

Playhouse Preschool

Allington Community Centre, Castle Road, MAIDSTONE, Kent, ME16 0PZ

Inspection date

Previous inspection date

09/01/2013

Not Applicable

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This inspection:

3

Previous inspection:

Not Applicable

How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend	3
The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children	3
The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision	3

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This provision is satisfactory

- The preschool's staff work well together and make decisions as a team, so all children benefit because they are given consistent messages.
- Staff have a clear knowledge and understanding of the preschool's safeguarding and child protection procedures, helping to safeguard and protect children from harm.
- Every staff member has their own copy of required documentation. This system enables them to link their observations on children to the learning areas more effectively, to help them track children's progress.

It is not yet good because

- Overall, the resources offered daily do not provide good enough stimulation and challenge to all children, including those learning English as an additional language.
- The assessment system does not allow staff to monitor children's progress and identify any next steps in their learning well.

Information about this inspection

Inspections of registered early years provision are scheduled:

- at least once in every inspection cycle. The current cycle ends on 31 July 2016
- more frequently where Ofsted identifies a need to do so, for example where provision was previously judged as inadequate
- brought forward in the inspection cycle where Ofsted has received information that suggests the provision may not be meeting the legal requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage; or where assessment of the provision identifies a need for early inspection
- prioritised for inspection where we have received information that the provision is not meeting the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage and which suggests children may not be safe
- at the completion of an investigation into failure to comply with the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Inspection activities

- The inspector carried out observations on the children's play and interaction with staff.
- The inspector spoke to the provider as well as staff.
- The inspector obtained feedback from some parents.
- The inspector reviewed a sample of relevant documentation.

Inspector

Mary van de Peer

Full Report

Information about the setting

Playhouse Preschool opened in 2012 and operates from one room in a community centre. It is situated in Allington, Maidstone, in Kent. There are 14 children currently on roll. The preschool is open each weekday from 9am to 12 noon term time only. An area is available for outdoor play. The preschool employs six staff. Of these four staff, including the manager hold appropriate early years qualifications. One staff member holds qualified teacher status. The preschool is in receipt of government funding for three- and four-year-old children.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

To meet the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage the provider must:

- ensure the range of activities provided reflects the needs of all children well, so these are age-appropriate, stimulating and relevant to their differing cultures and communities
- develop further the assessment system so that children's capabilities are known and understood well by staff, who can then clearly pinpoint what children need to learn next.

Inspection judgements

How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend

Parents are able to stay for play sessions, when their children start at the provision, to help them settle in. The provider and staff plan a flexible daily routine for children, which includes a snack time and outdoor play. The pre-school provides a range of toys and activities, some of which reflect children's interests and abilities. Children are able to use their imaginations, with the role play resources, for example. Each child has a key person, who is responsible for monitoring a group of children's individual progress. Observations on each child, in every learning area, are carried out as soon as a child starts at the provision. Staff talk with parents to identify and assess children's starting points. However, there is no clear process to collate this information in the learning records, so that the key person can monitor children's progress effectively and plan for their next steps in learning well.

Parents are able to view their children's learning records and talk to their key person about their child's progress when they wish. At present, there is only limited communication with children's other carers, for example childminders. This lack of liaison means that there is only some continuity in children's learning. A system is in place to start the progress checks for two-year-old children. The provider is informing parents of this check through the latest newsletter. This review will be in addition to the process still being finalised, to involve parents more in their children's learning and what they enjoy and achieve at home. Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities are welcomed at the preschool, as are children who learn English as an additional language. However, a more effective two-way communication system between key persons and parents would help provide information about the children's home language and culture, thus allowing staff to provide better care and learning continuity.

Children are beginning to develop new skills to support the next stage in their lives. They show independence as they make choices in their activities and use their imaginations as they negotiate play scenarios together. Staff deploy themselves appropriately and support and praise children, asking them questions that develop their thinking and communication skills. Children display a sense of achievement when they place a soft ball where they want it to go, as they kick it to an adult, or when they write some of the letters of their name. Children confidently ask for help when they need it and happily undertake tasks that require cooperation, such as tidying up together. Children show interest and motivation when staff ask them to sit down for a favourite story at the end of the session. The member of staff makes the story fun and most of the children are absorbed as they laugh and copy actions. This interaction helps develop children's enjoyment of stories and their listening and understanding skills too.

Children develop positive relationships with each other. They share and join in with pretend play together. Children also show appropriate levels of concentration as they try out their early writing skills. Children enjoy activities that develop their physical skills. For example, by mimicking their superheroes and 'rescuing' their friends. However, this play can get a little out of control as children run between tables. Staff encourage them to think about where they are running and they respond well, moving where there are no other children. Staff sometimes organise trips and games on the adjacent playing fields to develop team play. They also take the children on nature walks, where they collect different items and make it into a picture when they return to the provision, promoting their expressive art and design skills. Most of the needs of the range children who attend the preschool, are being met.

