

Playpals Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number EY384875
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Inspector Christine Lynn Williams

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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 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).

Description of the setting

Playpals Nursery originally opened in 1989 and changed ownership in 2008. The setting is privately owned and operates from a two storey premises situated just outside Solihull town centre. The toddler unit, nursery kitchen and staff facilities are situated on the first floor to which there is no lift access. The babies and pre-school children are based in separate areas on the ground floor. The nursery serves the local area and has strong links with local schools. There is a fully enclosed play area available for outdoor play.

A maximum of 32 children who are within the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) may attend the setting at any one time. The setting currently supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, and those who speak more than one language at home.

The nursery opens five days a week all year round except for bank holidays and one week between Christmas and the New Year. Sessions are from 08:00 to 18:00. Children are able to attend for a variety of sessions. There are 18 members of staff, 13 of whom hold appropriate early years qualifications to at least NVQ Level 2. The nursery owner is a qualified teacher and has achieved Early Years Professional Status. Three other members of staff are working towards a degree qualification. The setting provides funded early education for three and four-year-olds and receives support from the local authority.

Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good. Effective strategies ensure children flourish in a relaxed and homely environment where they are well cared for and make good progress in their learning and development. Children are well safeguarded, learn to keep themselves healthy and safe and benefit from well-qualified and supportive staff. There is a clear commitment to supporting families from varied backgrounds and to working closely with parents and other settings to ensure that all children's individual learning and welfare needs are met. Leadership is strong; however, the systems for assessing children's learning and evaluating the effectiveness of the provision are not yet fully developed.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- improve the assessment system by clearly identifying children's next steps in their learning and by fully utilising the information gained about children's developmental starting points
- reassess and extend the use of self-evaluation and link this to the outcomes for children.

The leadership and management of the early years provision

Those in charge of the nursery have a shared vision of the future and work hard to provide a homely environment where children feel part of a close knit group. Staffing is mature and consistent so that children benefit from continuity of care, and effective operational routines ensure that the nursery runs smoothly. Leadership and management are effective and staff are well-qualified, understand their roles and responsibilities and work well together. Staff constantly update their knowledge through workshops, training and staff meetings, while the owner is pro-active in keeping up-to-date with current early years thinking. The manager and staff are committed to making continuous improvements and regular self-evaluation is carried out in relation to daily routines, practises and policies. However, the evaluation system is still under development and does not always clearly link to the outcomes for children.

Inclusive practice is promoted well. Children share news about themselves and their families and this helps them to develop a strong sense of belonging. Staff encourage inclusion by supporting children well, including those with different levels of ability, learning difficulties and disabilities. They display signs in children's home languages, as well as English, and some staff have had specific training in sign language which is used effectively with reluctant speakers or those speak more than one language at home. The setting-based Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO) works with key persons and parents to co-ordinate a consistent approach to the needs of children with learning difficulties and disabilities and there is a clear commitment to supporting families from varied backgrounds.

Children's welfare is promoted with success. Effective steps are taken to ensure children are kept safe and healthy and staff are vigilant over safeguarding. For example, all staff have received child protection training, children are only released to individuals named by parents and there are secure systems to ensure children cannot leave the premises unsupervised. Close links are made with parents so that they are involved in their children's care and education and are kept well informed. They review their children's progress regularly and contribute to their child's learning and development record, although this information is not yet being fully utilised. Staff liaise well with outside professionals and the other settings children attend and this ensures there is a shared understanding about children's progress and continuity over learning and care. Clear policies and procedures have been developed to promote children's health, safety and enjoyment and these are effectively put into practice.

The quality and standards of the early years provision

Children make good progress and enjoy close attention and lots of opportunities to become creative and independent thinkers. They confidently seek support from caring and attentive staff and take part in a good range of interesting activities and experiences. All staff observe and note children's progress, with key persons using these to assess the learning. However, assessments are not yet fully effective as

they do not utilise the information provided by parents about children's starting points or clearly highlight children's next steps.

A high emphasis is placed on developing children's independence and this encourages children to develop a positive attitude to learning. Positive behaviour is rewarded with stickers, while gentle words and smiles help even the youngest children to know when they have done well. Children's individuality is valued and photographs of children's families are displayed in every care room to encourage them to share their home experiences with each other. They listen carefully to stories, enjoy looking at books and communicate well with each other. Pre-school aged children learn to link sounds to letters and write their names, while rhymes and songs play an important part in helping the youngest children to develop their language skills. Counting is threaded through most activities and a variety of quality resources help children to weigh, measure, sort and recognise shapes. Children delight in using their senses as they explore different textures, dig and plant in the garden and enjoy cooking activities. There are lots of opportunities to build and construct and pre-school children benefit from daily use of a computer. Children of all ages enjoy being creative. They become engrossed in games that develop their imagination and enjoy drawing and painting.

Children are kept safe because effective steps are taken to safeguard and promote their welfare. They know the rules for using the slide and climbing frame and the youngest children are helped to negotiate stairs safely. They learn to recognise the importance of different aspects of a healthy lifestyle as they are offered nutritious meals and snacks and get plenty of fresh air and exercise. Their health needs are known and met and a wide range of physical activities are provided which help children learn to climb, balance, peddle and co-ordinate their bodies.

Annex A: record of inspection judgements

The key inspection judgements and what they mean

Grade 1 is Outstanding: this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality

Grade 2 is Good: this aspect of the provision is strong

Grade 3 is Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound

Grade 4 is 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?	2
How well does the provision promote inclusive practice?	2
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement.	2

Leadership and management

How effectively is provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	2
How effective is the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement?	2
How well does the setting work in partnership with parents and others?	2
How well are children safeguarded?	2

Quality and standards

How effectively are children in the Early Years Foundation Stage helped to learn and develop?	2
How effectively is the welfare of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage promoted?	2
How well are children helped to stay safe?	2
How well are children helped to be healthy?	2
How well are children helped to enjoy and achieve?	2
How well are children helped to make a positive contribution?	2
How well are children helped develop skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being?	2

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