

Inspection of The Play Pit

Holly Lodge, 9 Brownlow Road, Felixstowe IP11 7EX

Inspection date: 3 July 2023

Overall effectiveness	Good
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The quality of education	Good
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Behaviour and attitudes	Good
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Personal development	Good
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Leadership and management	Good
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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 are warmly greeted by welcoming staff, and as a result they separate from their parents with ease. They happily enter the nursery and are excited when they see their friends. Parents comment that the nursery feels very homely. Staff are very nurturing towards the children, offering lots of cuddles throughout the day. Children feel safe and secure, as staff support the whole family and create close relationships with them.

Children are separated into age groups with babies upstairs and older children downstairs. The day is timetabled, so that each group has time in the garden, both morning and afternoon. Children thrive outside and they love to explore the different areas of the garden. Staff have carefully considered the space so that children really engage and focus on their play. They have many opportunities to develop their physical skills. Children enjoy sweeping the soil and use a range of tools in the sand and mud kitchen. They thoroughly enjoy the water play, giggling as they splash with their hands.

Children are confident and behave well. When they struggle to regulate their emotions, they are well supported by staff who help the children take turns. Children form close friendships with each other. They are very supportive of children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND).

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

- Staff know the children well. They use assessments to determine what children need to develop further, and plan resources and activities to support them. Staff regularly share children's assessments with parents so that their views can be added. They have high aspirations for children, particularly those with SEND.
- The provision for children with SEND is a particular strength of the nursery. They work closely with professionals and follow their guidance when setting targets for children's development. Staff are consistent in the way they implement the curriculum. This evidently works well for the children at the nursery as they make good progress. Transitions to school are highly effective. Teachers are invited to visit the children at nursery, giving staff the opportunity to explain the individual children's needs.
- The routines of the day, however, do not always benefit the older children's learning. Children are expected to sit for a long period of time during circle time, and their play is often interrupted to tidy up and move rooms or go outside. These interruptions hinder children's opportunities to fully engage in purposeful play.
- Staff focus on developing children's language and communication. Babies babble and staff are quick to respond to help them understand how conversations work.

Stories and singing are included everyday. Staff help children to consolidate their learning as they revisit things they have learned. For example, when a child draws a caterpillar in a cocoon, staff ask her what it is called, and she is supported to recall the correct name for it.

- There are opportunities in each area for children to make marks with a range of resources. Children engage well with imaginary play and like to act out familiar events. Staff encourage children to work together. Mealtimes are sociable times. Staff and children eat together so staff can model good manners.
- Staff create many opportunities for children to be independent. They involve children in planting fruit and vegetables and show them how to care for them. Children independently fill their watering cans to water the plants. Children enjoy growing sunflowers and use their mathematical knowledge to compare their heights. Staff challenge children to explain their statements, testing their understanding. For example, a staff member asks a child how he knows that his sunflower is the tallest. The child very confidently says 'it's the highest one.'
- The managers support their staff's well-being, which has a positive impact on their work with the children. Staff receive regular supervision, allowing them to discuss what is working well and any areas they wish to enhance further. They are encouraged to access training opportunities. Managers have good systems to monitor staff attendance of mandatory courses. Managers recognise the areas they want to develop, and are proactive in their approach to drive change.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff are highly effective at recognising the signs of potential abuse. All staff have accessed training. The nursery has good systems in place to record and report any concerns. The flowcharts and safeguarding information is displayed for staff in several places in the nursery for quick reference. Staff are clear about the procedure if they have concerns about an adult's conduct. Staff know about wider safeguarding concerns, such as radicalisation, and are vigilant in reporting any concerns to the lead practitioners. Managers are trained in safer recruitment and follow set procedures to ensure that staff working with children are remain suitable.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- revise and improve the routines of the day to ensure that children are fully engaged in their learning at all times.

Setting details

Unique reference number	251782
Local authority	Suffolk
Inspection number	10295294
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	1 to 4
Total number of places	52
Number of children on roll	77
Name of registered person	The Play Pit
Registered person unique reference number	RP519111
Telephone number	01394 276005
Date of previous inspection	19 December 2017

Information about this early years setting

The Play Pit registered in 1990. The nursery employs 21 members of childcare staff. Of these, 16 hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 2 and above. The nursery opens from Monday to Friday, all year round. Sessions are from 8am until 5.30pm. A breakfast and after-school club is also offered during school term times, with sessions from 8am until 8.30am and 3.10pm until 5.30pm. A holiday club operates from 8am until 5.30pm during the school holidays. The nursery provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector
Emily Holt

Inspection activities

- This was the first routine inspection the nursery has 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 provision.
- The provider and the inspector completed a learning walk together and discussed the curriculum and what it is that they want their children to learn.
- 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 provider and the inspector carried out a joint observation together.
- Parents shared their views of the setting with the inspector.
- The inspector spoke to children during the inspection.
- 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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