The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children

The preschool environment is secure and welcoming to children and their families. The key person system goes some way to ensure children receive support and they bond well with staff. This develops children's confidence well. Most children show they are happy and participate well in activities. They behave appropriately and staff encourage them to follow the rules of the preschool, for example, helping to tidy up at the end of the session. Staff teach them how to resolve minor conflicts for themselves. Staff deploy themselves so that children are properly supervised and if they need support, there is usually a member of staff nearby to help. Staff risk assess the environment, toys and equipment to help ensure children's on-going safety. Children are mostly cooperative and have great fun as they play together. They also enjoy staff interaction when they join in with some of their games, such as throwing and catching a soft ball. There is room to extend children's play opportunities and ideas to promote more motivation. For example, by offering a wider range and more choice in different activities, in order to meet children's differing ages and capabilities, for example, in the selection of puzzles offered. Children's independence is not always promoted sufficiently, such as at snack time, where the staff control the timing of this activity and pre-prepare foods. There are also limited opportunities for children to learn how to manage risk and keep themselves safe.

Children enjoy healthy snacks and drinks and usually have daily opportunities for exercise

outside in the fresh air. This means they are learning about healthy living options suitably. Children show they are keen to manage their own care; they wash their own hands and dry them after eating. Staff support the younger children where needed. Staff discuss children's care and learning with other professionals, parents and carers; however this is not usefully recorded, to aid the monitoring of children's progress and development. This means the provision does not always meet children's care and development needs well.

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

The owner/manager and staff are experienced childcare providers and half are qualified.. They show an adequate understanding and knowledge of the revised Early Years Foundation Stage framework. The manager and deputies monitor the provision for its effectiveness and self-evaluate for information in the areas they need to improve and/or change. However, this does not always extend to evaluating children's activities, to ensure these are challenging, interesting and meeting all the children's learning needs well. The staff hold regular staff meetings and review children's progress records to check these support their learning and development appropriately. The owner/manager is in the process of developing new systems; for example, including the progress check for two-year-olds, with support from the local authority. The owner/manager is aware of the need to involve staff, parents and children fully in the evaluation of the provision but this has not happened yet. The provider has taken action recommended by the local authority Early Years team and is also planning to improve and develop the outdoor area. This development will allow free flow play for children.

All staff show an appropriate understanding of safeguarding issues. They know the procedures to follow should they have concerns about a child's well-being. The owner/manager ensures she has updated information from the Local Safeguarding Children Board to help ensure policies and procedures are in line with requirements. There are recruitment procedures in place to check the suitability of staff. An induction process and staff appraisals help to ensure staff receive the training and support they want and need for their professional development. This system is enabling the childcare staff to begin to evaluate and improve the quality of care and teaching provided to all children. Staff carry out risk assessments and any accidents or incidents are logged, shared with parents and this helps to minimise hazards.

Parents confirm they receive adequate information about the provision. Newsletters keep them up to date with many developments, including the new two-year-old progress check. Noticeboards show children's key workers, so these adults are known to parents. Parents are aware of the complaints procedure. The staff have not yet fully established workable partnerships with other professionals to help provide support children with special educational needs and/or disabilities, who may attend in the future, but understand the process for doing so.

What inspection judgements mean

Registered early years provision

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	Outstanding provision is highly effective in meeting the needs of all children exceptionally well. This ensures that children are very well prepared for the next stage of their learning.
Grade 2	Good	Good provision is effective in delivering provision that meets the needs of all children well. This ensures children are ready for the next stage of their learning.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	Satisfactory provision is performing less well than expectations in one or more of the key areas. It requires improvement in order to be good.
Grade 4	Inadequate	Provision that is inadequate requires significant improvement and/or enforcement. The provision is failing to give children an acceptable standard of early years education and/or is not meeting the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. It will be inspected again within 12 months of the date of this inspection.
Met		The provision has no children on roll. The inspection judgement is that the provider continues to meet the requirements for registration.
Not Met		The provision has no children on roll. The inspection judgement is that the provider does not meet the requirements for registration.

Inspection

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under Sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006 on the quality and standards of provision that is registered on the Early Years Register. The registered person must ensure that this provision complies with the statutory framework for children’s learning, development and care, known as the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY448617
Local authority	Kent
Inspection number	803736
Type of provision	Sessional provision

Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	2 - 5
Total number of places	30
Number of children on roll	14
Name of provider	Preschool Playhouse (Kent) Limited
Date of previous inspection	Not applicable
Telephone number	01622673633

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Type of provision

For the purposes of this inspection the following definitions apply:

Full-time provision is that which operates for more than three hours. These are usually known as nurseries, nursery schools and pre-schools and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. They are registered on the Early Years Register and pay the higher fee for registration.

Sessional provision operates for more than two hours but does not exceed three hours in any one day. These are usually known as pre-schools, kindergartens or nursery schools and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. They are registered on the Early Years Register and pay the lower fee for registration.

Childminders care for one or more children where individual children attend for a period of more than two hours in any one day. They operate from domestic premises that are usually their own home. They are registered on the Early Years Register and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Out of school provision may be sessional or full-time provision and is delivered before or after school and/or in the summer holidays. They are registered on the Early Years Register and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. Where children receive their Early Years Foundation Stage in school these providers do not have to deliver the learning and development requirements in full but should complement the experiences children receive in school.

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Piccadilly Gate
Store St
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234
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