

Playhouse Preschool Broadwater

Long Meadow Primary School, Oaks Cross, STEVENAGE, Hertfordshire, SG2 8LT

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| Inspection date | 11/03/2013 |
| Previous inspection date | 30/09/2008 |

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| The quality and standards of the early years provision | This inspection: | 2 |
| | Previous inspection: | 3 |
| How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend | | 2 |
| The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children | | 2 |
| The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision | | 2 |

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This provision is good

- Well-qualified and knowledgeable staff have a good understanding of how young children learn. They place a sharp focus on helping children to acquire communication and language skills, consequently children are helped to make good progress in this area.
- Children with special needs and or disabilities and those that are vulnerable are well cared for and supported to make good progress in their learning. This is because the staff assess individual children's needs accurately and plan effectively.
- Staff plan motivating and enjoyable learning experiences according to children's individual learning styles and interests and consequently all children are very well involved and valued in this inclusive environment.
- Partnerships with other professionals are effective in providing for children's needs. Children make good progress and transitions in and out of the setting are well organised to promote continuity of care and learning.

It is not yet outstanding because

- Opportunities for children to explore and investigate the natural world are not sufficiently developed.

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
- scheduled more frequently where Ofsted identifies a need to do so, for example where provision was previously judged 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 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
- scheduled at the completion of an investigation into failure to comply with the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage.

The provision is also registered on the voluntary and compulsory parts of the Childcare Register. This report includes a judgment about compliance with the requirements of that register.

Inspection activities

- The inspector observed activities in the playrooms and the outdoor area.
- The inspector held a meeting with the manager of the provision.
- The inspector looked at planning, evidence of suitability of practitioners working in the setting, policies and a range of other documentation.
- The inspector took account of the views of parents.

Inspector

Linda Bird

Full Report

Information about the setting

Playhouse Pre-School was registered in 2008 on the Early Years Register. The pre-school operates from a mobile classroom in the grounds of Long Meadow Primary School in Stevenage, Hertfordshire. The pre-school is a privately owned provision. It serves the local area and is accessible to all children. There is a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

The pre-school employs 12 childcare staff of whom two are graduates with early years degrees, seven hold appropriate early years qualifications and one has Early Years Professional status. The pre-school opens Monday to Friday for most of the year which includes a summer holiday playscheme. Sessions are from 9am until 3.30pm. Children attend for a variety of sessions. There are currently 98 children attending who are in the early years age group. The pre-school provides early education for two- and three-year-old children. The setting has systems in place to support children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and a number of children learning English as an additional language.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

To further improve the quality of the early years provision the provider should:

- develop further the educational programme for understanding the world by increasing opportunities for children to investigate the natural world through the use of a wider range of resources.

Inspection judgements

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

Children are motivated and eager to learn; they join in activities with enthusiasm and enjoy their time in the pre-school. Staff provide interesting and fun activities that meet the needs of children. The educational programmes address the prime and specific areas of learning. However, the educational programme for understanding the world has few opportunities for the children to explore natural objects closely and to develop a care and concern for living things and the natural environment. Staff organise the setting well and ensure that children are able to access a broad range of toys, books and equipment; as a result children are active and independent learners. This means that children are well prepared for the next stage in their learning.

Staff effectively promote children's skills in language development and literacy. The pre-school has a welcoming and comfortable book area. The children enjoy listening to an adult reading a story. They gather around as she reads. The children listen attentively.

The adult engages their interest by showing them the pictures and asking questions. The children are being helped to develop an appreciation of books and are being supported to develop early reading skills. Both the indoor and outdoor environments have words and phrases displayed. Print is therefore readily available to children wherever they play. For those children with speech and language difficulties they are supported by staff to use sign language; this helps to promote the children's communication and language skills.

The children move freely between the indoor and outdoor environments. Outdoor provision is carefully planned to offer a wide range of activities including running, using ride on toys, balancing on the large seesaw, looking at books and imaginative play. The benefits of outdoor play are fully exploited even on a cold winter day; consequently the children's physical development is well supported. The outdoor space is imaginatively organised and this stimulating environment effectively supports children's learning.

The pre-school promotes the expressive arts including singing and appreciating music. A professional singer leads weekly sessions for the children. The children enjoy the sessions as they involve singing, movement and language development. The children pretend to hold a microphone to enhance their singing. They sing and move to the song 'Shooting star', this involves the children in jumping into the shape of a shooting star. The children learn to dance fast and slow and have fun while learning the meaning of these words. The session is fast paced and lively and is well pitched for the children's age range to promote learning and an enjoyment of singing and movement.

