

Play Pit Day Nursery

9 Brownlow Road, Felixstowe, Suffolk, IP11 7EX

Inspection date

09/10/2013

Previous inspection date

10/12/2012

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This inspection:

2

Previous inspection:

4

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 who have English as an additional language make particularly strong progress in their communication and language development. This is because they are provided with rich opportunities to use both their home language and English within the nursery.
- There are rich experiences for children to develop their self-care skills as they are given every opportunity to be independent in managing everyday tasks for themselves.
- Staff work in close unison with parents to share information readily and ensure children experience a very smooth transition into the nursery.
- The management and staff team demonstrate a strong drive for continuous improvement and use self-evaluation effectively to identify the strengths and weaknesses of the nursery. As a result, they have made a number of significant improvements to the provision for children since the last inspection.

It is not yet outstanding because

- There is scope to enhance children's imaginative ideas by extending the range of interesting, open-ended role play props in the outdoor area.

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 five playrooms and the outdoor learning environment.
- The inspector took account of the views of parents and grandparents spoken to on the day of the inspection, and engaged in discussions with staff and children at appropriate times.
- The inspector carried out a joint observation with a manager, while a group of children were having a snack.
- The inspector looked at children's learning journey records, planning documentation, the provider's self-evaluation form and some written policy documents.
- The inspector held a meeting with the managers and checked evidence of staffs' suitability and qualifications.

Inspector

Sarah Clements

Full Report

Information about the setting

The Play Pit Day Nursery was registered in 1990. It is registered on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. It is situated in a converted house in the Felixstowe area of Suffolk. The nursery is privately owned and managed. It serves the local area and is accessible to all children. Children have access to five rooms and there is an enclosed garden available for outdoor play.

The nursery employs 20 members of childcare staff. Of these, 16 hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 2 and above. This includes a member of staff with Early Years Professional Status, and another with Qualified Teacher Status. The nursery also employs a cook. The nursery opens Monday to Friday all year round, from 7.30am until 6pm. A breakfast and after school club is also offered during school term times, with sessions from 7.30am until 8.30am, and 3.10pm until 6pm. A holiday club operates from 7.30am until 6pm during the school holidays. Children attend for a variety of sessions. There are currently 192 children attending the nursery, 46 of whom are in the early years age group. The setting 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 educational needs and/or disabilities.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- enhance the educational programme for expressive arts and design by extending the existing good range of interesting, open-ended role play props in the outdoor area.

Inspection judgements

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

The staff are very secure in their knowledge of how children learn and develop, which means that they can promote children's good progress. Observation and assessments are used continuously by staff in order to build a full picture of each child's starting points, interests and preferred learning styles. Staff work closely with parents to ensure the provision is adapted to meet the needs of children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. As a result, all children experience a tailored approach to their learning, and engage in activities that promote the next steps in their development. For example, a younger child's interest in playing with cars is fully embraced as their key person provides additional vehicles for them to sort, position and count. This helps to promote their early

mathematical understanding. Children make choices from an ever-changing range of resources that capture their curiosity. The art room on the ground floor is particularly well resourced, with plenty of scope for children to explore different media and materials. For example, children enjoy constructing models with cubes of solidified jelly, and concentrate on threading pieces of dried spaghetti through small marshmallows. Older nursery children enjoy practising their early writing skills as they use pencils to write their names on their paintings. Children show further interest in learning about letters as they are inspired by the vibrant displays of printed labels, signs and notices, which are mainly offered in the indoor environment. As a result, they are actively developing the skills they need in preparation for the next stage in their learning.

Staff spend much of their time interacting directly with the children and make good use of carefully framed questions to extend their thinking. For example, the youngest children are purposefully asked about the animals they can see on an electronic toy. This encourages them to articulate the sounds made by the various animals, before staff repeat the names of the animals to refine children's speaking skills further. Staff have increased their use of Makaton sign language across the nursery, and consequently, children often use signs to emphasise their conversations. This is particularly supportive of the needs of children who have English as an additional language as they follow the signs to grasp a stronger understanding. Staff also actively liaise with parents to gather examples of the words children use in their home language, ensuring they have ample opportunities to use these in the nursery.

Children benefit from the time they spend in the nursery's outdoor area, which is generally well resourced. Here, they actively discover new things about the natural world. For example, they use magnifying glasses to hunt for mini-beasts, before identifying the different species using an informative reference sheet. There is a good range of outdoor equipment to support children's physical skills. In the main, children show a good awareness of the space around them, pedalling tricycles carefully and adjusting their speed to avoid any obstacles. Although the indoor environment offers children a good range of role-play props, including everyday utensils, writing tools and dressing-up clothes, these are not always made fully available in the outdoor area. This means that opportunities for children to develop their imaginative thinking and creativity are not always fully exploited. Children's first-hand experiences are enhanced through organised trips outside of the nursery. An annual 'big camping adventure day' provides rich opportunities for children to explore aspects of a farm environment. This includes popular tree climbing activities and the interesting experience of building a real camp fire.

Parents are kept well informed of the nursery's learning initiatives through daily discussions, vibrant displays and regular parent interview meetings. This promotes a consistent approach to supporting children's progress as parents gather ideas to enhance their child's learning at home. For example, a new newsletter suggests ideas for children, to develop their speech at home, including opportunities to sing and sign familiar rhymes. In addition to this, a recently introduced book lending scheme fosters the children's ability to choose books to read with their families at home and helps to widen their literacy skills in preparation for school.

