

Playplus Kindergarten

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number 129383
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Inspector Sheila Harrison

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Type of setting Childcare on non-domestic premises

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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under Sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006 on the quality and standards of the registered early years provision. 'Early years provision' refers to provision regulated by Ofsted for children from birth to 31 August following their fifth birthday (the early years age group). The registered person must ensure that this provision complies with the statutory framework for children's learning, development and welfare, known as the *Early Years Foundation Stage*.

The provider must provide a copy of this report to all parents with children at the setting where reasonably practicable. The provider must provide a copy of the report to any other person who asks for one, but may charge a fee for this service (The Childcare (Inspection) Regulations 2008 regulations 9 and 10).

The setting also makes provision for children older than the early years age group which is registered on the voluntary and/or compulsory part(s) of the Childcare Register. This report does not include an evaluation of that provision, but a comment about compliance with the requirements of the Childcare Register is included in Annex B.

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Description of the setting

Playplus Kindergarten is a privately owned setting. The setting registered in 1989 and the current premises opened in 1999.

It operates from two converted buildings situated in Bourne End, Hemel Hempstead, Hertfordshire. The kindergarten is open each weekday from 8am to 6pm for 50 weeks of the year. All children share access to two secure, enclosed outdoor play areas. Children come from a wide catchment area.

The setting is registered on the Early Years Register. A maximum of 48 children may attend at any one time. The setting also makes provision for children older than the early years age group which is registered on the compulsory part of the Childcare Register. There are currently 60 children aged from eight months to four years on roll. The setting supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and children who speak English as an additional language. The setting provides funded early education for three and four-year-olds.

The setting employs 25 members of child care staff. Of these, six hold appropriate early years qualifications at Level 2, 16 at Level 3 and one with a Level 4 qualification. There are two members of staff who are working towards a Level 3 qualification and one member of staff is working towards Early Years Professional Status. One member of staff has Qualified Teacher Status and two staff have early years degrees. The setting receives support from the local authority.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children are happy and have a good spread of play experiences and activities helping them to make good progress towards the early learning goals. The entire staff team get to know the children and their families well, which enables the setting to be inclusive and provide for the individual child. Rigorous systems are in place to ensure all children are safe and the welfare requirements are successfully promoted. Staff work together as a strong team and continually strive to improve the provision through careful reflection on their practice. As a result the setting is well placed to maintain and sustain continuous improvement.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To further improve the early years provision the registered person should:

- ensure records are clear and accessible to everyone who needs to see them, to enable them to plan and resource a challenging environment where children's play can be supported and extended
- maintain a regular two-way flow of information with providers who also deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage

- review the routines and deployment of staff to ensure that every child receives an enjoyable and challenging learning experience that is tailored to meet their individual needs with regard to the nappy changing routine and circle time.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The setting ensures that the arrangements for safeguarding children are robust, regularly reviewed and understood by those who work with the children. The company secretary maintains thorough records to ensure staff are suitable to work with children and ensures that there are effective risk assessments and appropriate action is taken to minimise hazards. Well-organised procedures are in place for identifying any child at risk of harm and liaising with the appropriate child protection agencies. Staff demonstrate a high level of commitment to promoting the children's safety. Daily checks on the premises are carried out and any maintenance issues are quickly dealt with. Children are well supervised to ensure their safety.

Children clearly benefit and thrive as a result of the setting they are in. Staff provide a welcoming and homely environment. They have access to a well equipped, safe and exciting outside area. Resources are plentiful and of high quality. There is a high staff child ratio with a well established team of knowledgeable and experienced staff. All staff undertake sensitive observations of the children's development, they gather and effectively use this information in the plans to aid children's progression. The learning journey's are compiled by one member of staff after coordinating all the information although access is limited. This leads to some staff not having sufficient information to help children take the next steps in their learning. Each child has a primary befriender and secondary befriender to ensure each child's special person is quickly available although the nappy changing routine is not undertaken by either befriender and misses some valuable opportunities for staff to build emotional support and reassurance. The constant movement of staff around the setting, on occasions, leaves staff without full information on appropriate intervention to extend children's spontaneous play and thinking. This detracts children from accessing a challenging learning experience.

