



## Playland

Inspection report for early years provision

**Unique Reference Number** EY305808

**Inspection date** 29 November 2005

**Inspector** Toni Hanson

**Setting Address** Vicarage Field, Ripple Road, Barking, Essex, IG11 8DQ

**Telephone number** 020 8270 7102

**E-mail**

**Registered person** Kim-Marie Searle

**Type of inspection** Integrated

**Type of care** Sessional care, Crèche

## 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?

Playland is a privately owned pre-school. Although it originally opened in 1991, Playland was re-registered in May 2005 due to a change of ownership. The pre-school operates from a designated area on the second floor of Vicarage Fields Shopping Centre in central Barking. It is open Monday to Friday from 09:30 to 12:30 and 13:30 to 16:30 during school term time. Children attend for a variety of sessions.

The pre-school is registered to care for 30 children aged 2 to under 5 years, although

the settings practice is to offer places for children aged from 2 years and 6 months on a sessional basis. There are currently 60 children aged from 2 to under 5 years on roll. Of these 30 children receive funding for nursery education. Children attend from the local residential area. The pre-school currently supports a number of children with special educational needs and welcomes those with English as an additional language.

Playland is owned and managed by Kim-Marie Searle. She employs a further seven staff to work directly with the children. All but one, hold an appropriate early years qualifications to National Vocational Level 2 or 3. Currently, two staff are working towards a recognised early years qualification. The pre-school is a member of the Pre-School Learning Alliance.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

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

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a clean and well-organised environment. They benefit from the pre-school's effective hygiene procedures to minimise the risk of infection, such as nappy changing and food preparation routines. Most staff have completed relevant first aid training and implement procedures such as the recording of accidents and administration of medication appropriately to promote children's good health. Children are learning about the importance of hygiene and personal care. Pictures of a child hand washing displayed in the children's bathroom are used to remind children of this important hygiene routine. They know they must wash their hands before snack time and tissues must be disposed off hygienically after nose blowing.

Children's understanding of healthy eating is promoted as they enjoy snacks of crackers and fresh tomatoes and talk about foods that are good for you. Although children are supplied with drinks of water and milk at snack time, drinks are not consistently available to them at other times during the session when they may be thirsty. Staff work closely with parents to ensure children's individual dietary requirements are catered for.

Children have good opportunities to practise and improve their eye/hand co-ordination. They use a wide range of small equipment and tools with increasing confidence and control including pencils, chalk, scissors and the computer mouse. They learn to move their bodies in different ways as they join in with action rhymes, including pretending to rock the doll when singing 'Miss Polly had a dolly'. Children use a broad range of large equipment safely and with control including balancing beams and the trampoline. Children learn to work co-operatively as they work together to make the large wooden rocker rock and excitedly help to keep the football inside the giant parachute. Children develop a positive attitude to exercise as they enjoy vigorous exercise and being active. They practice their ball control as part of the skittle game and run to stand the skittles up again so they can have another go at getting a 'strike'.

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

The provision is good.

Children play in a safe and secure environment. Colourful pictures, posters, displays of the children's work and a wide range of interesting activities are used effectively to make the environment bright and welcoming. Regular risk assessments and the pre-school's effective safety procedures protect children from harm. Good security systems are in place to keep children safe. The pre-school's rooms are locked securely while sessions are in progress and visitors are monitored and supervised. All staff are vetted appropriately and are suitable to work with children. Staff have clear policies and procedures to follow if they have child protection concerns about a child and know how to implement local procedures. This and the implementation of effective systems, such as the collection of children supports children welfare.

Children are developing a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe and recognise dangers. They know that plastic knives must be used 'carefully' as they butter their crackers at snack time. Children talk about personal safety after listening to the Goldilocks story and agree that she should not have gone into a stranger's house.

Children use safe, age appropriate and well-maintained furniture, toys and equipment, making their own choices from the wide range of play equipment easily accessible to them. These are checked and cleansed regularly, to ensure all equipment remains in good condition. Children benefit from a good range of safety measures, for example fire extinguishers and socket covers. The indoor space available to children is well-organised to make sure children have ample space to play and they move around the premises confidently and safely.

