

# Inspection of Playology Beach School & Learning Studio

Unit 4, The Waterside, Seaham Harbour Marina, Seaham SR7 7EE

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Inspection date: 23 September 2022

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Outstanding</b>
The quality of education	<b>Outstanding</b>
Behaviour and attitudes	<b>Outstanding</b>
Personal development	<b>Outstanding</b>
Leadership and management	<b>Outstanding</b>
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not applicable

## **What is it like to attend this early years setting?**

### **The provision is outstanding**

Staff are deeply committed to helping all children to achieve the very best that they can. They celebrate children's natural capabilities when they begin to attend and have extremely high expectations for how every child can learn even more.

Children spend most of their time on the beach, where staff aim to involve them in, 'hands on, feet in' learning. Children benefit from a wide range of challenging and stimulating activities that are planned in great detail to precisely meet their learning needs. All children become absorbed in their play. Toddlers become engrossed when they make cakes from sand to cook in a pretend oven. Pre-school children show remarkable problem-solving skills. They work together with their friends to build a den from sticks, ropes and nets. Children show a desire to learn more. Staff help older children to use fact-finding books to identify creatures and objects that they find. Younger children discuss characters and ask questions during animated and exciting story sessions. They giggle and squeal with delight while staff read to them skilfully.

Staff pay close attention to children's individual character and preferences. Their personalised approach helps children to feel at ease and to form warm relationships with staff. They settle very quickly and show extremely high levels of self-esteem and contentment.

## **What does the early years setting do well and what does it need to do better?**

- The highly-qualified staff have plenty of experience and knowledge. This contributes to the highly effective educational programme, which aims to 'cultivate creativity' and 'ignite imagination'. Children are highly motivated. Their keen interest and deep involvement help them to benefit fully from staff's expert teaching, across all areas of learning.
- Staff use their in-depth knowledge of individual children's abilities and needs, to inform incisive, personalised plans for learning. Children's progress and achievements are remarkable. They swiftly and consistently build on what they know and can do. Many achieve levels of development beyond typical expectations for their age.
- Children take part in, 'reflection time' and draw pictures about what they have learned. They help staff to decide which activities they will do next, to help them to learn more. Staff bring children's thoughts and interests into plans for their learning. They celebrate children's ideas and display their achievements in the indoor learning studios.
- Staff make excellent use of opportunities to teach children even more. For example, birds and aircraft that pass in the sky lead to animated discussions filled with rich language. The impact is evident in children's excellent language

skills. They are fluent, articulate and have a wide and varied vocabulary. This prepares them extremely well for later learning.

- The manager has insightful knowledge about staff's strengths and interests. She takes account of these in sharply focused reviews and development plans. Staff are keen to build on their own, already exceptional, teaching skills. Their drive and passion contribute to their capacity to maintain and enhance the outstanding quality of education.
- Children's behaviour is exceptional. Staff give them plenty of time and space to understand and manage their feelings and frustrations. Older children learn to resolve their own conflicts. They explain that their friends' ideas are sometimes different to theirs. They listen to one another's suggestions and find ways to settle differences during play.
- All children, including younger children, develop an excellent understanding of how to keep themselves safe. They tell visitors that they must not go beyond the 'stop sticks'. They wait for staff to invite them in to the 'fire circle' to toast their corn-on-the-cob on the fire.
- Parents say children, 'fully immerse themselves and embrace nature', and leave with, 'eyes sparkling with imagination and creativity'. Staff inspire them to continue children's learning at home. Staff, parents and children work together on projects, such as a hat parade, aimed at teaching children to take care of the natural world. This approach helps to extend and reinforce children's learning.
- Staff say they want to prepare children for, 'any challenge life brings'. They help children to develop their confidence and character, and to value what makes them unique. Children share objects from home and teach their friends about celebrations that are important to them. Children are very self-assured and highly resilient.

## Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff prioritise children's safety. They have a secure knowledge of how to identify children at risk from harm or abuse. They know how to record and report concerns if they are concerned about a child's welfare. All staff fully understand and diligently follow a comprehensive range of stringent procedures to keep children safe in the setting. Detailed and dynamic risk assessments take account of children's needs and their understanding, as well as the changing nature of the learning environment. Highly vigilant staff are used effectively to ensure that children are closely supervised at all times.

## Setting details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	2590461
<b>Local authority</b>	Durham
<b>Inspection number</b>	10249156
<b>Type of provision</b>	Childcare on non-domestic premises
<b>Registers</b>	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register, Voluntary Childcare Register
<b>Day care type</b>	Full day care
<b>Age range of children at time of inspection</b>	2 to 11
<b>Total number of places</b>	20
<b>Number of children on roll</b>	33
<b>Name of registered person</b>	Playology Limited
<b>Registered person unique reference number</b>	2590460
<b>Telephone number</b>	07545181069
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	Not applicable

## Information about this early years setting

Playology Beach School & Learning Studio registered in 2020 and is situated at Seaham Harbour Marina. The provision operates Monday to Friday, all year round, except for bank holidays. During school term time, Playology pre-school programme operates from 8.30am until 4.30pm. During school holidays, children aged between four and 11 years are cared for between the hours of 9am and 3pm. There are currently seven childcare staff who work with the children. Of these, four hold qualified teacher status and one holds a relevant qualification at level 3. The setting provides funded early years education for children aged from three to five years.

## Information about this inspection

**Inspector**  
Clare Wilkins

## Inspection activities

- This was the first routine inspection the setting has received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the manager and staff and has taken that into account in her evaluation of the setting.
- The manager showed the inspector around the spaces accessed by the children. She explained how the setting is organised and talked about the curriculum.
- The inspector observed interactions between staff and children.
- The manager met with the inspector to discuss leadership and management matters. The inspector looked at relevant documents provided, including evidence of the suitability checks carried out on staff.
- The inspector completed a joint observation with the manager.
- The inspector spoke to staff and children at appropriate times during the inspection. She took account of the views of parents from written feedback, and spoke to one parent on the day of inspection.

We carried out this inspection 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.

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