

Inspection of Play A Way Day Nursery

37 Stuart Road, Gillingham, Kent ME7 4AD

Inspection date: 13 June 2023

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not applicable

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is good

Children are met by familiar and friendly staff who know them well. They come in excited to see their friends and explore the toys and resources set out for them. Children settle well and are safe. Staff develop an attractive environment, which is well planned based on children's interests. For example, children enjoy exploring a water tray outside, filling and pouring with different utensils. This supports children's developing communication and mathematical skills as children talk about capacity, weight and measurement. Staff praise and encourage children, and they behave well. They hold their friends' hands outside and pass them fruits at snack time. Staff have high expectations for children. They encourage children to be respectful and kind. Where children need additional support, staff are calm and patient in their approach.

Children know the routines of the setting well. They wash their hands and talk about keeping themselves safe. For example, they cut fruit safely when making their own fruit kebabs. Children demonstrate positive attitudes to their learning. They wait patiently for their turn when lining up for lunch. Staff plan a motivating and interesting curriculum based on children's next steps and gaps in learning. For example, children develop a love for reading, such as when they share books and sing rhymes with adults in the outdoor book den.

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

- Parents talk highly of the friendly and caring staff. They say that their children enjoy attending and have made good progress in their speaking, confidence, and personal and social skills. They say that they get ideas to help their children at home, such as with toilet training. However, the provider has not fully considered how to ensure that all parents can be more involved in their children's learning at the setting.
- Leaders and managers reflect on practice well and they are proactive in making improvements. For example, they have developed the environment to provide children with a range of opportunities in different aspects of learning. They share resources with their other registered settings to increase variety for children, which helps to widen their experiences. They have ambitious plans for the future of the setting, such as further developing areas for children to role play.
- Staff's interactions with children are positive. Staff are good role models. They support children's understanding of healthy eating, and talk about what is in their lunch boxes. Children hold thoughtful conversations with staff about which fruits are the healthiest. Babies delight in exploring toys in the calm and nurturing environment. New babies settle immediately with their key person.
- Staff say that they enjoy working at the setting. They feel supported and have

access to a wide range of training. They appreciate the opportunities that they have to work with a variety of colleagues and in different rooms. However, at times, staff are not always aware of the expectations of them during large-group times. This impacts on older children's engagement and focus.

- Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are well supported. Staff use additional funding effectively to promote their physical skills. For example, children explore climbing equipment, such as a wooden bridge and beams, which staff purchased to develop their core strength, balance and coordination.
- Staff aim to develop children's independence and confidence. However, opportunities for children to do things for themselves are not always consistent. For example, younger children are taught skills, such as feeding themselves with spoons. However, staff are quick to complete tasks for older children, which they are capable of doing themselves, such as opening their lunches, pouring their drinks and serving their food. This impacts on older children learning to do things for themselves.
- Staff encourage children's thinking skills. For instance, children spend a long time exploring insects with magnifying glasses. They talk about the differences between the grasshopper that they found and other insects. They talk about the different sounds that the grasshopper makes. Staff ask questions and give children time to think about their answers. This supports their confidence.
- Leaders and managers have developed effective partnerships within the local community. They encourage links with local schools and colleges, offering work experience and placement opportunities. They seek advice and support from the local authority to support practice and provision for children with SEND. They encourage staff to undertake further qualifications to support their knowledge and skills. They are committed to providing good-quality care and education.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff know how to identify signs and symptoms of abuse. They know where to go for information, advice and support. They have a secure understanding of the processes to follow if they have a concern about a colleague, leader or manager. The setting is safe and secure. Checks are undertaken and recorded on sleeping children, including babies. There are appropriate systems in place for the recruitment, vetting and checking of the ongoing suitability of staff. Owners and managers have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities for staff and children's safety and well-being.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- enhance opportunities for parents to be more involved in their children's learning
- ensure that all staff know the expectations for large-group activities so that they can support all children to be fully engaged
- provide more-consistent opportunities for older children to do things for themselves to promote their independence.

Setting details

Unique reference number	2687131
Local authority	Medway
Inspection number	10299092
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 at time of inspection	0 to 4
Total number of places	42
Number of children on roll	68
Name of registered person	Play A Way Nurseries Limited
Registered person unique reference number	RP556707
Telephone number	07961143106
Date of previous inspection	Not applicable

Information about this early years setting

Play A Way Day Nursery registered in 2022. It is part of a chain that owns three other nurseries. It is based in Gillingham, Medway. It provides care from 7am until 6pm, Monday to Friday, all year round. The nursery receives funding for two-, three- and four-year-old children. There are 14 members of staff, of whom 11 hold relevant childcare qualifications between level 2 and 3.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Victoria Salisbury

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 and inspector completed a learning walk together of all areas of the nursery and discussed the early years curriculum.
- The inspector talked to staff at appropriate times during the inspection and took account of their views.
- The inspector spoke with the nominated individual/registered individual about the leadership and management of the setting.
- The inspector observed the quality of education being provided indoors and outdoors, and assessed the impact that this was having on children's learning.
- The inspector carried out a joint observation of a communication and language activity with the manager.
- The inspector spoke to several parents during the inspection and took account of their views.
- The inspector looked at relevant documentation and reviewed evidence of the suitability of staff working in the nursery.

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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