

# Playmates Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

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**Unique reference number** EY395935  
**Inspection date** 22/03/2010  
**Inspector** Tracy Bartholomew

**Setting address** The Log Cabin, Whitelands Park Cp School, Sagecroft  
Road, Thatcham, RG18 3FH  
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**Type of setting** Childcare on non-domestic premises

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## 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).

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.

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## **Description of the setting**

Playmate pre-school re-registered in 2009, although have been established since 1979. The setting run from a log cabin within the school grounds of Whitelands Park School, in Thatcham Berkshire. Children are cared for in the log cabin and have access to a kitchen, toilet facilities and a large secure outside play area. The pre-school is registered for 28 children under eight years, of whom no more than eight may be under three years. The pre-school is open five days a week with a half day on Friday, during term time only. There are currently 61 children on roll. Of these 34 are funded three and four year olds and four are funded two year olds. The pre-school is run by a committee, which is elected annually and employs five staff members to work with the children. Of these three including the supervisor and deputy, hold a childcare qualification. The pre-school is registered on the Early Years Register and the compulsory part of the Childcare Register.

## **The overall effectiveness of the early years provision**

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children enjoy the time they spend at this pre-school, they have a wide range of activities which further support their development and aid their milestone achievements. Children develop close trusting relationships with most adults and are enthralled in the company of them and their peers, which as a result ensures children are making good progress in their learning and development. The management team constantly reflects on their practice, they are effective in identifying strengths and weaknesses of the provision. They are making good adjustments to the provision to ensure they continue to provide all children with a consistent level of care which best meets their individual needs.

## **What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?**

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

- re-consider the methods used to deploy staff to ensure all children's needs are met
- reassess the methods used for snack times to ensure that all children have their independence and care needs met, in addition ensure that all staff effectively follow the setting's hygiene policy

## **The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision**

The management team and committee work closely to ensure safeguarding is well promoted across all areas. All staff fully understand their responsibilities and duty to safeguard children, they have a good procedures in place to enable them to make child protection referrals if needed. Risk assessments are undertaken on all areas of the premises and staff are diligent to ensure that these are on going

assessments, to minimise all potential hazards, such as moving toys left in walkways by the children. A detailed range of policies and procedures are in place, and these include all required documentation to support the daily management and practices of the pre-school.

The pre-school makes good use of the self-evaluation process, reflecting on how they can develop their practice and learn additional skills. They reflect on areas such as how well the children are using the room, resources and any changes they could make to enhance this. This ensures they make the best use of the learning environment inside and out of the premises. The manager has clearly identified the need to enhance her planning and has been pro-active in seeking help. In addition she is very aware of her staff abilities and most staff are diligent and have a first class awareness of how to progress and support children's development well. Some staff weaknesses do inflict on children's experiences due to their lack of understanding of deployment, this as a results means that some staff members are not consistently meeting the individual needs of all children. This is very inconsistent practice and it does take its toll on other staff working with the children. Regardless of this, children are making significant progress in their development. The key person approach is well maintained throughout the setting, and staff have a firm understanding and awareness of issues of equality and diversity. Those very skilled and knowledgeable staff effectively use this to underpin everyday practice, as for example, they know each child very well and work with parents and other practitioners to meet their differing individual needs, whilst promoting an inclusive practice.

The pre-school has a highly positive relationship with parents and carers and relationships are well established. The staff regularly asks parents and carers for their views and those who are actively involved on the committee use their comments and information to inform the practice. The staff actively involve the parents, they are encouraged to be parent helpers for example and the open door policy allows them to come and discuss any aspects of their children's care. In addition staff have very good support systems in place to ensure parents and carers are aware of their children's development, this is especially evident in their joint working. Children have access to a wide range of resources both inside and out. Staff regularly rotate the selections on offer and have a good plan for future purchases to ensure children are provided with sufficient challenges and variety, both inside and out of the provision.

## **The quality and standards of the early years provision and outcomes for children**

Staff use their secure understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage to provide a variety of interesting activities that shine from children's interests and capabilities. Consequently, the children therefore enjoy learning through play, they explore materials freely and making their own decisions about what to do. Most staff are very skilled at developing children's learning, they are hands on and use a variety of methods to further progress children's acquiring skills and development. Children work well independently and seek help when required, for example, they find their own aprons when painting. They further aid their games by obtaining

further resources such as marker pens to enable them draw bubble bees with staff on the outside whiteboard. Children behave well, as they are challenged and supported by staff who in turn give them gentle reminders when needed of what is expected from them. Good relationships aid and support children's understanding of behaviour, with staff fast to praise new accomplishments such as using the toilet, putting on coats and helping tidying away with rewards such as stickers. This helps to develop the children's self esteem and results in children clearly trusting the staff and feel safe within the pre-school.

Children benefit from a wide range of activities and resources which clearly cover the six areas of learning, daily plans are well utilised to ensure that children receive a wide range of activities that effectively cover the early learning goals, this results in children learning and developing skills which will equip them for the future. Children's progress is clearly observed and tracked within their learning journals. The staff make good use of these, involve parents and carers and stem their planning to incorporate all starting points for the children. Staff use their good knowledge of the children to highlight areas of future development, which ensures that areas are covered and monitors any milestones where children are falling behind in. Children have good access to the outdoor play space throughout the session and this space is well used by the children, for example they enjoy further developing their love of water and use of guttering and piping to aid their experiences, this develops the children's inner critically thinking and enables them to become active learners, as they work out how to overcome the water escaping.

The children show they are developing sound skills in their independence skills, for example they know they have to put their coats on before going out to play, and some confidently change their clothes after water play. However, further development of independence is to be considered at snack time, to enable children to pour their own drinks and select their fruit. Children promote their personal hygiene skills well; they actively wipe their own noses and wash their hands before snack and after outside play. Snack time is free flow, which works well on the whole, however at times this could be better managed to ensure all children sit at the table and that staff follow their own policies and procedures in relation to hand washing for example. Children are developing a sound understanding of being healthy and know it is good to go outside to play.

Children are offered a wide range of opportunities to develop their maths and knowledge and understanding, for example the children in the garden instigate their own game using the hamster wheel. They turn it onto its side, and invite a skilled staff member into their now 'doughnut'; the children then ask 'how many people can we fit in here' then with use of good communication the children invite others in, the staff member then fully engages all the children, including those on the outside, to develop their awareness of space, numbers, substations and communication, to obtain a fulfilling answer. These types of activities are in their plentiful by skilled practitioners which as a result, ensures children's learning is very well maintained. The pre-school promotes inclusive practice and supports the children to learn about the cultures and beliefs of others. Children have for example, learned about Chinese New Year. Children gain a clear sense of being part of a community and fund raise by undertaking sponsored events such as walks or dressing up.

## 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*

### The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

<b>How well does the setting meet the needs of the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?</b>	2
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	2

### The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

<b>How effectively is the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?</b>	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	2
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding	2
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	2
The effectiveness of partnerships	2
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	2

### The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

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### Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

<b>Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	2
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	2
The extent to which children feel safe	2
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	3
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	2
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	2

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## **Annex B: the Childcare Register**

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

Met