

Bandley Hill Playscheme

Inspection report for early years provision

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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

Bandley Hill Playscheme has been registered since 1993. It is managed by Stevenage Borough Council and is held in a local council purpose-built play centre situated in Featherstone Road, Stevenage. The areas used are the main hall, small room, kitchen, toilets and outside play space. Opening times during the school holidays are Monday to Friday 9am to 12.30pm & 1.30pm to 5pm. Opening times during term time are Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday & Friday 3.30pm to 6pm and Saturday 10am to 12.30pm & 1.30pm to 4pm.

It is an open access facility which enables children aged between five and 14 years to attend and leave as they please. Children under five may attend provided they are accompanied by an adult.

The playscheme is registered to care for a maximum of 40 children under eight years at any one time. It is registered by Ofsted on the Early Years Register and both the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. There are currently 12 children on roll within the early years age range.

There are nine members of staff working with the children. Of these, three hold a Level 3 qualification, two hold a Level 2 qualification and four are working towards a recognised qualification.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Overall, children make good progress in this open access setting. General careful monitoring of the children in the early years age range enables staff to adapt most activities to ensure they can participate. Children learn to behave in a safe manner and are adopting some aspects of a healthy lifestyle with lots of fresh air and physical exercise. A good self-evaluation process is established, incorporating the views of all users.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- develop staff and children's routines for good hygiene procedures
- ensure that activities provide suitable challenge for early years children.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children's safety and welfare are actively promoted. Thorough risk assessments and daily checks ensure that hazards are minimised and children can explore in safety. Stringent checks are carried out to ensure that all staff are suitable to work

with children. The management team follow a robust recruitment and selection process to provide a skilled and dedicated staff team who deliver warm, consistent care and education to all children. All members of staff hold first aid certificates, which ensures that any accidents are dealt with safely. Security and safety are a priority and this ensures that all children can explore the many activities in safety.

The staff have established a detailed self-evaluation process which is completed at the end of every school holiday playscheme. This effectively highlights the good organisation of the setting and identifies any areas for improvement. All members of staff exchange views and ideas through regular discussions and staff meetings. They actively seek feedback on their strengths and weaknesses from children, parents and carers, which provides a detailed overview from all the users. Staff are supported in attending further training and gaining qualifications. This helps create a positive learning environment where both children and staff thrive.

Resources are abundant and used well to promote children's learning and development. For example, the numbers on the pool table balls, the prices on the tuck shop list and collecting the correct change enable young children to make good progress in their understanding of problem solving and numeracy. Staff are very effectively deployed to maintain ratios on a daily basis, taking into account any staff absences. They count the number and ages of all children every hour, which enables them to have a fairly accurate record of attendance. Children under five are always accompanied by a responsible adult, but the head count enables staff to adapt activities to deliver a good range of stimulating, challenging activities and learning opportunities suitable for early years children. Staff are effective at extending spontaneous child-led opportunities and promoting children's independence and choices in this exciting and informal learning environment.

Parents and carers of children under five attend the playscheme and they receive a good level of information on the activities, policies and ethos of an open access playscheme. The setting also works well in partnership with other professionals, such as, local schools, children's centres and childminders, which promotes consistent, appropriate care for children. Some of the parents and volunteers were once children attending the playscheme themselves. This shows the respect that this open access scheme has with the local community.

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

Children display very good skills and attitudes towards learning as a direct result of the excellent input from the staff team. They make good progress in learning and development. Children learn to be responsible and are encouraged to use the wide variety of equipment and tools independently after being shown the correct way to use the zip wire or tools in the garden. This promotes children's confidence and self-esteem. Children display good levels of emergent writing skills as they use pencils, felt pens and paint to make marks. Posters and signs displayed indoors and outside enable children to recognise familiar words. Staff spend time talking to the children and really listening to what they say. This encourages children to be good communicators as well as establishing trusting bonds. Children feel safe in

this environment. They have consistent boundaries which are respected. Behaviour is generally good and children know that they need to observe to rules which support their safety.

Staff gain information from the child's parent or guardian which gives them a base from which to assess children as they play, using this information to inform activity planning. They ensure that they understand each child's background, cultures and beliefs through registration forms and a detailed knowledge of the local community.

Children have fun while they learn, for example, they realise that the tadpoles are being eaten by the fish in their pond, so they dig another one just for them. During the inspection, children were hunting for Easter egg pictures for a competition. Unfortunately, the older children were so good at it that the younger children didn't find as many. Occasionally, due to demand, the older children outweigh the number of the little ones and some activities are too challenging for the smaller children. An example of this is the pool table, as the younger children found this physically very difficult. The playscheme does have a lower pool table, but this was not available at the time.

Excellent use is made of the outdoor area, which is a true extension of the learning environment and incorporates exciting and stimulating resources to provide an excellent selection of physical activities. The extensive gardening area teaches children where fruit and vegetables come from and how to grow and care for them, and cooking activities enable them to taste their own produce. Activities such as these encourage children to adopt healthy lifestyles. However, with all the exciting activities on offer, children do not routinely remember to wash their hands before eating. Posters displayed reminding children to wash their hands before meals are not highlighted by staff, who do not always act as good role models.

Staff praise is used to support positive behaviour and self-confidence. This encourages children to develop habits and behaviour appropriate to good learners, while respecting and understanding their own and others' needs.

Children make independent choices and select their own resources, which promotes children's independence and self-esteem. They have secure relationships with the staff, whose consistent approach to behaviour management enables children to feel secure and develop their understanding of appropriate behaviour. They show care and concern for each other, sharing resources, listening and taking turns in discussions.

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