

Playbase Nursery

Playbase Ltd, Beezon Road, KENDAL, Cumbria, LA9 6EL

Inspection date

24/10/2013

Previous inspection date

03/12/2012

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This inspection:

4

Previous inspection:

2

How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend	4
The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children	4
The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision	4

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This provision is inadequate

- Staffing ratios are not met in the baby room or pre-school room because there is not the required number of qualified members of staff present. This breach puts children at risk and impacts on all aspects of care and learning.
- Babies and younger children do not always have a key person available to support them in settling in and meeting their care and learning needs. As a result, their emotional well-being is sufficiently affected to impact on their learning and development.
- Expectations of children are not satisfactorily high enough to challenge children to make good progress and be well prepared for school.
- Weak leadership and management mean that the monitoring of overall organisation and staff practice is ineffective.

It has the following strengths

- Children receive healthy, balanced and nutritious meals and snacks. Seasonal foods are locally sourced. Meals are fresh because they are cooked on the premises.
- Children enjoy a wide range of activities and opportunities, both inside and outside. This is because the nursery is well-resourced and the environment is suitably well-organised.

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 had a tour of the premises and observed all areas where children play and rest.
- The inspector talked with children, observing them in their play.
- The inspector discussed policy and practice with the owner, acting manager and staff members, taking their views into account.
- The inspector held a conversation over the telephone with the nominated person.
The inspector scrutinised a wide range of documentation. This included accident, medication and incident records, relevant policies and procedures, diaries, and children's files.
- The inspector talked with parents and carers, taking their views into account.

Inspector

Janice Caryl

Full Report

Information about the setting

Playbase Nursery was registered in 2006 and is on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. It is situated in a converted building in the centre of Kendal, Cumbria and is privately owned. The nursery serves the local area and is accessible to all children. It operates from four playrooms, a soft play area and there is an enclosed area available for outdoor play.

The nursery employs 12 members of childcare staff. Of these, eight hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3 and one holds a level 2 qualification. The pre-school leader has Qualified Teacher Status.

The nursery opens Monday to Friday all year round. Sessions are from 7.30am until 6.30pm. Children attend for a variety of sessions. There are currently 85 children attending who are in the early years age group. The nursery 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 meet the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage the provider must:

- ensure that deployment of staff within the nursery meets the ratio requirements set out in the Statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage, at all times
- ensure that all children, particularly babies and younger children, continuously have a key person upon whom they can rely. This includes during staff absences
- reflect and review staff training and professional development arrangements to ensure that they gain a better understanding of children's emerging abilities. This applies specifically to acquiring higher expectations of children by providing more challenging opportunities to support them in developing their independence and self-help skills.

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

- review the management and accountability arrangements to ensure that persons in charge monitor the overall organisation and staff practice on a routine basis to keep children safe and well cared for.

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

On the day of inspection, there were insufficient qualified staff to meet the required ratios for the care of children aged under two. This also applied to a short period of the day within the pre-school room. These requirements are specified in the Statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage. This is a breach of requirements and impacts on the ability of staff to meet the children's welfare and learning needs. As a result, the emotional well-being of babies and younger children are not fully met. The large number of pre-school children with one staff member means their individual care and learning needs are equally compromised, affecting overall progress.

Staff interactions with children do not always offer adequate challenge to help children make satisfactory progress. This is particularly evident in the promotion of supporting children in their development of self-help skills and independence. For example, children are not always sufficiently encouraged to put on their coats or serve themselves at meal and snack times. As a result, children are not necessarily well prepared for their next stage in learning and preparation for school. Assessments on children, including the two-year-old progress check are completed appropriately. They identify the areas where children need further support. These are incorporated into individual plans to help children achieve

the next step in their learning and development. Information gathered from parents and carers when children first start, help to monitor progress based on children's starting points. Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and who have English as an additional language are monitored and make steady progress. The nursery is well resourced to enable children to learn and develop skills through play.

During planned group times, staff promote learning more effectively. For example, babies are supported in taking their first steps. Staff working with the two- and three-year-olds engage children by introducing 'Teddy'. Children are enthralled as they see 'Teddy' get ready to go outside. Staff talk about the weather and, as a group, they discuss appropriate cold weather clothing. The pre-school children animatedly talk about their self-portraits, showing pride in their achievements. They develop a sense of belonging and feelings of self-worth when they describe their own pictures. Communication and language is promoted as children talk about fireworks. Staff introduce brightly coloured chalks so that children can draw and make their own display on the outdoor blackboard. Children's physical skills are developed as they handle and use the chalks, while fostering their imagination and forms of expression. The outdoor play space is well utilised by all children at different times of the day. The balance between child-initiated activities and adult-directed activities is balanced appropriately. This means children learn from their individual likes and interests.