The regular observation of children at play enables staff to assess children's learning needs and plan suitably challenging activities. Staff constantly observe and listen to children, questioning them during activities in order to extend their learning and enhance understanding. The children's 'Learning Journeys', which contain observations and assessments of progress are readily available to parents, in this way parents are involved in their children's learning. Children are keen and interested learners who are making good progress in working towards the early learning goals. Where children's starting points are below those of their peers, assessments show that they are making good progress. The pre-school is effective in preparing children for school.

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

Arrangements to help children settle into the pre-school and build secure emotional attachments with their carers are very effective. Successful implementation of the key person system ensures children feel safe and secure in the setting. Key staff work closely with parents so that they are well informed about children's needs and can provide good continuity of care. Children behave well; staff set clear boundaries and encourage the children to behave in a positive and respectful manner. Children are sensitively reminded to share toys, to take turns and to be kind to each other. The pre-school is inclusive and children are learning to respect and celebrate each other's differences. For example, children with special educational needs and/or disabilities are well supported to participate in all activities. There is a warm and friendly atmosphere.

Children are provided with a healthy snack during the morning. Staff prepare fruit and

savoury biscuits and milk to drink; this encourages the children to eat healthily. The children's independence is promoted by being given the time to butter their biscuits. Each child has their own water bottle with their picture on and this is available throughout the day. At lunch time the staff actively promote healthy eating by encouraging parents to avoid giving their children sweet items and crisps for their lunch. Children are encouraged to learn the importance of basic personal hygiene and ensure their hands are clean before eating and after going to the toilet. At particular times during the day, children can choose to play outdoors or inside. They are encouraged to dress themselves putting their coats and boots on. The staff use a wide variety of tasks and activities to develop children's independence. The children are successfully helped to develop self-help skills and a healthy lifestyle.

The staff attach importance to the children being outside and enjoying and benefiting from the fresh air. The children have fun playing in the well-resourced, outdoor area. The opportunity to enjoy fresh air and to run and play promotes children's physical development. The staff know the children well; and spend time talking to and playing with them, so they enjoy caring relationships. This positive adult interaction helps to develop children's confidence and self-esteem. Children are well prepared for the next stage in their learning because staff provide appropriate support to prepare them for their transition to school. This includes regular liaison with and visits to the school nursery class where the majority of children eventually transfer to.

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

The manager and her senior staff work closely together forming a very effective team. They are enthusiastic and committed to providing good quality provision for all children. The staff have widened their knowledge and experience by attending training courses and some staff are working to further improve their qualifications. As a result the staff team is motivated and enabled to offer good quality provision for all children. Effective systems are in place for recruitment and induction, ensuring that staff with appropriate skills and experience are employed. The manager carries out an annual appraisal with each member of staff. She has recently introduced short term goals for each member of staff and progress is monitored between appraisal meetings.

The pre-school enjoys close working partnerships with parents. Parents spoken to at the time of the inspection, hold the provision in high regard. They appreciate the way in which the staff help children to settle happily and learn to mix and play with other children. Effective partnerships with parents make a strong contribution to meeting the needs of children. The pre-school has a good relationship with Long Meadow Primary School and the children's centre which are both situated on the same site. These three settings together with another locally situated primary school have formed a federation which promotes effective partnership working to the benefit of the children and families. The pre-school has also developed strong partnerships with other professionals including the local authority early years consultant and with local nurseries and pre-schools. The close partnership working with other professionals ensures that children's needs are identified

and that they are supported to make good progress.

Staff are proactive in ensuring children's safety is maintained and the children are carefully supervised both indoors and outside. Rigorous systems are in place to assess risk and to ensure that the premises are safe and secure. Staff create an environment that is safe and welcoming, where children feel secure and happy. The provision has appropriate policies and procedures in place to meet the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. Effective procedures are in place to safeguard children. All staff have been suitably vetted to work with young children and a majority of staff hold a paediatric first aid qualification.

The manager provides strong leadership and she and her staff are ambitious to further improve provision for the children. The pre-school evaluates the quality of its provision through a planned self-evaluation process and staff are consulted and involved in this process. Feedback on the quality of provision is also sought from parents through the completion of questionnaires. Action plans are in place to address the areas requiring improvement; these include improving staff understanding of sounds and letters, and encouraging more parents to attend coffee mornings. The pre-school has good capacity for further improvement.

The Childcare Register

The requirements for the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are **Met**

The requirements for the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are **Met**

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 action. 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

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| Unique reference number | EY381778 |
| Local authority | Hertfordshire |
| Inspection number | 878846 |
| Type of provision | |
| Registration category | Childcare - Non-Domestic |
| Age range of children | 0 - 17 |
| Total number of places | 40 |
| Number of children on roll | 98 |
| Name of provider | Joanne King |
| Date of previous inspection | 30/09/2008 |
| Telephone number | 07817917697 07875259692 |

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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, which are usually the childminder's 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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