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

The provision is good.

Staff create a busy, friendly, welcoming environment where children enjoy playing and learning. Appropriate settling in procedures are in place to ensure children are settled gradually and at their own pace. This build children's confidence and helps them to work out what the new experience of attending pre-school is all about. An effective keyworker system ensures children are made to feel special. Children are greeted by their keyworker at the beginning of the session and this member of staff works closely with parents to promote children's emotional well-being. Most children enter confidently, settle quickly and eagerly begin to play. They enjoy their activities and interact well with staff and each other.

Children know the daily routine well. Picture cards are used effectively at group time to explain what is going to happen next, this helps children to feel secure and develops their understanding of the passing of time. Staff plan and provide a wide range of interesting activities and experiences for children each day, allowing them to initiate their own ideas and make their own choices about their play. Play resources are rotated to ensure children have the use of the full range. Children play well independently and with others, as well as enjoying opportunities to work more directly

with their keyworker through activities, such as cookery and craft work.

The imaginative play areas are well-organised and used well to support children's emotional well-being. One area is created into different scenes, often to support a current topic, for example becomes a dentist surgery during the setting's health week. This allows children to explore and discuss their thoughts and feelings about real events that occur in their lives. The other is an inviting home life area. This ensures younger or less confident children can relax and play quietly in comfortable and familiar surroundings.

Children have frequent opportunities to be creative. They explore the texture of thick paint, draw with pencils and chalk and have free access to a variety of collage materials to create their exciting and unique pictures. They create 'happy faces' on biscuits using sweets and icing during a cooking activity. Children enthusiastically sing familiar songs and rhymes at group time, sing quietly to themselves as they play and have regular access to musical instruments.

Younger children are well supported as they acquire new skills and knowledge through planned activities and use and develop these skills in their self-chosen play. Staff have a sound knowledge of child development and use this to plan and provide suitable activities for the youngest children. However, the Birth to three matters framework has not yet been implemented to help staff with their observation and recording of two-year-old children's achievements, learning and development.

## NURSERY EDUCATION

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children's attitude to learning is positive and they concentrate well at activities that interest them. Staff have a clear understanding of how three and four-year-old children learn and use their observations of children appropriately to help them make individual progress. All staff are involved in the planning of the curriculum and use their individual knowledge of children appropriately to contribute ideas for topic work. Most areas of learning are covered well.

Children are developing their listening and speaking skills well. They happily chat to staff and each other and are beginning to develop the confidence to share their views and experiences in large group discussions. Children enjoy talking about events that are important to them, including the purchase of a new party dress. Less confident speakers use gestures effectively to make themselves understood. Children use their imaginations well as they act out their real and imagined experiences through role-play. They care for dolls and cook 'chocolate pizzas' in the home play area. Children take their 'babies' to the 'doctors' and use the doctors set to make them 'all better'.

Children have frequent opportunities to develop their eye hand co-ordination and pre-writing skills as they draw with chalk, use small cutters and tools to make shapes in dough and draw patterns with their fingers in dry sand. Children's pre-reading skills are promoted well. They enjoy independently accessing and looking at books in the comfortable book area. Children handle books carefully and are keen to contribute their thoughts and ideas as they snuggle up to staff and listen to stories. Staff use

props and their acting skills well to make stories come alive for children. Children are enthralled as staff use spoons, bowls, blankets and teddies to act out the exciting story of Goldilocks and the three bears.

Children gain confidence in their use of numbers, as they help to count the number of children present at group time and work out if there are enough snack plates for everyone at their table. They enjoy counting songs and rhymes and develop their understanding of one less, as they act out and sing 'ten little monkeys'. Children solve problems of shape and size as they complete puzzles and build tall towers using giant plastic bricks. Children's progress in knowledge and understanding of the world is satisfactory. They develop their early information, communication and technology skills as they learn to use the mouse to control the computer game and use push button phones in the home play area to 'phone' the doctor. Children learn about the passing of time as they help to celebrate birthdays and develop their design and making skills as they use cotton wool and glue to make snowmen models. However, opportunities for children to explore how things work are often missed, for example finding out how chocolate becomes a liquid during their cookery activity. Also, there are too few opportunities for children to explore the natural world during the winter months.

