

Birchwood Leisure Centre Playscheme

Longmead, HATFIELD, Hertfordshire, AL10 0AS

Inspection date	07/06/2013
Previous inspection date	07/04/2009

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

- Children enjoy attending the club and show good levels of confidence. They play happily together and welcome staff's involvement in their games and activities.
- Children's behaviour is good and they treat each other with respect. This is because there are clear expectations and the ground rules are discussed with the children so that they are involved in the decisions being made.
- There is a close relationship with parents who praise the service provided, the activities offered and the benefits to their children.
- Children's learning and development is supported by the senior staff team who are continually reviewing their practice. As a result, knowledge and understanding of how children learn through play is shared with the staff team.

It is not yet outstanding because

- The organisation of the resources, including the broad range of art and craft materials, means that children are not always able to see and choose what is available for them.
- Opportunities to increase younger children's independence are not maximised because they cannot always pour their own drinks.

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 the children's activities in their base rooms and play in the some of the outdoor areas.
- The inspector spoke to staff and senior management at appropriate times. She looked at a selection of policies and children's records and discussed how these are used.
- The inspector spoke to the children and engaged in their physical and imaginative play.
- The inspector met parents and discussed their views on the service provided.

Inspector

Maura Pigram

Full Report

Information about the setting

Birchwood Leisure Centre Playscheme was registered in 1995 on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. It is situated in the Birchwood Leisure Centre in Hatfield. It is run by Hatfield Town Council. It serves the local area and is accessible to all children. It operates from rooms within the Leisure Centre and children have use of the indoor soft play area and the Centre's surrounding play areas, including the nearby enclosed playground.

The play scheme employs 15 members of childcare staff. Of these, three hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3, one holds a level 6 early years qualification and two staff members hold Qualified Teacher Status. Two staff members are trainee teachers. The play scheme opens Monday to Friday during school holidays. Sessions are from 8.30am until 6pm. Children attend for a variety of sessions. There are currently three children attending who are in the early years age group.

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 art and craft area so that it offers rich, varied and imaginative experiences for children by, for example, ensuring the materials are easily available and the contents of containers are known to children
- provide opportunities for younger children to pour their own drinks to support their independence skills.

Inspection judgements

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

Children are happy and enjoy a good range of fun activities both indoors and outdoors. Staff support children in purposeful play and cater for their individual interests. Children are familiar with the routine and engage well in play. They happily choose what they would like to do when they are not involved in group activities, such as, the exploration of soft play equipment. Staff show an interest in what the children say and do. They interact

well with them so that children make good progress overall. They listen attentively to children at all times so that their self-esteem is promoted. For example, ideas from children are attentively listened to and staff respond well to requests for favourite activities, such as, dancing and ball games. Staff engage children in conversation; this supports their communication skills well. Consequently, children are becoming confident and capable speakers in group situations.

There is a good range of resources to suit the varied age range that the play scheme provides for. Children enjoy a range of art and craft activities and are encouraged to use their own ideas and imagination. They enjoy creating models using recycled materials. However, there is scope to develop children's creative and independence skills further by ensuring the organisation of resources, including the arts and crafts materials, are organised in a way that allows children can easily see and choose what is available to them. Children are very involved in the planning of activities and outings that they would like to go on, such as, visits to the seaside and animal parks. Recently, children enjoyed creating three dimensional animals which followed on from an outing to a wildlife park. The children think about their play and solve problems as they go. Cooking, construction and board games supports children's mathematical skills and the concepts of turn taking. This means that they demonstrate the characteristics of effective learners. Children concentrate well at their chosen tasks. Younger children are well supported and encouraged by older children as well as the staff. This shows that children are learning how to be kind and considerate towards others. Books are easily available and children readily access these. They enjoy looking at these when sitting and relaxing on bean bags and share these with their friends. These support children's interest in reading for pleasure.

The manager of the play scheme is proactive in gaining a good understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage. Many of the staff working alongside the younger children are very familiar with the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. As a result, they observe children during their play and identify the next steps in their learning. They effectively use their experience to support children's learning and development. Learning journals are maintained and used well to assist in the settling in process. These are shared with parents so that children's enjoyment and progress can be discussed. Parents contribute detailed information when their child joins the setting. This is effectively used to help new children settle easily into the play scheme.

