

# Inspection of Playmates Pre-school

The Log Cabin, Whitelands Park, Sagecroft Road, Thatcham, Berkshire RG18 3FH

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Inspection date: 3 May 2023

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Good</b>
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The quality of education	<b>Good</b>
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Behaviour and attitudes	<b>Good</b>
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Personal development	<b>Good</b>
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Leadership and management	<b>Good</b>
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Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good
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## **What is it like to attend this early years setting?**

### **The provision is good**

Children confidently enter the pre-school and are quick to settle. Staff successfully put strategies into place to help those children who find it harder to separate from parents. Children happily engage in play and are safe and secure. They make friends and play well together. Children behave well and respect instructions from staff. Those with more challenging behaviour are closely monitored by the effective key-person system. Children know who their key person is and form a strong relationship with them. This helps to support children's personal, social and emotional development.

Staff recognise that children have been impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic and have planned for any gaps in children's development. For example, they identify that children's communication and language skills have been impacted by the pandemic. They focus on providing opportunities for children to play and explore, while developing their speech and language. Children have many opportunities to socialise with each other. For example, in the soft-play area, children discuss how to build a tower together. Staff have also planned the environment with communication and language in mind. For instance, they have a reading area outside, which has increased its use, and small-world play to support imagination and conversations. Staff implement many other interventions to further support the development of communication and language. All children make good progress, including children who speak English as an additional language and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND).

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

- Staff identify children's physical development as a focus. They implement strategies to help support this. Children enjoy daily physical play and fresh air and exercise. For example, they eagerly access the large outside space. Children have the use of many resources to help encourage larger physical movement, such as ride-on cars, a slide and a hill to run down. This helps to build up their stamina, strength and coordination.
- Most children begin to develop good levels of independence. For example, they confidently self-register upon entering the pre-school and wash their own hands before mealtimes. However, occasionally, some staff do things for children which they could do themselves. For instance, staff do not consistently encourage all children to have a go at wiping their own noses.
- Staff promote healthy eating throughout the pre-school. Children know the lunchtime routine well and make healthy choices. Staff communicate with parents about healthy eating and suggest items to include in the children's lunch boxes. Staff support those children who are fussy eaters. For example, they eat their lunch with the children to spark discussions about different foods. This has

led to some children trying new foods.

- Staff have high expectations for behaviour. They are quick to remind children of the rules and boundaries, for example to sit and listen at group times. Children show respect for staff and their peers and act upon instructions. Staff believe this is good preparation for starting school and gets children used to routine.
- Staff offer an inclusive environment that meets the needs of all children. This includes children with SEND and those who speak English as an additional language. Staff ensure that the pre-school meets the individual needs of the range of children who attend. This ensures that every child is fully supported and included in all areas of the pre-school.
- Staff feel fully supported by the manager. They say how they feel they can approach her at any time. Staff attend regular meetings as a team and on a one-to-one basis with the manager. This allows for discussions, such as about key children, safeguarding concerns and planning ideas. Staff always have access to training, for example online. The manager suggests face-to-face training courses when needed. Staff use every opportunity to extend their knowledge and personal development further.
- Parents are very complimentary about staff. They say staff are welcoming, approachable and happy. Parents explain how their children have made good progress in their development. They say that their children have learned to settle well and are confident learners. Parents believe that staff give regular feedback about their children's progress. They feel they can approach staff at any time with a question or query.

## Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff have a confident knowledge of their role in safeguarding children and child protection. They can confidently identify the signs of abuse and neglect. Staff explain the process involved in escalating concerns about an adult or a child. They clearly identify who the designated safeguarding lead is and know where to access further safeguarding information and contact details. The manager has a robust recruitment process in place and has attended safer recruitment training. Staff strive to ensure children are in a safe and secure environment.

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

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

- provide more opportunities for children to complete simple tasks for themselves, to extend their independence skills even further.

## Setting details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	EY395935
<b>Local authority</b>	West Berkshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	10285369
<b>Type of provision</b>	Childcare on non-domestic premises
<b>Registers</b>	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register
<b>Day care type</b>	Full day care
<b>Age range of children at time of inspection</b>	2 to 4
<b>Total number of places</b>	70
<b>Number of children on roll</b>	70
<b>Name of registered person</b>	Playmates Preschool Committee
<b>Registered person unique reference number</b>	RP906812
<b>Telephone number</b>	07770518857
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	4 October 2017

## Information about this early years setting

Playmates Pre-school registered in 2009. It operates from within the school grounds of Whitelands Park School in Thatcham, Berkshire. The pre-school is open weekdays from 9am to 3pm during term time. It receives funding to provide free early education for children aged two, three and four years. The pre-school employs 10 staff to work directly with the children. Of these, nine members of staff have a relevant early years qualification.

## Information about this inspection

### Inspector

Lynne Murray

## 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 provider.
- 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.
- Children spoke to the inspector during the inspection.
- The inspector talked to staff at appropriate times during the inspection and took account of their views.
- The inspector carried out a joint observation of a group activity with the manager.
- The inspector spoke to several parents during the inspection and took account of their views.
- 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.

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