



Office for Standards  
in Education

## COMBINED INSPECTION REPORT

URN 129383

DfES Number: 582641

### INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date 25/02/2004  
Inspector Name Gillian Charlesworth

### SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type Full Day Care  
Setting Name Playplus Kindergarten  
Setting Address Kingsway  
London Road  
Hemel Hempstead  
Hertfordshire  
HP1 2RQ

### REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name Playplus Kindergarten 2461923

### ORGANISATION DETAILS

Name Playplus Kindergarten  
Address La-Mesa  
Lauries Close, Bourne End  
Hemel Hempstead  
Hertfordshire  
HP1 2RS

## ABOUT THE INSPECTION

The purpose of this inspection is to assure government, parents and the public of the quality and standard of day care in accordance with the National Standards for Under Eights Day Care and Childminding; and that the nursery education for funded three and four year old children is of an acceptable quality. Inspection of nursery education also identifies strengths and weaknesses so that providers can improve the quality of educational provision and help children to achieve the early learning goals (elgs) by the end of the Foundation Stage. This inspection report must be made available to all parents.

If the setting has been inspected previously, an action plan will have been drawn up to tackle issues identified. This inspection, therefore, must also assess what progress has been made in the implementation of this plan.

### Information about the setting

Playplus Kindergarden was registered at the Kingsway site in 1999 and is run by Mrs Tammy Clark. It is situated in Bourne End close to the A41 bypass. There are two other Playplus sites, one in Bourne End accommodating babies and a second, smaller unit, in Woodhall Farm, accommodating similar ages to the Kingsway site. A sandwich board is used to identify the nursery from the main road and there is ample car-parking available at the front of the premises.

It operates from a bungalow with separate single-storey extension and heated summerhouse. Older children from 2 years have a base room within the bungalow whilst the under 2's base room is across the courtyard in the single story extension. The nursery focuses on family groupings whereby children of mixed ages can play together for a large part of the day. An extensive, secure garden is equipped with mobile and non-mobile apparatus and accommodates a pet guinea pig. The Nursery promote use of terry nappies in partnership with parents. Meals are provided by the parents as part of the nursery's policy.

There are currently 64 children aged from one to five years on the role. This includes five funded 3 year olds and two funded 4 year olds. Children attend for a variety of sessions. There are no children currently attending with Special Needs or Disabilities, or with English as a second language.

The group opens five days a week all year round excluding one week at Christmas and one week at Easter. Opening times are between 08:00 until 18:00.

The principle Mrs Tammy Clark is a qualified teacher and oversees the management of the nursery. The deputy/manager is Sarah Pimm who is working towards a level 4 qualification. 22 part-time/full-time staff work with the children, 9 of whom have early years qualifications to NVQ level 2 or 3. 5 staff are currently working toward a recognised early years qualification. Emergency cover is provided by additional familiar staff and staff seconded from the two other sites.

### **How good is the Day Care?**

Playplus Kindergarden provides satisfactory care for children.

It is well staffed by committed practitioners. Training, development and teamworking is prioritised. Staff are aware of their roles and responsibilities although management could give higher priority to Ofsted's procedures and effectiveness of some systems. The indoor environment is clean, well-maintained and homely; arranged into designated areas for the children to freely select activities. There is a good range of resources both inside and outside. A secure, extensive garden provides numerous opportunities outdoors. The operational plan is supported by a familiar routine which, at times, dominates over the children's individual needs. A review and regular monitoring would enhance the care and learning of all children, especially the under 2's, and make best use of staffing and the limited space available.

Staff and management show genuine interest in the children. They are good role models and create an environment that encourages good behaviour. They are friendly and approachable and have developed good relationships with the children. There is some planning of activities. Timetabled structured learning is supported by free play with children of mixed ages who can select from the good range of resources which are mostly at low-level and accessible. Information on children's records is limited although these are currently being developed.

Staff promote health and hygiene effectively through bespoke procedures and children's routines. Child protection procedures work in practice and most reasonable precautions have been taken to promote safety within the setting.

Staff have established professional, friendly relationships with parents. There are systems for regular exchange of nursery information and more information on children's progress and the daily routine would complement this, especially for under 2's. Documentation is comprehensive.

### **What has improved since the last inspection?**

There were no actions outstanding from the previous inspection. However, the nursery have appointed a new Manager/deputy, M/s Sarah Pimm who is working towards a level 4 qualification through a distance learning degree course.

### **What is being done well?**

- Staff are friendly, approachable and good role models thus promoting positive behaviour. They have high expectations of the children's behaviour and help children find solutions to conflict during their play activities, encouraging them to take turns and share. They talk and listen to the children and value their contributions through constant praise and encouragement.
- Staff work well as a team. They are responsive, interested and enjoy interacting with the children which helps children to become confident and involved in their chosen activities. There is a clear routine which older

children are familiar with and respond well to. Structured sessions are complimented by opportunities for free play with children of mixed ages, focussing on choice, social interaction and enabling children to learn from one another.

