

The Funhouse Pre-School

Janet Duke Primary School, Markhams Chase, Basildon, Essex, SS15 5LS

Inspection date	06/03/2013
Previous inspection date	16/01/2012

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	3
	Previous inspection:	2
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

- Children access an attractive and well-resourced outdoor learning environment, offering a wide range of opportunities to explore the natural world and engage in energetic play.
- Staff are positive role models. They provide clear boundaries and explanations to help children to develop a secure understanding of how to behave appropriately.
- The manager and staff understand the importance of promoting children's safety. They follow clear procedures to assess and minimise risks, enabling children to explore and learn about taking risks in safe surroundings.

It is not yet good because

- Assessments of children's learning are not consistently rigorous, occasionally resulting in activities that are not fully matched to children's needs or sufficiently challenging.
- Overall, staff do not make skilful use of open-ended questioning to extend children's learning and encourage them to think critically and creatively.
- Information about children's learning is not routinely exchanged with other relevant early years settings, so children do not always receive consistent and complementary support across the different settings they attend.

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 main play room and the outdoor learning environment.
- The inspector held meetings with the manager of the provision and spoke with staff and children at appropriate times.
- The inspector looked at children's learning journey records, planning documentation, the provider's self-evaluation form and some written policy documents.
- The inspector took account of the views of parents and carers spoken to at the pre-school and on the telephone.

Inspector

Sarah Clements

Full Report

Information about the setting

The Funhouse Pre-School was registered in 2011 on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. It is situated in a purpose built premises in the Basildon area of Essex, and is managed by a voluntary management committee. The pre-school serves the local area and is accessible to all children. It operates from one room and there is a fully enclosed area available for outdoor play. The pre-school employs nine members of childcare staff. All staff hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 2 or above. The pre-school opens Monday to Friday during school term time. Sessions are from 8.45am until 11.45am and 12.30pm until 3.30pm. Children attend for a variety of sessions. There are currently 74 children attending who are in the early years age group. The pre-school provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children. It supports a number of children who speak English as an additional language and children with special needs and/or disabilities.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- develop the assessment arrangements further by completing more precise observations of children's achievements, interests and learning styles, and using this information to plan challenging experiences for each child.

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

- increase the use of carefully framed open-ended questions to extend children's learning and encourage them to think more critically and creatively in their play
- strengthen partnership working with the other early years settings that children attend so that children benefit fully from a shared understanding about their needs and common approach to supporting their learning.

Inspection judgements

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

Staff are generally competent in their knowledge and understanding of how children learn and develop. They provide children with an appropriate range of resources which capture their interest and support their learning in all areas. As a result, children make steady progress in their learning and development and are appropriately prepared for the next

stage in their learning. Children move around the pre-school freely, making choices in their play. Their enjoyment of outdoor play is fostered by a particularly well-resourced and inviting outdoor learning environment. Here, children refine their physical skills as they balance on low stilts and jump across the stepping stones. They have interesting opportunities to explore the natural world as they plant flowers and build 'mountains' using piles of bark chippings.

Staff regularly observe children in order to assess their learning, and many of their observations are collated in a learning journey record for each child. These assessments vary in quality and do not always include sufficiently detailed information about children's achievements, interests and learning styles. This means that occasionally, children are not offered suitably challenging and enjoyable experiences that build on what they already know and can do. Children with special needs and/or disabilities experience a more tailored approach to their learning. The special educational needs coordinator works closely in partnership with parents to identify any gaps in children's achievement and ensure additional support is readily planned.

Overall, children have adequate opportunities to develop their communication and language skills through everyday discussions and talking generally about what they are doing. They enjoy listening to stories in groups and engage in conversations about past events in their lives. Children are supported to learn to write their names on their finished art work and younger children practise making marks using chalks on the ground outside. Staff interact with children reasonably well during different activities, encouraging them to count how many steps they take and to recognise the colours of the stepping stones. However, not all staff use open-ended questioning to best effect, which means that children are not always fully supported to think things through, develop new ideas and work out how to solve problems. For example, children are not asked carefully framed questions to prompt them to think about new concepts, such as capacity, while building sandcastles.