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

Children enjoy warm relationships with the staff and show that they feel settled and happy. They are confident and well-motivated to explore their surroundings. Staff work in close partnership with parents to obtain detailed information that can be used to provide appropriate and effective care for each child. A key person and a buddy system further contribute to children feeling settled and secure. Children state they look forward to coming to the play scheme and like 'making things' and playing in the soft play area.

Staff encourage children to be independent in their self-care, especially when pouring drinks. However, the size of the jugs available are not always easily managed by the

younger children, which hinders them from becoming fully independent. All children bring a packed lunch to the play scheme and parents are asked to ensure that these are healthy. Staff talk to children about the content of their packed lunch so that they learn to eat sensibly and understand the benefit of different foods. Children behave well because there are clear boundaries in place. They are able to recall the 'golden rules' prior to group games, such as, playing football or using the playground equipment outdoors. Children receive constant praise and support which supports their personal, social and emotional development.

Children learn about the importance of physical activity through a variety of play opportunities, such as, playing badminton, ball games, jumping on the bouncy castles and using wheeled cars. They have regularly access to the large indoor soft play area. During this time children love using the giant slides and have fun taking supervised risks in their play. They have regular opportunities for fresh air and enjoy using the centre's facilities for ball games. In addition, good use is made of the nearby playground where children enjoy using the climbing apparatus. This promotes children's confidence and they show care and consideration to others so that they can safely use the equipment. Good explanations from staff help children understand how to keep themselves safe on the indoor and outdoor play equipment. In addition, discussions about the importance of protecting themselves from the impact of the sun when playing outdoors, further supports children's understanding of how to maintain a healthy lifestyle. All outings are carefully risk assessed to ensure they are suitable for the children attending. Careful attention is paid to ensure children are safe as possible at all times. Overall, children develop good levels of confidence and self-esteem to support them in the skills they need when mixing with other children.

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

The staff have a clear understanding of their legal responsibilities to implement the welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage, to ensure that children are safe and secure at the play scheme. They are clear about their roles and responsibilities and are fully aware of what to do should they have concerns about children in their care. High priority is placed on protecting children's welfare and the manager follows stringent procedures working with outside agencies when necessary. Safe recruitment procedures ensure all those working with children are safe to do so. Clear supervision and informal discussions by the manager means that training needs are discussed and supported. An appraisal system is held informally and positive steps are been taken to ensure this is robust. Knowledge is kept up to date through regular training.

The manager and senior staff have embraced the revised 'Early Years Foundation Stage' so that children make good progress in their learning while having fun. The recommendations made at the last inspection have been addressed. For example, observations made of children during their play are regularly now used to plan purposeful play experiences. The manager and the staff receive support from the local authority; they actively act upon advice to continually improve the service they offer. As a result,

monitoring of the play scheme is an ongoing process. Views of staff are regularly shared through informal discussions and meetings. Parents and children's views are sought through questionnaires. These are actively used to monitor the purchase of further equipment that the children enjoy using. All the required documentation is in place to support children's care, including the required parental consents. Policies and procedures are regularly reviewed to ensure they are up to date and reflect current requirements. These are shared with parents so they are clear about the play scheme's practice

Daily safety checks are carried out on all areas used by children. Staff take sensible precautions to ensure children are as safe as possible at all times. For example, a staff member is always situated by the entrance to the children's base room to ensure children's safety. There is a good partnership with parents. They are well informed about how their child has been during each session and about forthcoming activities. This supports continuity of care. Parents are complimentary of the play scheme and state that it has helped their children's confidence and social skills greatly. The positive partnership with parents ensures that all children are well supported and any concerns are quickly identified so that they can be effectively addressed. The manager is aware of the importance of working with other providers who are involved with children's care and learning. She works closely with outside agencies when necessary and attends meetings to protect children's welfare. Some staff work with the children in their schools. As a result, children's welfare and development is shared so that children's needs are met.

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	148164
Local authority	Hertfordshire
Inspection number	876190
Type of provision	
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 17
Total number of places	40
Number of children on roll	3
Name of provider	Hatfield Town Council
Date of previous inspection	07/04/2009
Telephone number	01707 270772

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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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