

Play Alma Mater

123 Long Lane, Oldham, Lancashire OL9 8AY



Inspection date	17 January 2019
Previous inspection date	21 August 2015

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

This provision is good

- The enthusiastic manager evaluates the quality of the nursery provision. She is committed to providing children and families with high-quality childcare. The views of staff, parents and children are actively sought and consistently acted upon. This has helped to maintain a good standard.
- Members of the long-serving staff team are welcoming and friendly. They communicate positively with children and form close bonds with them. Children arrive in high spirits and settle quickly in the homely environment. All children receive individual care and support, which helps them to feel safe and secure.
- The quality of teaching is good overall. Well-qualified staff regularly observe and document children's achievements. Staff use this information to plan some stimulating and exciting activities. These are based on children's individual interests and learning needs. Children make good progress in their learning and development.
- Children particularly enjoy books and reading. They sit and listen with anticipation and animatedly join in with phrases from much-loved stories. Older boys recite the alphabet, confidently spell out the phonetic sounds of their names and even spell out letters in the names of their peers.
- Children behave extremely well. Staff are calm and sensitive and reinforce golden rules. Two-year-old children learn about feelings and staff use a 'feelings wall' to prompt discussion.
- Staff do not always gather detailed information about children's skills and capabilities on entry, to inform planning and precisely challenge children's learning from the start.
- Staff occasionally miss opportunities to promote children's mathematical skills, particularly counting and use of number.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- gather more detailed information from parents about children's capabilities on entry and plan to challenge their learning even more from the outset
- enhance opportunities for children to use counting and number during play and further promote their mathematical development.

Inspection activities

- The inspector looked at all areas of the nursery. She observed the quality of teaching indoors and outdoors, and assessed the impact this has on children's learning.
- The inspector held a meeting with the manager and carried out an evaluation of teaching with her.
- The inspector spoke to staff and children at appropriate times during the inspection.
- The inspector looked at relevant documentation, such as policies, procedures and children's records, reviewed self-evaluation and checked evidence of the suitability of staff.
- The inspector took account of the views of parents.

Inspector
Layla Davies

Inspection findings

Effectiveness of leadership and management is good

Safeguarding is effective. Staff are thoroughly aware of possible signs that may indicate a child is at risk of harm. The manager ensures that all staff know what to do should they have a concern about the safety of a child or the conduct of a colleague. This helps to promote children's welfare and keep them safe. The manager monitors the progress of individuals and groups of children. This helps staff to identify any gaps in children's progress and implement effective strategies to help gaps to close. Staff are supported well in their professional development. For example, they have regular one-to-one meetings with the manager. New staff are thoroughly vetted and benefit from a detailed induction. They develop new skills and are mentored closely by experienced colleagues.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good

Children have excellent opportunities for sensory play and exploration. For example, babies explore the crunchy texture of cereal and two-year-olds experiment with coloured rice. Babies delight in playing with cause and effect toys. They capably open locks and operate handles. Furthermore, they are enchanted, watching bubbles float up inside bubble tubes. Children have fun and enjoy learning. Older children demonstrate excellent physical skills and stretch up high to manoeuvre the large parachute. Children have good opportunities to be creative. For example, younger children enjoy making patterns in paint. They make models by manipulating dough and enjoy dressing-up games. Older girls play cooperatively together and fill hessian bags with assorted 'shopping'. They use their strong social skills and invite others to join in with their pretend play.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare are good

Children and staff truly enjoy their time together. Babies' care is carefully tailored to mirror home routines. They are soothed to sleep to the sound of a calming lullaby. Children independently access a range of good quality toys and equipment and find their name on arrival. This contributes towards their strong sense of belonging. Overall, staff involve parents in children's learning. For example, staff give children a teddy bear to take home for the weekend. Children delight in showing family photographs and recalling the adventures of their time spent with the bear. Children have good opportunities to learn about their own safety. They know that the strategically placed cones indicate where it is safe to walk when it is icy. Furthermore, children play outdoors in the fresh air, eat healthy meals and particularly enjoy an active dance session. This contributes towards their health and well-being.

Outcomes for children are good

All children, including those in receipt of funding, make good or at least typical progress. All children are enthusiastic learners who exude confidence. For example, older children delight in being awarded the accolade of special helper at lunchtime. Children develop many skills needed in readiness for future learning and school. For example, they develop early writing skills. Children eagerly make marks in ice and flour, and older boys expertly recognise letters as they write their name. Younger children use rollers and water to make patterns on the wall outdoors.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY417433
Local authority	Oldham
Inspection number	10065386
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register
Day care type	Full day care
Age range of children	0 - 4
Total number of places	60
Number of children on roll	58
Name of registered person	Gordon, Pamela Jean
Registered person unique reference number	RP514810
Date of previous inspection	21 August 2015
Telephone number	0161 683 4899

Play Alma Mater registered in 2011. The nursery employs 12 members of childcare staff. Of these, one holds a recognised early years qualification at level 5, eight hold level 3 and two hold level 2. The nursery opens Monday to Friday, all year round. Sessions are from 7.30am until 6pm. The nursery provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

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