The setting effectively evaluates the provision. Recent questionnaires returned from staff and parents are collated and assessed to inform the detailed self-evaluation system. Managers consistently communicate high expectations to staff about securing improvement. They stimulate the enthusiasm of staff and channel their efforts to good effect. Comprehensive policies and procedures are maintained to improve the outcomes for all children. These are updated regularly to ensure that they reflect the best practice. For example, a new policy relating to meeting the needs of gifted and talented children has recently been adopted to deliver an individualised observation and planning system for these children.

The setting effectively promotes equality and diversity. Staff know the children exceedingly well. They encourage parents to provide photographs of their families

and words in their home language and this helps children to develop a strong sense of belonging. Staff bring the aspects of their own beliefs to help children celebrate the festivals of their friends. With a female workforce the setting encourages fathers to come and read to the children to provide positive and more diverse role models. Staff promptly identify a child's need for additional support sharing information and records with colleagues, parents and, where appropriate, with interagency teams to ensure that each child gets the help he or she needs. Staff invites the children's other providers of the Early Years Foundation Stage to visit the setting although they find it difficult to develop this into a two-way flow of information reducing the continuity of learning for some children.

The setting has a highly positive and well-established relationship with parents and carers. Parents are very well informed about their children's achievement, well-being and development through the comprehensive systems for daily feedback. Staff have a valuable two-way conversation with parents at the start and end of the day. Staff and parents contribute to the daily diary and parents can request to view their child's learning journey. Parents report that they are very happy with the setting and one parent commented that 'It is a lovely place and my child has a fantastic relationship with his befriender'.

The quality and standards of the early years provision and outcomes for children

Children enjoy their learning and are making good progress. Staff have a good understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage and plan activities linked to children's interest. A counting game using model dinosaurs was introduced following a child's interest with dinosaurs. Staff are diligent in supporting learning through conversation and questioning that helps to develop and extend communication skills. Babies are tenderly supervised by caring staff who constantly talk to them to stimulate their language and understanding. They are content, happy and confident. Older children build the foundations for literacy through the frequent opportunities to enjoy a wide range of books, songs and stories. In a delightful story time, a member of staff cuddling two children close encouraged the children to follow the story, turning the pages and examining the pictures. She checks their understanding of language to communicate their feelings by asking them for other words to describe furious. They use the objects of the story to count, to use language, such as, 'one more' and 'take one away' and to understand that four comes before five. Children are actively engaged in small groups during circle time. They listen carefully to a story, looking at the large pictures and recall the animals they have seen although, some circle times are less engaging and potentially children's concentration skills are discouraged.

Children are successfully helped to understand the society in which they live. They take part in charity events to raise money for those less fortunate. They greatly enjoy visits from the travelling farm and a person that brings animals for them to touch and see. They could excitedly recall when he brought lizards of all sizes and they are looking forward with much anticipation to his next planned visit with animals from the rain forest.

Children have many opportunities to explore the outdoor environment every day. Babies are provided with all in one suits to allow them to use their senses and experience moving around on the grass. They are taken for short walks to the canal to see the world around them. Older children's physical development and coordination is promoted as they move around freely and manoeuvre their sit and ride toys safely and with control. They play imaginatively in the small wooded area as they act out the story 'Going on a bear hunt'. Children are well supported to develop the habits and behaviour appropriate to good learners. Staff are observant and they quickly and sensitively intervene to help the young children share and to take turns.

Children are helped to keep themselves safe as staff encourage them to adopt responsible practices, such as, tidying up and moving carefully around the premises. They participate in regular fire drills and therefore learn how to stay safe in an emergency. Children's health is promoted well. The very efficient housekeeping team prepare the healthy meals that parents have provided. They ensure all the laundry is clean and there are secure procedures to prevent the spread of infection.

Annex A: record of inspection judgements

The key inspection judgements and what they mean

Grade 1 is Outstanding: this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality
Grade 2 is Good: this aspect of the provision is strong
Grade 3 is Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound
Grade 4 is Inadequate: this aspect of the provision is not good enough

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

How well does the setting meet the needs of the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?	2
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	2

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	2
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding	2
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	2
The effectiveness of partnerships	2
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	2

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
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Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	2
The extent to which children feel safe	2
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	2
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	2

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Annex B: the Childcare Register

The provider confirms that the requirements of the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are:

Met