

Playhouse Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspection date

01/02/2011

Inspector

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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

Playhouse Nursery registered in April 2002 and operates from the United Reform Church, Radlet, Hertfordshire. The setting has use of a large hall and associated facilities including toilets and a kitchen. There is a secure outside play area. An additional first floor room is also used by the provision.

The setting is registered by Ofsted on the Early Years Register and on the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. A maximum of 30 children may attend at any one time with none under the age of two years. There are currently 29 children on roll all of whom are in the early years age group. Of these, 17 children receive government funding for early years education. The nursery supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and children who speak English as an additional language.

Playhouse Nursery operates term time only and is open Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday from 9.15 to 12.00 with a lunch club available from 12.00 to 12.45. On Thursdays the setting is open from 9.15 to 11.45. There are seven members of staff, six of whom hold early years qualifications including one at Level 6 and who has Early Years Professional status.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Partnerships with parents, carers and others ensure children's individual needs are met and all children are fully included. Staff support children well in their learning and development and children are making good progress towards the early learning goals. A committed staff team effectively implement the setting's policies and procedures to ensure children are safe and their welfare is fully protected. The provision has a positive attitude to improvement and is aware of their key strengths and some of the areas they wish to develop further. Systems to more effectively monitor the quality of the service offered, such as self-evaluation, are in the early stages of development.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- develop further a quality improvement process, such as self-evaluation, to monitor and further extend effective practice to ensure continued improvement.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children's safety is paramount with risk assessments in place to ensure the environment is safe. Staff supervise children closely and the security of the facilities used by the setting ensures no unauthorised person can gain access to the hall and that children cannot leave unsupervised. Staff have a secure knowledge of safeguarding procedures as they regularly update their child protection knowledge through training and there is a designated member of staff responsible for ensuring the correct safeguarding procedures are followed if there was a concern. Recruitment and vetting procedures ensure staff are suitable to work with children and therefore, children's welfare is protected. All required documentation to ensure the safe and efficient management of the setting is in place, is informative and overall, well-organised.

The leadership and management of the setting is strong which results in staff who are clear about their roles and responsibilities and who work very well together as a team. Their enthusiasm for caring for children is evident and, as a result, outcomes for children are very positive. Continuous professional development is encouraged and a highly qualified staff team regularly attend a variety of early years courses and workshops to ensure they are well-informed and their childcare knowledge is kept up-to-date. The setting is committed to fully implementing the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage and strives to provide a quality service. They are aware of their key strengths and have some systems in place to monitor and assess the quality of the provision, such as seeking feedback from parents through the use of questionnaires. A self-evaluation system to systematically identify the settings strengths and areas requiring further development has been introduced but is still in the early stages of development. The setting plans to develop this further and aims to actively use this as a way of ensuring continued improvement. They are also in the process of completing the Herts Quality Standards (HQS) accreditation which is a county led quality improvement scheme.

Effective staff deployment and good use of space and resources ensures an environment that is fully inclusive. Children and their families are valued and included and as a result, children are happy and confident in their play and develop a strong sense of belonging as they feel welcomed into the setting. The nursery are forthcoming in sharing information and seeking feedback from parents. An open-door policy and frequent opportunities for parents to get involved in their children's care, learning and development strengthens relationships. Highly effective systems for working with parents and other agencies ensure children with special educational needs and/or disabilities are closely monitored and given valuable support to enable them to participate and achieve. The nursery liaises with other early years providers delivering the Early Years Foundation Stage and have established positive links with some of the local schools to ensure continuity and to promote the full integration of care and learning.

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

Children's learning and development are promoted. Staff understand that every child is unique and are effective in ensuring that all children, regardless of their starting points or additional needs, are fully integrated and supported. A key person system is used and staff closely monitor children's learning through regularly observing and assessing their key children to identify their achievements and progress over time. Children's individual learning journeys show how they are progressing and this information is used when planning future play experiences. Consequently, activities and play experiences are planned which identify the developmental needs of individual children to ensure they make good progress towards the early learning goals. Children enjoy their surroundings and show a keen interest in what they do. They arrive happy and quickly settle and engage in activities. Children's independence skills are encouraged as they can freely access the environment. They confidently go to the toilet on their own or put an apron on to participate in an art activity. A rolling snack-time also enables children to choose for themselves when they wish to have their snack.

Children have regular opportunities to experience music, imaginative play and explore varied art media on a daily basis. They can freely access a varied range of art and writing materials. They enjoy investigating the changes to colours when painting or exploring the different textures of dried pulses when pouring and filling containers. Children respond with enjoyment when listening to stories, songs and rhymes and can often be seen sitting and looking at books with friends. They enjoy using their imaginations to tell stories and a storyboard displays some of the children's work. At story time children keenly listen to the story of the three little pigs and delight in participating in the story. Children have regular opportunities to become familiar with the written word, such as, when they are encouraged to find their name card on arrival at the setting or before they sit down to have their snack.

Staff are proactive in implementing some effective strategies to promote and safeguard children's health. Hygiene procedures are consistently applied, such as cleaning the tables for snack-time and for lunch club and ensuring hand washing takes priority before children eat. Consequently, children's health is protected. Through discussion and some activities children are learning how to stay healthy and about personal care routines. They are aware of the need to wash their hands before they eat and after visiting the toilet. When asked they are able to confidently say the reasons for doing so. Children learn about healthy foods and how to take care of their bodies through planned activities, discussion and the daily routine. Children develop self-confidence in their physical skills as they use a varied range of indoor and outdoor equipment and activities on a daily basis. They have opportunities to balance on beams, develop their jumping skills on a small trampoline or negotiate around obstacles on small bikes. Children demonstrate a strong sense of security and are confident and self-assured in the setting. Positive relationships between staff, children and parents enable children to feel secure. The environment is safe and children are learning how to keep themselves and others safe. They know how to safely hold scissors when cutting out and staff

sensitively remind children not to run when indoors in case they fall and hurt themselves or others. Behaviour is managed in a positive manner with clear boundaries set by staff and children behave well. Praise and encouragement ensure children develop high levels of self-esteem. Staff reinforce sharing and taking turns and discuss how children's behaviour can have an impact on others. Children are valued as individuals and in turn are learning to respect each others differences and to manage their own behaviour.

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

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

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	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

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
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Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	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	2
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

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