

Abington Vale PlaySchool

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	220115
Inspection date	27/06/2011
Inspector	Janet Keeling
Setting address	10 Bridgewater Drive, Bridgewater Drive, Northampton, Northants, NN3 3AF
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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*.

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Description of the setting

Abington Vale Playschool reregistered in 1992 and is run by a voluntary management committee. It operates from a mobile building in the grounds of Bridgewater Primary School in Northampton. Children have access to an enclosed, outdoor play area. The setting serves children and families from the local and surrounding areas.

The setting is open Monday to Friday from 9am to 3.30pm during school term time only. A maximum of 24 children from two to five years may attend the setting at any one time. Currently there are 62 children on roll, all of whom are within the early years age group. The setting is in receipt of funding for early years education. Children attend for a variety of sessions. It supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and children who speak English as an additional language. The setting is registered by Ofsted on the Early Years Register.

There are five members of staff who work directly with the children. Of these, three hold National Vocational Qualifications (NVQs) at level 3 and two hold NVQs at level 2. The setting receives support from the local authority.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children are happy, confident and eager to learn at this very welcoming setting. They make good progress in their learning and development as they engage in a range of enjoyable activities which take account of their interests and learning needs. Staff are motivated, work well as a team and strive to offer an inclusive and welcoming service where the uniqueness of each child is celebrated. Staff build excellent partnerships with parents and carers and, as a result, children's needs are supported well. Most policies and procedures are in place and implemented effectively to safeguard and promote children's welfare. Managers and staff are enthusiastic and passionate about improving outcomes for children. They demonstrate a positive attitude and commitment towards the sustained and continuous improvement of the setting.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- improve induction procedures for parent helpers ensuring they are given full information and guidance on their roles and responsibilities while working in the setting
- improve arrangements for the storage of children's lunch boxes.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

All staff have completed safeguarding children training and have a clear understanding of child protection procedures. They know who to contact should they be concerned about a child in their care. There are effective recruitment and vetting procedures in place to ensure that children are cared for by suitable people. Induction procedures for new staff are implemented effectively, however, induction procedures for parent helpers, to ensure they are given full information on their roles and responsibilities, are less well developed. Staff are competent, demonstrate a good understanding of their roles and responsibilities and have a good understanding of health and safety issues. Written fire procedures are in place and staff ensure that children engage in emergency evacuation procedures. Staff routinely verify the identity of all visitors to the setting and are vigilant about the safe arrival and collection of children. Risk assessments are completed and cover all aspects of the premises and outings. The deployment of resources is good. For example, staff are successfully deployed to support the children's care and well-being and make good use of space, both indoors and outdoors.

Staff are positive role models, work well as a team and strive to improve their practice. The setting's self-evaluation system, together with parent questionnaires, helps staff to identify its strengths and areas for improvement. Recommendations made at the previous inspection have been addressed. There is a shared vision for inclusive practise, ensuring that every child can achieve well, regardless of their background and, as a result, children are fully included and integrated into the setting's life. Staff are committed towards continuing their own professional development and have ongoing opportunities to attend relevant training courses to improve their knowledge and skills. Consequently, children's care and well-being are further enhanced. Weekly planning meetings and regular staff meetings provide valuable opportunities for staff to evaluate the effectiveness of activities and reflect on their practice. Yearly staff appraisals encourage the continued professional development of all staff.

Partnerships with parents and carers are outstanding. Parents are invited to attend the setting before their child starts. They also receive good quality information about the running of the setting. Ongoing information is shared very effectively through a variety of appropriate methods. For example, an attractive notice board in the entrance hall displays information regarding the running of the setting, including their registration certificate, newsletters and forthcoming events. The effective key person system, the daily communications book and the informal exchange of information at each session ensures that children's changing needs are consistently met. Parents spoke very highly of the setting during the inspection. Comments included, 'this is an excellent group', 'we are kept well informed' and 'we would highly recommend the setting to other parents'. Managers and staff work successfully in partnership with other early years staff at both the host school and other local schools to ensure all children have a smooth transition into their chosen school.

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

Children benefit from a very welcoming environment and from the staff's understanding of how to develop learning through play. All children show great enthusiasm as they arrive at the setting and quickly become absorbed in their favourite activities. They have many opportunities to make choices about their own play and learning as they freely access a range of activities and resources both indoors and outdoors. Consequently, children become active learners. Children interact very positively with their peers and are keen to share their ideas with their friends and staff. All children are valued and treated with equal concern with any specific requirements being met sensitively through discussion with parents and other professionals. On admission to the setting an 'all about me' form is completed with parents. This ensures that children's individual needs and interests are fully supported. Staff observe children, listen carefully to what they say and record information on a daily basis. Information is evaluated and used effectively to inform future planning. All children have learning folders, which contain both photographic and written information of children's learning, achievements and records of their own work. These folders are formally shared with parents twice a year at the parent consultation meetings, and are available for them to see at any time.

Children immerse themselves in their activities. They are confident, enthusiastic and relate well to each other and staff. Their communication skills are promoted well as staff and children hold detailed conversations about their past and present experiences. Children develop a love for books as they engage in story-time and enjoy looking through picture books with their friends. Children are also encouraged to choose a book each week which they take home and share with their family. They are beginning to learn that print carries meaning as they use their name cards to self-register on arrival and at snack-time, and are encouraged to mark-make as they play. For example, as children talk about the 'wet' and 'dry' sand they draw patterns in the sand using their fingers and cars. Children also recognise their own work which is beautifully displayed in the setting's art gallery. They thoroughly enjoy music and enthusiastically join in with a range of songs and action rhymes. There is great fun and laughter as the children tunefully sing, 'Humpty Dumpty', and 'Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star'. Children are comfortable using a range of technology, such as the computer and programmable toys.

Children's creativity is fully supported through good access to a range of role play equipment, construction toys and to a wide range of media. In the creative area children enthusiastically knead, roll, cut and shape yellow dough. They share tools and cutters and proudly show staff their creations. At another table children thoroughly enjoy making paper telescopes. They excitedly use them as they explore maps in the pirate ship. Children enjoy being in the fresh air and have good opportunities to explore their natural environment. For example, they plant flowers in tubs and help to water them each day and engage in nature walks where they collect leaves for their collage pictures. Their physical development is supported very well as they access a range of outdoor equipment. They build with crates, confidently negotiate the pirate ship, pedal bikes, balance on large tyres

and enjoy well supervised access to the large trampoline. Children also benefit from planned visits and outings to places, such as the post office and Rookery Open Farm.

Children are happy, secure and develop a sense of belonging at the setting. They are very well-behaved and have learnt the simple rules of working happily with others, and as a result, they share, cooperate, take turns and show consideration for each other. Staff encourage children to keep themselves safe as they discuss the appropriate use of equipment and as they engage in regular emergency evacuation procedures. Effective hygiene procedures minimise the risk of cross infection. Children enjoy healthy snacks and access drinking water throughout the session, ensuring that they remain hydrated. At lunch time, children bring in their own packed lunches and enjoy a very sociable break sitting around the table chatting with staff and their friends. However, current procedures for the storage of lunch boxes are not implemented effectively. They develop an understanding of the wider world through access to resources that are representative of diversity and by celebrating festivals throughout the year such as, Christmas, Chinese New Year and birthdays. Children demonstrate that they are acquiring skills that will help them in the future and prepare them for their transition into school.

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	1

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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