

Inspection of Playaway Preschool

Cage Green CP School, Cage Green Road, Tonbridge, Kent TN10 4PT

Inspection date:

24 November 2022

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Requires improvement

Personal development

Requires improvement

Leadership and management

Requires improvement

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

Good

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision requires improvement

There have been some staffing issues since the last inspection. This has impacted on the quality of the provision. The provider has recently taken action to improve safeguarding arrangements, but there are inconsistencies in the quality of teaching. Children are generally happy and have fun as they explore resources and play with their friends. They form warm bonds with staff, approaching them readily for support or attention when needed. Overall, children behave well and understand the routines of the day. However, staff do not always consider the concentration abilities of the youngest children. For example, during story time, some children become distracted and unsettled, which disrupts the activity.

During the busy morning sessions, staff interaction with some children is limited, and they do not focus well on supporting children's communication skills. Language promotion is much better in the afternoons when there are fewer children present and staff have less demands on their time. Children who stay for the afternoon benefit from a lot of attention and engage in lively conversations.

Children gain good mathematical skills. They count confidently and use their developing knowledge to successfully play number games. Children love to spend time outside. They make full use of the exciting opportunities to use ride-on toys, to climb and to dig. This helps them to develop their coordination and muscle strength.

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

- The manager has recently worked with the staff team to strengthen safeguarding arrangements and has implemented several new procedures effectively. The manager's interactions with children are very positive. She successfully builds on their interests to extend their learning. For example, children were fascinated as she encouraged them to consider the leaves 'raining' down from the trees. The manager is currently focusing on working with staff to strengthen their individual teaching skills.
- The early years curriculum lacks challenge in some areas. Some activities, such as making items to take home for Christmas, have a great deal of adult direction. Although staff are successful in their aim to teach children to follow instructions, they do not encourage children to explore their own ideas. This limits children's creativity. In addition, support for children's communication and language is inconsistent. However, the arrangements to teach mathematics and to promote children's physical development are much more successful.
- Staff encourage children to be independent in their toileting. They also include them well in tidying up, helping to take responsibility for their play environment. However, at other times, staff are too quick to intervene to complete tasks that

are within children's capabilities. For example, children routinely approach staff with their coats without attempting to put them on themselves. Staff automatically provide support without recognising the opportunity to support children to master this skill. In addition, the high level of direction in adult-led activities does not encourage children to become independent learners.

- Overall, staff manage the behaviour of older children effectively, giving them gentle reminders when needed. For example, children listen and comply when reminded to walk rather than run indoors. The arrangements to help younger children learn what is expected of them are less effective. During the daily routine, some staff physically manoeuvre the youngest children to different areas to join in activities without explanation. This leads to children becoming frustrated, and staff do not have a confident knowledge of how to respond in these situations.
- Partnerships with parents are very positive. Parents report that their children are keen to attend each day and are making progress. Children benefit from observing the friendly interaction between the staff and their parents. This supports them to feel secure and to develop confidence. There are appropriate arrangements in place to work with other professionals to meet the needs of individual children, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- Staff promote healthy eating at snack and mealtimes. They provide a selection of fruit for children during the morning and cut this into small pieces to minimise the risk of choking. Staff plan activities to help children to learn which foods are healthy and which should be eaten in moderation. They also encourage children to eat the healthiest items from their lunches first.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The manager and staff team have developed their knowledge of safeguarding issues. They confidently discuss the potential signs that may indicate a child is at risk of harm, including the risks posed by exposure to extreme views and beliefs. There are clear, up-to-date procedures to refer any concerns about the welfare of a child, and these are understood by staff. There are also secure and appropriate arrangements to respond to any allegations about staff.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- review and improve the planning and implementation of educational programmes, particularly in relation to communication and language and creative development
- provide more consistent support for children to develop independence in their

self-care and learning

- support staff to develop a more secure understanding of expectations for children's behaviour and to use consistently positive methods to manage behaviour.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY557921
Local authority	Kent
Inspection number	10262068
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register
Day care type	Sessional day care
Age range of children at time of inspection	2 to 4
Total number of places	30
Number of children on roll	30
Name of registered person	Barnes, Marian Dawn
Registered person unique reference number	RP557920
Telephone number	07833132302
Date of previous inspection	15 October 2021

Information about this early years setting

Playaway Preschool registered in 2018 and is located in Tonbridge, Kent. The setting is open Monday and Friday, from 9am until 2pm; Tuesday and Thursday, from 9am to 3pm; and Wednesday, from 9am to midday, during term time only. The pre-school receives funding to provide free early education for children aged two, three and four years. There are five members of staff, of whom two hold qualifications at level 3 and two are qualified at level 2.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Liz Caluori

Inspection activities

- This was the first routine inspection the provider received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the provider and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the provider.
- We carried out this inspection as a result of a risk assessment, following information we received about the provider.
- The manager showed the inspector all areas of the nursery and discussed the educational programmes in place.
- The inspector observed the interactions of staff and children and the impact these were having on children's learning.
- The manager and inspector completed a joint observation of an activity.
- The inspector spoke with staff and children at appropriate times during the inspection.
- The views of parents were sought as they arrived to collect their children.
- The inspector scrutinised a selection of relevant documentation.

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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