drinks regularly while older children usually help themselves to drinks throughout the day. Individual dietary needs of all the children are taken into account as are parental wishes. A list of dietary requirements is displayed in the activity rooms and in the kitchen.

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

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a safe environment, for example, the premises are covered by close circuit television and reception is always covered by a member of staff. Entry into the nursery is controlled by a numbered key pad lock and a visitors log is maintained. Children's risk of accidental injury is minimised by staff being vigilant and through the use of daily risk assessments to reduce potential hazards. Staff have a good understanding of how to achieve a mixed balance of allowing children to move around freely and setting safe limits. Staff explain to children safe practices, such as sweeping up spilt sand, mopping up water and tidying up toys helping children learn to take responsibility for keeping themselves safe.

Children use a wide range of well maintained, good quality and developmentally appropriate toys and resources. These are organised at child height to encourage self-selection and promote children's growing independence. Staff ensure all toys and resources conform to safety standards and are regularly checked to ensure they remain safe.

Children are well protected as all parental consents, policies regarding lost and uncollected children and named persons who can collect the child are in place. Staff have a good understanding of child protection procedures and most have attended training. They recognise

their responsibility in the protection of children in line with the nursery's policy and procedure. There are effective systems in place to record existing injuries.

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

The provision is good.

Children are happy, settled and enjoy coming to the nursery. They happily leave their parents with confidence and enthusiastically participate in activities. They are eager and keen to learn and show excitement and enjoyment in the broad range of activities which offer good levels of challenge. All children have a strong bond with staff and this increases their self-esteem and well-being. Staff are very caring in their approach and spend time playing with the children and interacting with them. Babies benefit from routines which are consistent with their experiences at home. They develop early communication skills as they attract the attention of staff who respond to their sounds appropriately. Children show a keen interest in books and enjoy listening to stories. Staff fully involve them in story time and frequently ask questions about the story, which encourages children to think and use their imagination.

There is a good balance between adult-directed and child-initiated activities and planning for the younger children incorporates the 'Birth to three matters' framework. Children are engaged in a broad range of activities which enhances their development, such as sand, water, dough, paint and role play. Staff use observations to record children's development and these are used to plan the next steps in their learning. Children's developmental records are well maintained and staff date entries to show how children are progressing.

### **Nursery Education**

The quality of teaching and learning are good. Staff work well as a team and have a secure understanding of the Foundation Stage curriculum and use their knowledge to plan a balanced range of activities across the six areas of learning. Staff ensure planned activities and experiences motivate children and sustain their interest and as a result children concentrate and persevere very well with activities they enjoy. However, at times large group activities, such as story time, do not ensure all children are involved. Written assessments on children are completed, however, a new system is being introduced and observations have not been transferred. Staff use questioning to extend learning in daily routines, for example, asking children about colours and numbers and what they think during activities, such as painting and playing with small world toys.

Children are confident communicators. They initiate conversations and listen and respond well to what others are saying. They recognise their name in print and have many opportunities to practice this throughout the day. Some children can write their own name, others are able to write and recognise others children's names and that of 'Fireman Sam'. Children are beginning to recognise and name letters. They enjoy books, handle them correctly and many children tell stories using books and resources. For example, one child told some children and the inspector the story of 'the hungry caterpillar' using props. Children receive very good opportunities to develop their mathematical skills. They use language appropriately and talk about shape and size as they discuss the small hexagon and the large square fence and play with the Russian dolls. They count as they stir in the ingredients for making play dough and talk about containers being full and empty whilst playing with the pasta and water. They count and name numbers and some children are able to write numerals.

Children are very happy and settled and are eager and interested to learn. They have formed good relationships with staff and each other. They show good personal independence and self-care skills as they wash their hands after using the toilet, try on dressing up clothes and help to tidy up. They are patient and take turns whilst playing the 'incy wincy spider' game. Children behave very well, share resources and say please and thank you to each other. They confidently talk about home life and staff encourage this by joining in their conversations. Children have very good opportunities to experience everyday technology. They use calculators, microwave, and simple programmable toys freely. They access the computer independently and most have good mouse control. They enjoyed going on a bug hunt identifying insects and using magnifying glasses to find them. Children are learning about the world in which they live through walks around the local area and resources reflect positive images of diversity, such as books, small world people and dressing up clothes.