Parents are encouraged to read their child's learning journey record on a daily basis, and they are starting to contribute their own comments to these. This means that parents have a clearer understanding of their children's progress and can begin to be more involved in supporting their children's learning and development at home. There are positive opportunities for parents to volunteer during pre-school sessions and to share aspects of their lives with the children. For example, parents read a familiar book to children in Chinese and show them how to write Chinese symbols. This helps children to develop a secure awareness of different languages and promotes their appreciation of wider cultural practices.

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

Children experience a smooth transition into the pre-school. They are provided with sufficient time to settle and feel secure in their new surroundings as their parents are encouraged to stay and support them during their first sessions. After a short time, children enter the nursery happily and separate confidently from their parents. They form secure attachments to their key person and demonstrate friendly behaviour towards one

another. As a result of these positive relationships, children feel reassured that there are familiar people close by to offer them support when they need it. Children feel valued as their drawings and craft creations are used in a range of colourful displays throughout the pre-school environment. They are provided with basic opportunities to develop their independence and complete everyday tasks for themselves. For example, they are able to put on their own coats, find their name cards, and pour drinks with limited support from the staff.

Children benefit from appropriate boundaries and expectations with regard to their behaviour. They demonstrate a sound ability to take turns when playing together. For example, they use an egg timer to keep track of the time they spend in the popular sandpit, ensuring they step out when it is time for someone else to have their turn. Children are beginning to take responsibility for their own and other's safety. They explain to younger children that it is unsafe to throw sand and often use their 'walking legs' while moving around indoors. Children's good health is promoted. They learn about the importance of healthy eating as staff talk to them about making healthy choices during sociable snack times. Children demonstrate a growing awareness of their own personal care needs. Many are independent with toileting routines and are able to access suitable facilities for washing their hands at appropriate times. Children's continuous access to the outdoor environment ensures that they benefit from appropriate amounts of fresh air and physical exercise.

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

The manager and staff have a secure understanding of their role in keeping children safe. They ensure that the premises are suitably safe and secure by carrying out daily checks of all areas accessed by the children. Staff are deployed efficiently in order to supervise children as they flow freely between the indoor and outdoor environments. The pre-school's procedures for safeguarding children are understood by all staff ensuring they know how to fully protect children. For example, staff understand that they are not permitted to use mobile phones while they are caring for children. The manager has completed relevant safeguarding training to enable her to confidently take the lead in following up any concerns about a child's welfare. The recruitment of staff, students and volunteers involves a range of robust checks to make sure children are cared for by suitable people. The manager monitors staff performance through annual appraisals and encourages staff to attend regular training courses to extend their knowledge, understanding and skills. This means that staff are suitably trained and qualified to meet children's needs. A range of policies and procedures meet all welfare requirements and inform the safe and efficient management of the pre-school. For example, a clear complaints policy is shared with all parents to provide them with the information they need to promote their children's well-being.

Self-evaluation is used accurately to highlight the strengths of the provision and identify some areas for improvement. For example, there are secure plans to update all planning documentation to reflect new guidance. Management use annual questionnaires to gain formal feedback from parents, ensuring they are fairly represented in the overall

evaluation. Parents speak positively about the support their children receive at the pre-school. In particular, they compliment the staff's willingness to work in partnership with outside professionals to meet their children's needs. The manager fosters links with some other local early years settings. However, these partnerships are not yet fully established to enable all parties to exchange relevant information about children's learning and ensure children make the best possible progress wherever they spend their time.

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

Unique reference number	EY428418
Local authority	Essex
Inspection number	903354
Type of provision	
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 17
Total number of places	26
Number of children on roll	74
Name of provider	Funhouse Preschool
Date of previous inspection	16/01/2012
Telephone number	01268 450587

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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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Piccadilly Gate
Store St
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M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234
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