

# Alton Playcentre

Inspection report for early years provision

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**Inspector** Sharona Semlali

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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).

Children only attend this setting before and/or after the school day and/or during the school holidays. The judgements in this report reflect the quality of early years provision offered to children during those periods.

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

The Alton Playcentre was originally registered in 1992. It is a specialist provision for children with a statement of moderate learning difficulties. It was established in partnership with the Alton School and Wandsworth Council Play and Extended Services. It is funded using Aiming High Short Breaks Grant. It is held in Alton Primary School, which is situated within the Alton Housing Estate in Roehampton London. The area is well served by public transport and parking is available. The housing estate and surrounding areas are designated 'Sure Start' areas. The Play Centre is held in the resource-base classroom that specifically caters for children with moderate learning difficulties. Children have access to a large dining hall and a playground for outdoor games.

The Play Centre is registered to accommodate a maximum of 180 children aged from three to eight years. It is only open only during school holidays from 10.00am until 3.30pm. On the day of the inspection, there were 12 children aged from 6 to 11 years of age present. There are currently seven staff members available to work at the site, although the number of staff working each day depends on the number of children in attendance and their individual needs. Three staff members hold a NVQ Level 3 in child care, two have qualified teacher status, one is a learning support assistant and another is unqualified and works in a special school. The manager has a foundation degree in Education. The Centre is registered on the Early Years Register and on the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register.

## The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

The Alton Resource Base Play Centre provides a warm and welcoming inclusive environment where children with moderate and complex learning needs are well catered for by a team of qualified, motivated and caring staff. Children are happy and enjoy exciting learning activities. Good partnerships with parents and carers, and the school, contribute significantly to the development of children's well-being. Self evaluation is used effectively to identify further improvements to the provision and therefore the club has good capacity to improve.

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

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

- ensure planning is more flexible with back-up plans in case of unexpected changes of events
- review how all staff manage children's behaviour immediately after lunch by planning a range of activities that meet their interests and learning needs during this part of the day

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

Safeguarding arrangements are robust and fully understood by all staff. The provider undertakes strict vetting procedures when employing suitably qualified staff. Health, safety and child protection policies and procedures are all in place and fully meet statutory requirements. The Club has met most of the recommendations from the previous inspection. One of these was to review and improve documentation for child-protection issues which has now been effectively addressed. Regular risk assessments are in place to ensure children's safety on the premises and during trips away from the premises.

Robust partnerships are well established with parents, carers, the minibus drivers and the school. Even though most children are transported home by the minibus, communication is purposeful between staff and parents and carers. This is achieved through a 'communications book' or via the telephone. A parent said, 'I feel well informed. I received the plan of activities a week before it started.'

The leader actively promotes inclusive practice by ensuring there is good staff-pupil ratio in all of the activities so that the multifaceted needs of the children are sensitively met. Children are valued and treated well as individuals. Enhanced consideration is given to developing children's coping skills by getting them to actively participate in events in the local community, for example by going out on fun trips. Children respond well in a mature manner by which they conduct themselves and respect others around them. The manager and staff know the strengths and weaknesses of the provision and take active steps to develop learning and care. They constantly evaluate the activities and staff's performance at the end of each day to improve the setting for the children.

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

Children are eager and excited about attending the Club right from the moment they enter the door. For example, on the day of the inspection, they were particularly looking forward to the trip to the bowling alley. Children started the day calmly with a 'sensory break' activity where they sit in a circle each with a sensory toy. Calming music playing in the background allows them to have a few moments reflection time. This contributes well in developing their thinking and listening skills, preparing them for transition to the different activities and settings. This activity is successfully repeated after each most sessions throughout the day. Children ask questions and gain clarity about the day's events during this time.

Children adopt a broad range of personal hygiene routines such as always washing their hands at the appropriate times. As one of the children states, 'I always wash my hands after I've been to the toilet.' Children have enhanced opportunities throughout the day to release their excess energies and be physically active whilst playing different types of ball games with all staff in small groups. Children play in a very large and secure playground environment to assist in developing their

physical and social skills. There is a broad balance of child and adult-led activities to ensure children enjoy a wide range of activities.

Effective steps are in place to ensure children are kept safe at all times, particularly during outings. Children are transported in the same minibuses used during the week with familiar drivers that they know. Their seatbelts are well fitted and secure to ensure the children feel safe. Comprehensive staffing ratios give effective support, and meticulous attention is given to all children throughout the journey. Children know and understand how to stay safe. They demonstrate this by the mature way they conducted themselves throughout the journey. They are very confident in discussing issues with staff and have developed strong, trusting relationships with them. All children, with all of their complex special educational needs and/or disabilities, feel secure and happy. A parent states, 'I know that my son is happy to come here therefore this makes me happy too.'

Children are very inquisitive, curious and have broad knowledge about the wider world around them. During the journey, staff used a variety of stimulating questions to promote their understanding of the environment. For example 'if we have to stop at the traffic lights what colour will they be? When we go what colour will they be then?'. Children were confident at dealing with the disappointment of not being able to take part in the bowling activity. They waited patiently for the minibuses with staff in an unfamiliar, crowded and noisy environment at the bowling alley. They are beginning to learn essential life skills such as patience and resilience.

Children's behaviour is generally managed well by staff but after returning from the trip and waiting for a long time for the bus, children's restlessness after lunchtime was challenging to some of the staff. There was no back-up plan and children did not have access to any indoor resources at this particular time because staff members do not plan consistently or flexibly for children's learning immediately after lunch. This results in boredom and the children are unsettled for a short time period of time.

## 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>The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage</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	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