- The environment is warm and welcoming and is set out into designated areas where children can freely choose from a good variety of accessible resources. A creative area is always available and includes water, painting and a messy table top activity. The role play and book area are cosy and inviting and a large family room has been made warm and comfortable with sofa for children to relax and opportunities for quiet table top and floor activities. The extensive garden is well equipped with mobile and fixed apparatus and children can develop their physical skills by climbing rope ladders and exploring.
- Children's awareness of good hygiene practices is developed through daily routines which staff actively promote. Procedures and documentation have been devised to ensure that children's medical needs are met and include a bespoke visual system for staff to easily identify any specific needs.

#### What needs to be improved?

- the operational plan
- the registration system
- safety and supervision arrangements
- arrangements for children under 2 year olds
- awareness of conditions of registration regarding significant changes.

#### Outcome of the inspection

Satisfactory

#### CONDITIONS OF REGISTRATION

*All registered persons must comply with all conditions of registration included on his/her certificate of registration.*

*As a result of this inspection conditions of registration have been imposed / varied / removed and a new certificate of registration will be issued.*

#### WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE NEXT?

#### The Registered Person must take the following actions by the date shown

Std	Action	Date
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1	Ensure that Ofsted, as the regulator, is informed of significant changes at the earliest opportunity (this refers to a significant change to premises).	26/02/2004
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**The Registered Person should have regard to the following recommendations by the time of the next inspection**

Std	Recommendation
2	Review and monitor the operational plan, which is available to parents, to ensure that the children's needs are fully met. This refers to staff deployment at meal and sleeptimes; effective use of the space available and groupings at meal and circle times; arrangements for breakfast; maintaining and monitoring room temperatures and management of children's records.
2	Maintain an accurate system for registering children and staff on a daily basis showing hours of attendance. The name, address and date of birth of each child who is looked after on the premises should be recorded.
3	Ensure that criteria for Annex A, Babies/Children Under 2, is met including the provision of a consistent member of staff for each child; clear planning of activities and exchange of information with parents.
6	Ensure that the system to identify and minimise risks includes all areas of the nursery and is effective on a daily basis. This refers to blind cords; supervision at meal and sleep times; chemical sprays; access to the kitchen and the washing line.

## INSPECTION OF THE NURSERY EDUCATION PROVISION FOR FUNDED THREE AND FOUR YEAR OLDS.

### How effective is the nursery education?

The provision for nursery education at Playplus Kindergarten, Kingsway is good. It enables children to make generally good progress towards the early learning goals within all six areas of learning.

The quality of teaching is generally good. Staff develop good relationships with the children and provide valuable support, they have high expectations of children's behaviour and give frequent praise and encouragement. They interact effectively and calmly at the children's level. Staff provide an inviting environment where children can learn through a range of practical activities, although not all resources are easily accessible for the older children. Short term planning is limited and does not sufficiently cover all six areas of learning. Children's assessments are not fully utilised to enable staff to plan the next steps in the children's learning programme.

Leadership and management is generally good. The principal is committed to the ongoing improvement of the setting through regular staff meetings. She has addressed the key issue from the last inspection, however, she has acknowledged that some aspects, regarding children's assessments still remain. The group continually update their skills and benefit from in house training. Staff surveys are used effectively for staff members to evaluate their practice and the provision.

Partnership with parents and carers is generally good. Parents are provided with informative newsletters and a notice board and feel staff are very approachable. Parents have the opportunities to discuss their child's well being informally as they arrive and leave, or at open evenings. However, parents have expressed they would appreciate further information on their child's learning and progress.

### What is being done well?

- Staff converse with children and interact at their level at all times. Staff participate within the children's self-chosen activities and encourage their imaginations within their role-play.
- Children's communication, language and literacy is promoted effectively. Children are learning how to handle books appropriately, thus staff promote their enjoyment of books and children regularly access books independently. A comfortable and inviting book corner is well resourced.
- Children are relaxed and settled, they are happy to arrive in the mornings and fully engage themselves with the activities and resources available to them. They are developing good social skills and work co-operatively with their peers.
- Staff plan an exciting theme based curriculum that captures the children's interests and imagination.

**What needs to be improved?**

- procedures of observation and assessment for use in planning, to enable children to extend their progress towards the early learning goals
- staff's planning of activities to ensure all six areas of learning are fully exploited on a regular basis. Ensure plans highlight learning intentions and consider differentiation.
- opportunities to involve parents in their child's learning and review the information provided for parents.

**What has improved since the last inspection?**

The kindergarten has made generally good progress since the last inspection. An assessment system which includes children's records that cover all six areas of learning was highlighted, to be used effectively to inform planning. Staff now have access to individual children's assessment records which include all six areas of learning in great detail, however, this system still needs to be reviewed to ensure the information gathered is used effectively to inform future planning of activities.

## SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

### PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Children are fully engaged and focused within activities. Children behave well, they respect adult role models and are pro-active at tidy up time. They have developed strong relationships with staff and work alongside their peers well. However, there are missed opportunities to develop older children's independence during daily routines.

### COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement: Generally Good

Children are good communicators, they listen to stories with enjoyment and can sing many songs from memory. Children have developed a positive approach to reading, they access books independently and handle them with care. Older children are developing good writing skills, writing their name independently and with adult support writing recognisable letters to create a simple sentence. However, there are missed opportunities for children to use early writing, during their role-play.

### MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Children enjoy singing number songs and joining in practical activities, such as singing 10 golden daffodils. This is used well to reinforce early ideas of subtraction. Children can recognise objects which are a pair and use positional language to place a bean bag behind, under and on top of an object. Weekly plans encompass working with certain numerals, a selection of numbers are adopted, thus reinforcing the children's understanding.

### KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement: Generally Good

Ongoing topics of countries from around the world are utilised well, to stimulate the children's interest. Children enjoy using their senses to explore materials in practical activities such as sand and water. However, limited opportunities are available for the older children to independently access ICT resources. They have regular opportunities to utilise construction equipment and materials to join and build.

### PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Children move confidently around their environment. Children access wheeled toys independently, can climb a rope ladder with increasing control and use tools effectively to model play dough. A spacious garden enables a variety of equipment to be set out. However, plans do not show how physical development is incorporated, in particular how older children's skills are being challenged and developed.

<b>CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT</b>	
Judgement:	Generally Good
Children have opportunities to explore colour, texture and form through free painting, play dough, sand and water. Regular opportunities are available for children to extend their imagination through themed role play inside and outside. Children enjoy music sessions and are enthusiastic to join in with familiar songs and rhymes.	

<b>Children's spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development is fostered appropriately.</b>
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## **OUTCOME OF THE INSPECTION**

The provision is acceptable and is of good quality overall. Children are making generally good progress towards the early learning goals. The next inspection will take place in three to four years time.

## **WHAT THE SETTING NEEDS TO DO NEXT: THE KEY ISSUES**

- develop the use of childrens' observations and assessment records for use in planning, to enable children to extend their progress towards the early leaning goals
- improve staff's planning of the curriculum to ensure all six areas of learning are fully exploited on a weekly basis. Ensure plans highlight learning intensions and consider differentiation
- increase opportunities for parents to be actively involved in their child's learning and review the information provided for parents with regards to their child's progress and achievements.

*The provider must draw up an action plan within 40 working days of receipt of this report showing how the key issues detailed above will be addressed. The action plan must be made available to all parents and to the Local Authority if required. An evaluation of the action taken will form part of the next inspection of funded nursery education.*

## **SUMMARY OF NATIONAL STANDARDS**

### **STANDARD 1 - SUITABLE PERSON**

*Adults providing day care, looking after children or having unsupervised access to them are suitable to do so.*

### **STANDARD 2 - ORGANISATION**

*The registered person meets required adult: child ratios, ensures that training and qualifications requirements are met and organises space and resources to meet the children's needs effectively.*

### **STANDARD 3 - CARE, LEARNING AND PLAY**

*The registered person meets children's individual needs and promotes their welfare. They plan and provide activities and play opportunities to develop children's emotional, physical, social and intellectual capabilities.*

### **STANDARD 4 - PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT**

*The premises are safe, secure and suitable for their purpose. They provide adequate space in an appropriate location, are welcoming to children and offer access to the necessary facilities for a range of activities which promote their development.*

### **STANDARD 5 - EQUIPMENT**

*Furniture, equipment and toys are provided which are appropriate for their purpose and help to create an accessible and stimulating environment. They are of suitable design and condition, well maintained and conform to safety standards.*

### **STANDARD 6 - SAFETY**

*The registered person takes positive steps to promote safety within the setting and on outings and ensures proper precautions are taken to prevent accidents.*

### **STANDARD 7 - HEALTH**

*The registered person promotes the good health of children and takes positive steps to prevent the spread of infection and appropriate measures when they are ill.*

### **STANDARD 8 - FOOD AND DRINK**

*Children are provided with regular drinks and food in adequate quantities for their needs. Food and drink is properly prepared, nutritious and complies with dietary and religious requirements.*

### **STANDARD 9 - EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES**

*The registered person and staff actively promote equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice for all children.*

### **STANDARD 10 - SPECIAL NEEDS (INCLUDING SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITIES)**

*The registered person is aware that some children may have special needs and is*

*proactive in ensuring that appropriate action can be taken when such a child is identified or admitted to the provision. Steps are taken to promote the welfare and development of the child within the setting in partnership with the parents and other relevant parties.*

#### **STANDARD 11 - BEHAVIOUR**

*Adults caring for children in the provision are able to manage a wide range of children's behaviour in a way which promotes their welfare and development.*

#### **STANDARD 12 - WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS AND CARERS**

*The registered person and staff work in partnership with parents and to meet the needs of the children, both individually and as a group. Information is shared.*

#### **STANDARD 13 - CHILD PROTECTION**

*The registered person complies with local child protection procedures approved by the Area Child Protection Committee and ensures that all adults working and looking after children in the provision are able to put the procedures into practice.*

#### **STANDARD 14 - DOCUMENTATION**

*Records, policies and procedures which are required for the efficient and safe management of the provision, or to promote the welfare, care and learning of children are maintained. Records about individual children are shared with the child's parent.*