Parents and carers are informed and involved in their children's learning. Regular newsletters explain future events and give messages. Displays in the entrance hall, parents' room and individual care rooms are informative. Parents are encouraged to share observations and photographs from home and these are used to help inform the planning. As a result, there is continuity and shared learning between home and the nursery.

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

Care plans on children inform key persons of the immediate needs and routines of babies and children. This is because staff work closely with parents to ensure children's needs are known. However, key persons are not always available. This means that children, particularly babies and younger children, do not always have an immediate attachment and emotional bond that they can rely on. This affects their ability to learn and develop. Children are helped to settle in through a gradual process. As children move through the nursery, discussions between staff ensure that any transitions are as smooth as possible. Children are, subsequently, monitored and support provided appropriately. Staff are calm, patient and sensitive as they assist babies and young children in settling down to sleep. Children are constantly monitored by adults, who remain with them while they rest.

Children receive healthy and nutritious snacks and meals. Displays showing healthy eating options support parents and other adults in reinforcing messages about making good choices and portion control. As a result, children develop an understanding of how to eat healthily. Good hygiene practice is promoted throughout the nursery. All children are encouraged to wash their hands before eating and after visiting the toilet. As a result, they develop good habits that help to prevent cross-contamination. Staff ensure that children

get lots of opportunities to exercise. Children use the stairs on a daily basis to access the outdoors. They develop an understanding of safety as staff carefully explain and guide them up and down the stairs. Children demonstrate their emerging understanding of how to manage risk as they sensibly hold on to the rail and ascend and descend the stairs.

Children have lots of opportunities to develop their physical skills outside. They run, climb, ride trikes, play football and practise jumping and balancing. Children also benefit from the soft play area, which is shared between the age groups. Younger children enjoy the ball pool, while older ones slide, climb and negotiate the different areas. Staff promote positive behaviour as they remind children to be careful of others, take turns and look after each other.

Children are suitably supported in their move onto school. Staff have good links with local schools and teachers are invited into the nursery to meet the children. Documents are shared to help school staff understand children's emerging developmental needs.

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

The inspection was brought forward by Ofsted following concerns about staffing qualifications and staffing ratios. The inspector found on the day that the leaders and managers are ineffective in ensuring that staff ratios meet the requirements of the Statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage. As a result, a breach in the requirement means that children's care and educational needs are not adequately met. Also, methods to ensure that children establish consistent close attachment bonds are not fully in place. Consequently, children's emotional well-being is compromised, particularly for younger babies and those new to the setting.

Appraisals and supervision help to monitor staff development and staff receive training and professional development opportunities. However, the management team have not identified that staff's expectations of children's abilities are not high enough. As a result, children are not suitably challenged.

Children are kept safe through reporting mechanisms that identify key aspects of their care and learning. For example, accident and medication forms are well documented. They are adhered to by staff, who demonstrate their understanding of the policies and procedures to keep children safe. The managers, leaders and administrators document important and key messages, such as phone calls, discussions and appointments. These are written in the office book to ensure that information is shared effectively and with the relevant people. The responsibilities to safeguard children are understood by managers and staff. All staff are trained in child protection and first aid and risk assessments are in place. They demonstrate their understanding of the procedure to take if they have a concern over children's welfare. The registered provider explains in detail the recruitment process. This is clear and robust, with new managers and staff carefully selected to ensure they are suitable for their role. All staff are vetted through the Disclosure and Barring Service, which helps to ensure they are safe to work with children, further helping to keep

children safe.

The educational programme, including the planning and assessment, is monitored by the manager and room supervisors. The environment is suitably resourced to ensure that children benefit from a range of activities. This helps and supports them in moving towards the early learning goals. The registered provider describes some areas that have been identified for development. For example, she is looking at more informative ways of monitoring children's progress. However, the registered provider has not taken full responsibility for compiling a focused improvement plan to address issues identified at the last inspection. Monitoring of the provision and staff practice has been left with the previous manager. Consequently, actions to tackle areas of development have not sufficiently improved the provision or practice.

The nursery has established strong links with parents and carers. Parents comment positively about the provision and they feel fully informed about their children's progress. For example, newsletters, daily diaries, information displays, open days and meetings help in maintaining secure and effective relationships. Parents and carers have opportunities to make suggestions and comment. This feedback is used to help improve aspects of the provision. Managers and staff have experience of working with other agencies to ensure the needs of individual children are met.

The Childcare Register

The requirements for the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are

**Not Met
(with
actions)**

The requirements for the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are

Met

To meet the requirements of the Childcare Register the provider must:

- ensure at least half of all persons caring for children have successfully completed a qualification at a minimum level 2 (compulsory part of the Childcare Register).

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	EY330130
Local authority	Cumbria
Inspection number	938280
Type of provision	
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 17
Total number of places	102
Number of children on roll	85
Name of provider	Playbase Limited
Date of previous inspection	03/12/2012
Telephone number	01539 737472 or 0773 333 2443

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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
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