

Play Aloud Simon Balle

Simon Balle School, Mangrove Road, HERTFORD SG13 8AJ



Inspection date	14 February 2019
Previous inspection date	25 August 2016

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
	Previous inspection:	Good	2
Effectiveness of leadership and management		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment		Requires improvement	3
Personal development, behaviour and welfare		Requires improvement	3
Outcomes for children		Requires improvement	3

Summary of key findings for parents

This is a provision that requires improvement

- Children's behaviour is not always managed effectively. Not all staff consistently implement the behaviour management policy. This means that young children do not learn about appropriate ways to behave.
- The quality of teaching is variable. Staff do not consistently provide children with appropriate levels of challenge. This reduces opportunities for them to make good progress in their learning overall.
- Staff do not make the best use of key-person group times and times of transition, to fully promote and extend children's engagement.

It has the following strengths

- The new manager has implemented a lot of valuable changes, but more time is needed to be able to confirm a positive impact on outcomes for children. Staff attend regular supervision and appraisal meetings. This helps to identify useful training opportunities and supports their continuous professional development.
- Staff encourage children's communication and language development. For example, during story time, staff use open-ended questioning and repetition to support this.
- Children learn about their personal safety during day-to-day experiences. For example, during registration, children can explain why they need to listen to their name being called. They know staff need to know they are here in case there is an emergency. This promotes children's safety and awareness.
- Parents have regular opportunities to attend meetings with key staff. They discuss their children's development and they regularly contribute to children's learning journals with achievements from home.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

To meet the requirements of the early years foundation stage and Childcare Register the provider must:

	Due date
ensure that staff manage children's behaviour appropriately and consistently	28/03/2019
assess the individual needs, interests and stage of development of each child more effectively and use this information to plan appropriate, challenging and enjoyable experiences so that all children make good progress.	28/03/2019

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

- help staff to make the best possible use of key-person group times and times of transition, to fully promote and extend children's engagement.

Inspection activities

- The inspector completed a joint observation of an adult-led activity and evaluated this with the manager.
- The inspector spoke with a number of parents during the inspection and took account of their views.
- The inspector spoke with staff and children at appropriate times throughout the inspection.
- The inspector observed the quality of teaching during activities indoors and outdoors, and assessed the impact this has on children's learning.
- The inspector held a meeting with the manager and area manager. She looked at relevant documentation and reviewed evidence of the suitability of staff working in the setting.

Inspector
Jo Rowley

Inspection findings

Effectiveness of leadership and management requires improvement

There have been some recent changes to the setting's management team. However, the improvements that they are making have yet to be embedded so that they have a positive impact on outcomes for children. The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Staff are aware of the procedure to follow if they have concerns about children's welfare. Recruitment and induction procedures are robust. Staff carry out suitable risk assessments, review accidents and supervise children appropriately. Staff complete peer observations. These help staff to identify their strengths and areas for improvement, but more time is needed to be able to confirm a positive impact on their quality of teaching. Staff have suitable relationships with parents, and parents speak positively of the staff team and the changes made by the new manager. Staff support parents to extend their children's learning at home and they work well with other professionals. This supports children's care and learning experiences.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment requires improvement

Children do not make good enough progress. There are inconsistencies in staff teaching. Staff make observations of children and they track their progress, but some of the assessments they make are not accurate. This means that staff do not engage children in challenging activities and experiences that extend their learning and development. For example, during activities to support children's mathematical understanding, staff do not extend their learning. Young children participate in making their own dough. However, there are insufficient resources available to support this and staff are not fully prepared for the activity. This interrupts children's engagement. Despite this, children go on to enjoy a 'dough disco', which promotes their physical development.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare require improvement

Children's behaviour is not managed consistently. Some staff do not follow the setting's behaviour management policy when dealing with children's behaviour. This means young children do not learn about appropriate ways in which to behave. Children eat a range of balanced and nutritious meals. The manager takes into consideration children's dietary needs when planning these. Children and staff sit together to eat their meals. This promotes a positive social experience for all children. Children learn the importance of handwashing through daily routines. This supports their understanding of healthy lifestyles and promotes their independence. Staff support children's personal care needs and well-being appropriately. Children have daily opportunities for fresh air and exercise. They choose from a wide range of resources, including an interesting mud kitchen, which is a firm favourite.

Outcomes for children require improvement

Children are not yet making good enough progress towards the early learning goals. However, they do gain some of the basic skills they need in readiness for school or the next stage of their learning. Children develop their imaginative skills. They explore role-play activities such as a 'Chinese restaurant', with interest.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY493298
Local authority	Hertfordshire
Inspection number	10094441
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register, Voluntary Childcare Register
Day care type	Full day care
Age range of children	3 - 8
Total number of places	64
Number of children on roll	202
Name of registered person	Play Aloud Ltd
Registered person unique reference number	RP545792
Date of previous inspection	25 August 2016
Telephone number	07495942416

Play Aloud Simon Balle registered in 2015. The setting employs 13 members of childcare staff. Of these, nine hold an appropriate early years qualification at level 3 or above. The setting opens from Monday to Friday all year round. Sessions are from 7.30am until 6.30pm during term time and from 8am until 6pm during school holidays. The setting provides funded early education for three- and four-year-old children.

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