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

Children show that they feel at home and happy in the nursery's welcoming and child-friendly environment. They develop very secure emotional attachments to the staff, including their key person, who has a clear understanding of their individual needs. This is fostered effectively through initial discussions with parents and purposeful observations of children during their first sessions. As a result, staff understand how each child prefers to learn and can provide resources that reflect their favourite things. Children have plenty of time to settle when they first attend and when they move into different groups within the nursery. Staff take a gradual approach to suit children's individual needs, ensuring each child's key person is always involved to provide familiar reassurance. Consequently, children experience a smooth transition.

Children frequently seek the staff's attention to share artwork and talk about special events in their lives. Staff take time to foster their sense of achievement by showing an interest in what they say and do, and offering lots of praise. Children's behaviour is consistently positive throughout the nursery and they have a tendency to play cooperatively together. For example, they happily share the modelling dough to make 'lots of sausages', before they are praised by the staff for showing 'very good teamwork'. The effective organisation of the facilities and resources has a very positive impact on children's ability to develop their independence. For example, they demonstrate a strong sense of responsibility as they dutifully hang up their aprons and find a dustpan and brush so they can help to sweep up the spilt sand. In addition, the provision of extra sinks in both art rooms enables children to manage hand-washing routines very easily for themselves. When it is time for children to move on to school, the staff ensure they are well prepared and feel confident about the change. This is achieved by offering children regular opportunities to engage in school themed activities, such as trying on school uniform, getting changed for physical education activities and making a packed lunch. In addition to this, teachers from several local schools are welcomed into the nursery so children can meet them and start to form new attachments that support them in their transition.

Children learn to adopt many aspects of a healthy lifestyle, including time spent exercising outside in the fresh air. They demonstrate a positive approach towards eating healthily because they have rich opportunities to sow, harvest and eat fresh fruit and vegetables. The provision of food is balanced and nutritious, and staff set a good example by sitting down to eat with the children at meal times. Staff make the most of opportunities for children to serve their own food using a spoon, and provide gentle guidance so they learn how to pour their own drinks from a young age. Babies are given good support to enable them to explore food freely using their hands, before moving on to a spoon. This promotes aspects of their personal, social and emotional development very effectively. Children take part in supervised activities which help them to learn how to use tools in a safe manner. For instance, they are reminded of the importance of sitting down while using scissors, and have opportunities to learn to use a knife as they chop some apples from a local farm. Children's good awareness of risk is demonstrated as they remind others to 'slow down' when they notice them running indoors.

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

Staff have a good understanding of the nursery's safeguarding policy and the procedures they must follow if they have concerns about a child's welfare. This is because child protection issues are included as an important part of the induction process for new staff, and ongoing safeguarding practice is always discussed during staff meetings. Procedures for checking the suitability of staff have been totally reviewed since the last inspection, and are now very robust. This includes a strict policy to ensure all adults complete enhanced checks through the Disclosure and Barring Service before they are permitted to be in contact with the children. As a result, the steps taken to promote children's welfare have improved significantly. Children are cared for in a safe and secure environment where staff are alert to any potential hazards. The risk assessment arrangements have recently been rationalised to make them even more sharply focussed on minimising any risks to children as soon as they arise. Any accidents are managed effectively. Clear accident records are maintained and parents sign to acknowledge the record; these records are then purposefully monitored by the manager to assess any trends.

There are effective arrangements for monitoring and reviewing the ongoing practice of staff, and the managers are committed to supporting them with any aspects of underperformance. Staff access plenty of ongoing training to further enhance their skills. This means that they are confident in their roles and children are well supported by qualified, skilled and knowledgeable staff. For example, a member of staff attends training to develop their understanding of how to identify when a child may be experiencing selective mutism. In turn, this helps them to assess children's speaking skills more accurately and ensures children continue to receive support that meets their individual needs. A recently established procedure for recording 'mini meetings' held between the management and staff has enhanced the process of self-evaluation. This ensures that staff can clarify any areas of their practice they are less sure of, and the management can monitor the educational programmes more closely. The management has worked very hard to maintain staff morale and drive up standards at the nursery since the last inspection. As a result, all actions and recommendations raised have been successfully addressed and met. The arrangements for observing and assessing children's progress are regularly reviewed, ensuring these remain effective in identifying and narrowing any gaps in children's achievement.

There are strong, supportive relationships with parents which are strengthened by the effective key person system. The nursery's policies and procedures are issued to all parents to ensure they have the information they need to promote their children's welfare. Parents' views are fully valued as part of the nursery's strong reflective practice. For example, staff fully take on board a parents' suggestions to improve opportunities for children to learn about wider aspects of diversity in people and families. They invite parents to join the recently established 'equality and inclusion group' and take steps to ensure the nursery's displays are more inclusive. Good partnership working with a broad range of professionals helps the staff to target their support for individual children. This is particularly effective in meeting the needs of children with special educational needs

and/or disabilities. For example, staff complete individual learning plans for children who need additional support, drawing on advice from a speech and language therapist.

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	251782
Local authority	Suffolk
Inspection number	934941
Type of provision	
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 17
Total number of places	54
Number of children on roll	192
Name of provider	Susan Spaulding and Penelope Conway Partnership
Date of previous inspection	10/12/2012
Telephone number	01394 276005

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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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