

Playbox Playgroup

Hitchin Christian Centre, Bedford Road, Hitchin SG5 1HF



Inspection date	13 September 2018
Previous inspection date	Not applicable

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection: Previous inspection:	Good Not applicable	2
Effectiveness of leadership and management		Good	2
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment		Good	2
Personal development, behaviour and welfare		Good	2
Outcomes for children		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents

The provision is good

- Both managers value their enthusiastic, experienced and qualified staff team. They monitor staff performance, identify further training needs and develop practice ideas. This helps to support the continued professional development of staff and promotes children's progress, helping them to prepare for nursery school.
- Staff recognise and support the developmental needs of children very well. They provide an inclusive environment and work hard to ensure children receive the individually tailored care and learning they need. All children make good progress in their development.
- Staff build good relationships with all children. They provide a nurturing approach, helping children to feel happy, secure and settled.
- Parents are kept well informed about the progress their children make in the setting. Feedback from parents is extremely positive with regard to the superb quality of care their children enjoy.

It is not yet outstanding because:

- Parents do not have enough opportunities to contribute their own ongoing observations to the assessment process used within the setting.
- Staff do not make the most of their good relationships with parents to support them to complement and extend their children's learning at home.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- encourage parents to share with staff ongoing information about their children's achievements
- enhance the strategies that are in place to support parents to complement and extend their children's learning at home.

Inspection activities

- The inspector observed the quality of teaching during activities and assessed the impact this has on children's learning.
- The inspector discussed an evaluation of an activity with one of the two managers.
- The inspector held a number of discussions with the managers, staff and children.
- The inspector looked at relevant documentation, including evidence of the suitability of persons working with children. The inspector discussed with the managers how they reflect on their practice.
- The inspector took account of the views of parents through email feedback and discussions during the inspection process.

Inspector

Lynn Clements

Inspection findings

Effectiveness of leadership and management is good

Safeguarding is effective. The managers and staff regularly complete training and develop a very good understanding of how to deal with any child protection concerns. The managers and staff regularly evaluate the quality of their setting. Action plans are set in place to promote continued development. Following a recent audit on play opportunities, staff identified that early mathematics could be further extended. As a result, children now explore even more mathematical concepts during imaginary and outside play. Partnerships with staff at other local nurseries and schools are good. This provides continuity which helps staff to prepare children for the next stage in their learning.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good

The setting is inviting and provides varied environments that help to support children's learning and development. The managers and staff have thought carefully about the organisation of their setting. This helps to ensure that children have the opportunity to explore and learn in secure and challenging indoor and outdoor play spaces. Staff are confident in their role of promoting children's learning. Good, and occasionally very good, teaching is evident. For example, staff skilfully model language and engage children in conversations which interest them and extend their vocabulary. Activities are based on children's interests and what they need to learn next. They have fun exploring the properties of dough and enjoy using their senses to smell the fresh lavender they press into it.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare are good

Children settle quickly and are relaxed and content. They are confident and have good levels of self-esteem. For example, children seek out friends and staff to help them with their play ideas and proudly show off their finished creations. Children play in harmony together. They thoroughly enjoy creating an impromptu band and explore loud and soft sounds. Children laugh and dance around to the beat they discover. Behaviour is good. Staff support children to be kind to each other and listen when appropriate. Children are supported to learn how to keep themselves safe. For instance, staff remind them how to carefully replace objects they have finished using instead of throwing them on the floor. Staff use clear explanations that help children to learn and understand that their actions have consequences.

Outcomes for children are good

Children have plenty of opportunities to play in the fresh air. They use resources, such as crates and balancing equipment, to help promote their physical development. All children, including those who are in receipt of additional funding, make good progress based on their starting points on entry to the setting. Children are motivated and keen learners, using their imagination to create meals in their play kitchen.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY538554
Local authority	Hertfordshire
Inspection number	10077086
Type of provision	Sessional day care
Registers	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register
Day care type	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Age range of children	2 - 3
Total number of places	28
Number of children on roll	24
Name of registered person	Hitchin Christian Centre
Registered person unique reference number	RP538553
Date of previous inspection	Not applicable
Telephone number	01462441321

Playbox Playgroup originally opened in 1992 and re-registered in 2016. The setting employs seven members of childcare staff. Of these, six hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3 or above, including two with qualified teacher status. The setting opens from Monday to Friday during term time only. Sessions are from 9.15am to 12.15pm each weekday morning, from 12.15pm to 3.15pm on Tuesday and Wednesday, and from 1pm to 3pm on Monday and Thursday. There is a lunch club from 12.15pm to 12.55pm each weekday. The setting provides funded early education for two- and three-year-old children.

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