Children have good opportunities outdoors for balancing, jumping and climbing and they move with confidence and enjoyment. They use small tools, such as scissors, paintbrushes, glue spreaders appropriately and manipulate threading beads well. Children receive good opportunities to be creative using different types of media. They experiment with paint, play dough, cornflour and clay and make collages using materials and paper. They are beginning to mix colours together and describe different textures, such as pasta, spaghetti and sand. Children have a good repertoire of songs and join in with familiar songs with enthusiasm. They use their imagination well in exciting role play situations, such as laundry, hair dressers and using the telephone.

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

The provision is good.

All children are warmly welcomed into the setting and very good relationships have been formed between children and staff. Staff take positive steps to promote the welfare and development of all the children attending. The nursery is committed to teaching children about equal opportunities through play. Books and toys promote positive images of culture, ethnicity and disability resulting in children developing a positive attitude towards others. All children are encouraged to join in activities and no child is discriminated against in their choice of activity. There are effective systems in place to support children with learning difficulties, disabilities and those with English as an additional language.

Children are very well behaved and show concern for others. Boundaries are in place to ensure children's safety and well-being. Bullying amongst children is not tolerated. Strategies are in place for dealing with unacceptable behaviour and the child's age and stage of development is always considered. Staff encourage good behaviour and attitudes with praise and acknowledgement. Staff are calm towards the children and there is a strong emphasis on respect and consideration for others. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Partnership with parents and carers is good. Staff work successfully in partnership with parents to meet the individual needs of children. Parents are valued by staff and positive relationships have been established with them to ensure children receive good quality care and nursery education. Parents are encouraged to settle their child in and they work hard to promote effective communication with parents to ensure consistency with home. Parents receive an information brochure when their child starts nursery. Staff talk through policies and procedures and share information regarding the 'Birth to three matters' framework and the Foundation Stage curriculum. Parents communicate daily with staff both verbally and through the use of

individual diaries. Planning is displayed and parents are actively encouraged to be involved with their child's learning.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

The nursery environment is well organised to promote children's welfare and safety, however, the arrangements for nappy changing in the two to three year olds room are not effective. All children feel settled and relaxed, and staff work well together as a team to provide a warm and welcoming environment for children and their parents. Space is laid out to maximise play opportunities for children enabling children to initiate and extend their own play and learning.

Leadership and management of the nursery is good. Children benefit from the commitment of the management and the nursery staff to provide good quality care and education. The staff team is strong and the manager recognises her staff are her strength. Staff are well supported to access training and are committed to developing practice through ongoing training. There are clear systems to monitor the quality of teaching, its impact on children's learning and identify strengths and areas for improvement. Staff are appropriately qualified and management has ensured those who work with the children in receipt of funding for nursery education have sufficient knowledge and understanding of the curriculum to enable them to help all children achieve well. Induction training together with appropriate written policies and procedures, and in combination with basic training in child protection, food hygiene and first aid, help staff keep children healthy and safeguard their welfare. However, the procedure for the vetting of staff needs updating and the complaints log does not respect confidentiality.

Overall, the provision meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

## **Improvements since the last inspection**

At the last inspection the nursery was asked to examine the organisation of pre-school resources to ensure that they are used more effectively to meet the needs of all children. Resources are effectively organised ensuring the needs of all the children are met and promoting children's independence.

## **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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## 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):

- improve nappy changing arrangements for the 2-3 year olds
- update the procedure for the vetting of staff and the recording of complaints in line with current legislation.

### **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):

- further develop the system for assessing children's learning
- consider ways of developing large group activities to ensure all children are involved

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