

# Stevenage Play Learning & Activity Team Ltd

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Unique reference number</b>	EY424269
<b>Inspection date</b>	04/10/2011
<b>Inspector</b>	Susan Marriott

<b>Setting address</b>	Ashtree Primary School & Nursery, Chertsey Rise, STEVENAGE, Hertfordshire, SG2 9JQ
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<b>Type of setting</b>	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**

Stevenage Play Learning & Activity Team was registered in 2011. The club is organised by a private company and operates from Ashtree Primary School & Nursery in Stevenage, Hertfordshire. The owner is currently managing the establishment of the club. The club serves the needs of the pupils from the school. There is a fully fenced large play-ground available for outdoor activities. The club opens Monday to Friday from 3.15pm to 6.15pm during school term time. Children are able to attend for a variety of sessions. A maximum of 30 children may attend the club at any one time. The club also offers care to children aged over five years to 11 years. There are currently 35 children on roll, of whom, five are in the early years age group. The club is registered on the Early Years Register and on both the voluntary and compulsory parts of the Childcare Register. Two staff work at the club on a regular basis and they both hold relevant childcare qualifications. They are supported by four other part-time staff.

## **The overall effectiveness of the early years provision**

Overall the quality of the provision is satisfactory.

Stevenage Play Learning and Activity Team Ltd., (SPLAT) is a newly developed childcare provision, focussing on supporting children's play opportunities, in and out of school hours. Children are very happy at this lively, friendly and inclusive club, where staff put children's individual needs at the centre of their sound practice and the Welfare Requirements are mostly met. Children benefit from continuity of care because staff have friendly relationships with their parents, however, partnership work with the school is an area for development. The owner and her staff work effectively together and most documentation is in place to support children's welfare effectively. They are committed to evaluating their provision and to looking for ways to continue to develop their practice.

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

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

- increase the frequency of fire drills to fully secure the safety of children and staff
- ensure that the identity of any visitors is verified before admitting them to the premises
- extend the opportunities for partnership working with the school.

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

The owner-manager has a good knowledge and understanding of playwork and is striving to embed good practice in her setting. She has a clear vision to provide after school care that focuses on the needs of the individual children attending.

She values the contribution that good quality play experiences can make towards children's learning and development and has high aspirations for the future development of the business. Children are safeguarded effectively because most staff have completed safeguarding training and have a secure knowledge of the relevant policies. Appropriate employment procedures are in place to ensure that all staff are suitable to work with children. Checks with the Criminal Records Bureau are carried out promptly. The manager is very aware that new members of staff whose checks are not yet complete, must not be left alone with children. Children receive care in a generally, safe and secure environment because the manager has a clear understanding of the risk assessment which is recorded appropriately. However, fire drills have not been practised recently and the identity of visitors is not always checked before admitting them to the premises, potentially compromising the safety of children and staff.

An effective key person system is in place and staff work closely with parents to ensure that they are aware of children's particular needs. Children are enabled to continue their learning at home because parents receive regular information about what children have been doing. Newsletters and the club website also help parents to be aware of club activities. There are no children attending who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. However, the owner fully understands the importance of working in partnership with others involved in the daily care of the children. A diary system is in place to support continuity of care but this is not currently being used very much by parents, carers or school staff. The school shares information about topics covered in the classrooms and the owner-manager is keen to improve links with the on-site primary school to improve outcomes for children further.

Children benefit greatly from the care and support of a high ratio of staff, most of whom, have good levels of qualification in Playwork. They use an interesting range of resources both indoors and outside. In all weathers, they make appropriate use of the school hall, the playing fields, the trim trail and the playground. For example, with the advent of darker evenings, the owner-manager has plans for outdoor activities with torches. Children have helped to clear the allotment beds of weeds and have opportunities to plant and grow. Staff are deployed well and keep in touch via two-way radio, so that some staff can remain indoors with those children who do not wish to go out. Staff, parents and children are all involved in the self-evaluation process. For example, children are invited to complete their own feedback forms and staff contribute towards the reflective log. Parents spoken to when collecting their children confirm that they are very pleased with the service provided and value the help with their working hours.

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

Staff have a clear understanding of children's learning needs at this time of day and involve children in choosing interesting and varied play opportunities that balance the activities they have enjoyed at school. There are options for both free play and planned activities and staff ensure that all areas of learning are included.

The club caters exclusively for a very wide age range of children from Ashtree Primary School and the play appropriately complements the early years provision in school. Children of all ages mix together happily and older children are very considerate of the needs of the younger ones when they are playing together. Consequently, children develop as independent, confident learners. They self-select from the activities or free play toys that are set out and know that they can choose additional toys from the store.

Staff have a detailed knowledge of their key children's individual preferences and learning needs. They record regular observations in children's 'Learning journey' books and all children make suitable progress towards the early learning goals. Records and photographs show children racing on the spacehoppers, doing maze puzzles, using a fashion wheel game to design a princess and an outfit and building their confidence in making their own snack. Children develop a sound awareness of the wider world in which they live. For example, children enjoyed making Hawaiian costumes and planning activities for their stalls at the local carnival. A democratic vote amongst the children resulted in the money raised being used to buy a parachute and some face paints. Children enjoy playing 'Options' and agree what the rules of the game will be. Children use games consoles and explore the new two-way radios with increasing confidence and this supports their sound development of skills for the future. Children improve their personal and social skills through group games. They enjoy playing 'Musical statues' and this supports their listening skills effectively.

Children develop a good understanding of their own safety. They have regular opportunities to contribute towards risk assessing their own play. For example, they discuss whether it is safe to walk along the playground wall and whether it is sensible to roll on a space hopper whilst sucking a lollipop. Children feel secure at the club, develop close relationships with the staff and behave well. They take ownership of club rules because they are involved in drawing them up and they respond well to the positive role models provided by staff. Children take part in many interesting and varied activities. They spend plenty of time outside in the fresh air being physically active and develop sound problem-solving skills through activities, such as, building dens. Healthy hygiene habits are promoted because children know that they must wash their hands at the end of the school day. Tired children can rest and relax in the book area with cushions and blankets if they wish. Children extend their knowledge of healthy eating through activities, such as, making their own snack and this also provides opportunities for them to learn to use tools, such as, sharp knives, safely.

## 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>	3
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	3

### 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>	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	3
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding	3
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	3
The effectiveness of partnerships	3
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	3

### 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>	3
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	3
The extent to which children feel safe	3
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	3
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	3
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	3

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