

# Inspection of Playhouse Preschool

Allington Community Association, Castle Road, Maidstone, Kent ME16 0PZ

---

Inspection date: 24 January 2023

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Good</b>
------------------------------	-------------

---

The quality of education	<b>Good</b>
--------------------------	-------------

Behaviour and attitudes	<b>Good</b>
-------------------------	-------------

Personal development	<b>Good</b>
----------------------	-------------

Leadership and management	<b>Good</b>
---------------------------	-------------

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good
--	------

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

### **The provision is good**

Children are happy and confident as they arrive at the setting. They separate from parents extremely well and are greeted by the friendly manager who uses signs to say good morning. Staff act as positive role models as they have developed warm, friendly relationships with children and know them very well. This helps children to feel secure and settled.

Children benefit from reassurance from staff if they become upset. For example, they look at photographs of themselves and their families. This helps them to settle, and also promotes discussion about different types of families, particularly children with English as an additional language. Children begin to learn about how they are different and similar to each other.

Children are learning to share and take turns. Staff have high expectations for all children, using praise and encouragement regularly to promote positive behaviour. On the rare occasion when children display unwanted behaviours, staff respond quickly, provide clear explanations and remind them of the rules, such as 'kind hands'. This helps children to develop their understanding of what is expected of them.

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

- Staff promote children's communication and language skills very well. Staff morale is high. They create a positive atmosphere, which engages children in dialogue through asking them questions and encouraging them to think for themselves. Staff also use strategies, such as sign language and picture cards, to ensure that children with limited speech can effectively communicate their needs. For example, staff use a visual timetable to support children with English as an additional language to understand what is coming next. This helps build on children's self-esteem and confidence.
- Staff actively encourage children to develop their independence. For example, children wash their hands and put on their coats by themselves. Resources are easily accessible to children, allowing them to make their own choices during play. This gives children a sense of responsibility and encourages them to develop positive attitudes towards their learning.
- Staff know the children very well. Through regular discussions, they talk about children's interests and how to create new learning experiences for them. The manager supports staff in developing their practice by identifying any specific areas for training. Staff supervise children closely during lunchtime, however, they do not use these times as effectively as possible to promote opportunities to develop relevant knowledge and skills.
- Staff support children to develop their understanding of the world. For example,

children re-enact a shopping experience, as they use baskets and make marks to write shopping lists. Staff question children about different types of food and extend this by talking about types of food animals like to eat. They introduce new ideas to children's conversation; however, they are not fully effective at helping children to extend their thoughts and ideas.

- Staff provide opportunities for children to develop healthy lifestyles. Children enjoy a variety of healthy snacks, such as apples and cheese. They have regular access to fresh air and exercise. Children build on their physical strength and coordination as they run and go for walks. Staff teach children about how to keep themselves safe. For example, they talk about road safety and rules for approaching other walkers.
- Parents have very good relationships with the manager and staff. They make comments about the level of support they receive from the 'caring, attentive staff' and about the 'excellent communication'. Parents love how happy their children are and the level of progress they have made since attending.
- The manager is the designated special educational needs and/or disabilities coordinator. She works closely with the staff team and external agencies, such as specialist teachers, to ensure children who may have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) receive the support they need. Children with SEND are making good progress in their development.

## Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The designated safeguarding lead completes regular training to ensure she is kept up to date with safeguarding legislation. Staff have sound safeguarding knowledge, and understand how to respond to potential concerns. For example, they know the signs and symptoms of abuse. The manager understands her legal duty to protect children from harm and knows what to do if she was concerned about a child. She has robust recruitment procedures in place and knows who to contact if an allegation was made about a member of staff. Staff complete risk assessments to ensure the environment is suitable for children to use. Children are well supervised.

## What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- deploy staff more effectively during routine times, such as lunchtime, to enable them to develop children's knowledge and skills
- strengthen staff understanding of how to use opportunities, such as during conversation, to help children extend their thoughts and ideas.

## Setting details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	EY448617
<b>Local authority</b>	Kent
<b>Inspection number</b>	10263583
<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>	Sessional day care
<b>Age range of children at time of inspection</b>	2 to 4
<b>Total number of places</b>	40
<b>Number of children on roll</b>	54
<b>Name of registered person</b>	Preschool Playhouse (Kent) Ltd
<b>Registered person unique reference number</b>	RP531703
<b>Telephone number</b>	07761 697 295
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	5 May 2017

## Information about this early years setting

Playhouse Preschool registered in 2012 and is located in Maidstone, Kent. It operates from 9am to 3pm, Monday to Friday, term time only. The setting employs 13 members of staff. Of these, one has qualified teacher status, two hold a level 5 qualification, five staff have a level 3 qualification and one staff holds a level 2 qualification. The setting receives funding for free early education for children aged two, three and four years.

## Information about this inspection

### Inspector

Jasmine Nelson

## Inspection activities

- This was the first routine inspection the pre-school 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 setting.
- The manager joined the inspector on a learning walk and talked to the inspector about their curriculum and what they want their children to learn.
- The inspector spoke to children to find out about their time at the setting.
- The inspector observed the interactions between staff and children.
- The manager showed the inspector documentation to demonstrate the suitability of staff.

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.

If you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit [www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/](http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/), write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: [psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk)

This publication is available at <https://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231  
Textphone: 0161 618 8524  
E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
W: [www.gov.uk/ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/ofsted)

© Crown copyright 2023