

Playhouse Preschool Broadwater

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	EY381778
Inspection date	30/09/2008
Inspector	Susan Parker
Setting address	Long Meadow Primary School, Oaks Cross, STEVENAGE, Hertfordshire, SG2 8LT
Telephone number	07817917697
Email	
Type of setting	Childcare on non-domestic premises

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 report includes information on any complaints about the childcare provision which Ofsted has received since the last inspection or registration whichever is the later, which require Ofsted or the provider to take action in Annex C.

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.

Description of the setting

Playhouse Pre-School Broadwater is held in a mobile class room in the grounds of Longmeadow school. The entrance is accessed via a slope. The pre-school is registered by Ofsted on the early years register, the childcare register and the voluntary childcare register. It is a privately owned provision. It has undergone recent re-organisation and changes in ownership and management. It has been operating in its current restructure for five weeks at the time of this inspection. A maximum of 26 children may attend the pre-school at any one time.

The pre-school is open each weekday from 09:00 to 12.00 for 38 weeks of the year. A lunch club runs from 12:00 to 12:30 each day, and an afternoon session runs from 12:30 until 15:00, children can attend all day. There is access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area. There are currently 54 children aged from two to five years on roll. Of these, 20 children receive funding for early education. Children attend from both the local town and surrounding areas. The pre-school has systems in place to support children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and children who speak English as an additional language. The pre-school employs seven members of staff. Of these, six hold appropriate early years qualifications and one is working towards a qualification. The group receives support from the local authority.

Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall, Playhouse Pre-school Broadwater provides effectively for children in the EYFS. The flexible system for planning involves staff, children, parents and carers which ensures that all children enjoy their time at this pre-school and are making satisfactory progress towards the early learning goals. The staff create a warm and welcoming environment through good use of space and resources. They are skilled at ensuring that all children benefit and learn from the exciting range of hands-on activities provided.

The provider has made exemplary changes to the setting in a very short space of time which reflects her positive attitude and her outstanding commitment to continual improvement. She is working closely with staff and outside agencies to improve the experiences of the children who attend this group.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To further improve the early years provision the registered person should:

- update policies and procedures to reflect the new group name and staff roles
- provide suitable challenges for children who are older or more capable.

The leadership and management of the early years provision

Effective safeguarding policies and practice ensure that children are well protected. Staff have a sound understanding of child protection and implement the policies appropriately. The provider has implemented robust systems to monitor and evaluate the provision; however, the provider has only recently taken over so there has been limited time to effectively evaluate the success of these systems. An example of this has been the introduction of an open-door policy for parents. This has greatly improved the communication between the group, parents and carers. The provider is pro-active in improving the setting's documentation to reflect the sound practice, and to meet the guidelines for the EYFS.

The provider and staff have a very positive attitude and are committed to improving the learning and development of those children attending. She has creatively re-organised the layout of the rooms to allow for more free play space for the children. This has increased the opportunities for children to choose and access resources independently.

There are effective links with other professionals and with the local schools, childminders, nursery and children's centre which ensures that the children's individual needs are generally planned across the differing provisions that they attend. The staff have a sound understanding of child protection and are able to implement their policies appropriately.

The quality and standards of the early years provision

Children are provided with sufficient opportunities to help them make progress across all areas of learning and development. The planning is flexible, responding to the children's interests and ideas, ensuring hands-on experiences whenever possible. Staff are implementing new and robust observation and assessment systems so that they can effectively develop their planning to include each child's next steps. Plans are linked to themes and reflect what the children enjoy and can do. However, some aspects of the set activities do not pose a challenge to more capable children. For example, children's name cards all have a picture clue which does not effectively promote recognition of familiar words.

Parents, children and carers are encouraged to contribute to the planning process by being asked their opinion about the activities available and how they can be developed. For example, carrot seeds planted before the summer holidays were harvested and eaten for snacks. This was linked to a healthy eating theme where parents were asked to bring in exotic fruits for the children to try. This developed into children extending their vocabulary when they were describing the various fruits as 'furry' 'sour' and 'squashy'. During activities the staff effectively support children's learning. They encourage the children to express their ideas through discussion, drama, music, craft activities and early writing skills. The introduction of home school books will further enhance the communication between the provider and the child's main carer. Children and staff work well together, for example when discussing the shape and texture of fruits, a child recognised the shape of buttons matched the shape of grapes, so staff provided a selection of using green buttons for a collage picture of a bunch of green grapes.

The staff have an effective understanding of creating a safe and welcoming environment in which risk is minimised and children are learning about keeping themselves healthy and safe. The children are aware of the behavioural boundaries which enables them to play safely both inside and outside. The whole premises are assessed for risks on a regular basis and outside areas are checked daily for any hazards. They make good use of facilities within the linked school, including use of cooking facilities and joint educational visits.

Annex A: record of inspection judgements

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

Overall effectiveness

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?	Satisfactory
How well does the provision promote inclusive practice?	Satisfactory
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement.	Good

Leadership and management

How effectively is provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	Good
How effective is the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement?	Satisfactory
How well does the setting work in partnership with parents and others?	Satisfactory
How well are children safeguarded?	Satisfactory

Quality and standards

How effectively are children in the Early Years Foundation Stage helped to learn and develop?	Satisfactory
How effectively is the welfare of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage promoted?	Good
How well are children helped to stay safe?	Satisfactory
How well are children helped to be healthy?	Good
How well are children helped to enjoy and achieve?	Good
How well are children helped to make a positive contribution?	Good
How well are children helped develop skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being?	Satisfactory

Any complaints about the inspection or report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

Annex B: the Childcare Register

The provider confirms that the requirements of the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are: Met

The provider confirms that the requirements of the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are: Met

Annex C: complaint/s made to Ofsted

This section of the report includes details of any complaint/s made to Ofsted when:

- we took action for the provider to meet the requirements of the Early Years Register; or
- we asked the provider to take action in order to meet the requirements of the Early Years Register; or
- the provider had already taken any necessary action to meet the requirements of the Early Years Register.

We will not report on any complaint where the provider met the requirements of the Early Years Register or did not require any action by Ofsted or the registered provider.

Detail of the complaint/s

Since registration there have been no complaints made to Ofsted.

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.