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

The provision is good.

All children are welcomed and included fully in the life of the pre-school. They are treated with care and respect and have regular opportunities to explore the world they live in. Children's confidence and social skills are promoted well. Staff are good role models, encourage care and concern for others and use positive methods to manage children's behaviour. In response children's behaviour is mostly very good. Praise such as 'well done' and 'good listening' is used frequently by staff to build children's self-esteem. Children understand responsible behaviour as they confidently take on roles and responsibilities within the group, such as putting the picture cards away at group time and helping sort and tidy toys at 'tidy up time' to keep the pre-school tidy.

Children become aware of their own and other's needs through discussions with staff and themed activities about themselves and the wider society. They make an album of photos of their family members as part of the 'getting to know you' topic and talk about different styles of clothing as they dress up. Children learn about a variety of cultures and different traditions through topic work. They discover other languages through dual language books and computer games and with bilingual staff. Children explore their local community as they visit the hairdressers, a dentist surgery and go for walks to the park. They enjoy regular visitors to the pre-school including a fire fighter, the community police officer and librarian. This positive approach fosters children's social, moral, spiritual and cultural development.

Staff are committed to providing an inclusive environment for all children. An appropriately qualified and experienced Special Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO) works closely with parents, staff and other professionals to ensure children are included in

all activities and receive the support they need to make good progress towards their individual targets.

Children benefit from the pre-school's commitment to working closely with parents. Staff's relationships with parents are friendly and professional. Parents say they value the individual care and attention their children receive from key workers and the friendly atmosphere staff create. The effective keyworker system ensures children are settled and secure and parents are kept up-to-date with their child's care and progress. Appropriate formal and informal systems are in place for parents and staff to exchange information regularly, including newsletters, twice yearly parent meetings and discussions with staff at the end of the session. These help provide children with consistent care between the pre-school and home.

The partnership with parents of children who receive nursery education is good. Parents receive useful information about the Foundation Stage curriculum and the six areas of learning when their child starts at the pre-school. Parents are well informed about the activities and experiences their child is involved in each day through regular newsletters and displayed curriculum plans. Children's achievements are discussed at parent meetings and parents can access their child's records at any time. Activity planning letters help parents further support their child's learning, by suggesting activities they can provide at home.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

Children's care and learning is promoted well through the good leadership and management of nursery education. Staff are clear about their roles and responsibilities and work well together as a team. The pre-school's policies and procedures are known and implemented appropriately, this promotes children's care and well-being. All the required documentation, which is required for the efficient and safe management of the pre-school, is well organised, comprehensive and stored securely. Consequently, the setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Procedures for the recruitment and vetting of staff ensure current staff have appropriate qualifications and experience and are secure in their knowledge of child development. The provider takes up references and ensures that adults who have not yet been fully vetted are never left unsupervised with children. However, new legislation has not yet been responded to and the system for ensuring staff suitability is incomplete.

Children benefit as staff are supported appropriately by management both formally and informally through daily discussions, staff meetings and appraisals. These are used appropriately to ensure staff have regular opportunities to further develop their childcare knowledge and teaching skills through training. All staff are encouraged to contribute to the planning of the curriculum. However, systems to monitor and evaluate strengths and weaknesses in the planning of all areas of the curriculum are not fully effective. Consequently, missed opportunities to develop some aspects of children's knowledge and understanding of the world have not been recognised.

## **Improvements since the last inspection**

Not applicable.

## **Complaints since the last inspection**

There have been no complaints made to Ofsted since registration.

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**

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 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 staff's recording of observations and assessments of the youngest children's progress by using the Birth to three framework
- implement a rigorous system in line with current regulations, to ensure that all necessary checks are carried out on staff.

### **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):

- improve systems to monitor and evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of planning and ensure all aspects of the foundation stage curriculum are sufficiently covered.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Building better childcare: Compliments and concerns about inspectors' judgements* which is available from Ofsted's website:



