

PlayPen Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number EY348751
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Inspector Shanti Flynn

Setting address Meopham CP School, Wrotham Road, Meopham,
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Type of setting Childcare - Non-Domestic

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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

Playpen Pre-school registered in the current premises in 2007. It is privately owned and operates from a self-contained single storey building with a large hall, an adjoining smaller room with a kitchen and toilets. There is access to a covered outdoor area. It is situated in the village of Meopham, on the outskirts of Gravesend in Kent. The pre-school serves the local community and some families from further away. The pre-school opens five days a week during school term time. Sessions run from 8.45am to 3.15pm Mondays, Tuesdays and Thursdays; and 8.45am to 12.45pm on Wednesdays and Fridays. The pre-school is registered on the Early Years Register, and both the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. It is registered for up to 24 children from two to eight years, all of whom may be in the early years age range. Currently there are 48 children on roll. The pre-school is funded for the provision for free early education for children aged three and four years. It supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. There are nine staff working with the children; all hold relevant early years qualifications.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is outstanding.

Highly motivated staff welcome all children, including those with additional needs, into the pre-school. An excellent system allows staff to build extremely effective relationships with children and their families. Staff use their excellent knowledge of individual children's interests to plan interesting and challenging activities. This means that all children make significant gains in their learning during their time at the pre-school. Policies and procedures are comprehensive and implemented very effectively to safeguard and promote children's welfare. Rigorous self-evaluation shows an excellent capacity for improvement.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To further improve the high quality early years provision the registered person should consider:

- enhancing systems to help children read their own names by taking a more consistent approach to letter formation.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children are protected by robust safeguarding procedures and staff that prioritise keeping them safe. All the required written records, policies and procedures are in place, including a comprehensive safeguarding policy. These are regularly

reviewed and shared with staff, so they fully understand their roles in implementing these. An extensive recruitment process means that all adults working with children have been appropriately vetted and are cleared as suitable to do so.

The environment is maintained to an exceptionally high standard, as a result of a comprehensive risk assessment. Daily risk checks identify potential hazards inside and outdoors, and help keep children safe. The pre-school is very secure. Staff only open the door to people they can identify.

The pre-school is led by two managers that work extremely well together and are highly committed to reflecting on the service provided for children and their families. They introduce new ideas enthusiastically to support children's learning, and continually strive for improvement to provide high quality care and education. They are supported by a highly committed team of staff who are passionate about the work that they do. Together, they share a vision to achieve the best possible outcomes for children in their care. There is an excellent system of self-evaluation which takes into account the views of parents and carers. Management also seeks feedback from the schools to which children eventually move. Successful evaluation produces an improvement plan that leads to providing all children with improved experiences, such as the introduction of a new quiet area.

All staff are fully committed to equality of opportunity, welcoming each child as an individual. The pre-school supports a number of children with additional speech, language and communication needs and has gained a national accreditation award for their work in this area. Staff attend additional training so they know how to support children's individual requirements. Management appoint two special educational needs co-ordinators so there is always one present, to provide expertise to staff. Staff successfully adjust their teaching to match children's individual needs.

Partnership with parents is outstanding. A special system helps staff to build excellent relationships, as each family has a particular staff member allocated to them. The pre-school shares information effectively with parents about their children's learning and achievements through 'Learning Journals', regular newsletters and a comprehensive website. Staff do all they can to know, understand and accommodate differences in children's backgrounds. Parents are actively encouraged to share in their children's learning by spending time in the pre-school with them and adding to their Learning Journals.

A rich and vibrant environment provides children with a wealth of learning opportunities and excellent resources, both indoors and outside. An emphasis on child-initiated play allows children to choose their own activities and encourages them to be creative and explore new resources. A flexible routine, a high adult to child ratio and purposeful deployment of staff ensures children's individual needs are exceptionally well met.

The pre-school has developed excellent relationships with the local school and participates in joint activities. This has a significant positive impact in helping prepare children for the transition into school.

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

Children come into the pre-school happily, following a well established routine. They readily change into their indoor shoes and hang their coats up on their pegs. The extremely inviting area means they settle quickly as they choose what they want to play with. The main room is divided up thoughtfully into different areas. Children move freely around and enjoy exploring the exciting activities on offer. Resources are kept at child height so that children can choose others to extend their play.

All children benefit from use of an excellent covered outside area all year round. Staff plan this carefully to cover all required areas of learning, including a cosy area for quieter activities and one for growing vegetables. Children delight in playing outside with balls and bats, large building blocks and 'finding treasure' in the sand.

Staff use their excellent knowledge of the children's interests and play observations to plan stimulating activities. These experiences help children to develop new skills and consolidate their learning exceedingly well. High staff ratios mean that adults are able to spend time with the children individually. Staff use skilful questioning, so this is quality time too. They give children time to explore and investigate. They encourage children to work things out for themselves. For example, children use a picture of a local windmill to make their own windmills at the craft table and enjoy testing their creations. Children gain and practice valuable skills for their future lives; all make significant progress in communication. They enjoy recreating scenarios in pretend play and making lists of bugs in the 'mini-beast hut'. They find their name cards and stick these on the board to show they are waiting for their turn on the computer; however, there is a lack of consistency in letter formation to help children in learning about letter names and sounds.

Children become independent learners and relish making choices for themselves. For example, they choose when to play outside, which craft materials to use and when to have their snack. Children show an excellent understanding of good hygiene practices. All staff are committed to the values of outdoor learning and plan for children to regularly visit the adjoining wooded area to play and explore. Children demonstrate an excellent understanding of the benefits of physical activity, discussing how 'you get hot when you run'.

Children show an excellent understanding of how to keep themselves safe too. For example, older children know that they can use scissors only when sitting down. They demonstrate this by safely selecting tools from the trolley and then sit down to use them. Children confidently approach adults for help and to ask for things that they need. They chat about their families and what they did at the weekend. This shows the exceptional sense of security and well being that children feel. Children's behaviour is exemplary. They have an excellent understanding of the standard expected. This is as a result of gentle reminders and the nurturing, caring responses from the adults present. They form good friendships and develop

excellent negotiation and sharing skills.

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?	1
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	1

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	1
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	1
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	1
The effectiveness of safeguarding	1
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	1
The effectiveness of partnerships	1
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	1
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Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	1
The extent to which children feel safe	1
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	1
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	1

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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