

Playtarium at St Jo's

St. Joseph's Catholic Infant School, Gardenier Avenue, Luton, Bedfordshire, LU3 2NS

Inspection date	11/06/2014
Previous inspection date	13/06/2012

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	
	Previous inspection:	
How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend		2
The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children		2
The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision		2

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This provision is good

- Teaching techniques are well adapted to suit this setting. The practical assessments and activity planning ensure that children's interests and developmental needs are always considered. Consequently, children participate in a creative selection of activities that interest them and extend their learning.
- The positive environment created by practitioners means that children are happy, confident and enthusiastic. Their views and ideas are sought and valued. This supports children in developing positive attitudes to play and learning.
- The voluntary management committee and practitioners work well together and are committed to the continuous development of the setting. Their ongoing evaluation ensures that children's welfare is promoted and they are cared for in a safe, well-organised environment.
- Practitioners work well with parents and the school and they have a good understanding of children's needs. As a result, children are offered appropriate support that enables them to participate meaningfully and benefit from the play opportunities that are offered.

It is not yet outstanding because

- Daily routines, such as snack time, are not always used to promote children's independence to the optimum.
- Children's greater understanding of the relevance of healthy lifestyles, such as the

effects of exercise, is not always promoted to the maximum.

Information about this inspection

Inspections of registered early years provision are:

- scheduled at least once in every inspection cycle – the current cycle ends on 31 July 2016
- scheduled more frequently where Ofsted identifies a need to do so, for example where provision was previously judged inadequate
- brought forward in the inspection cycle where Ofsted has received information that suggests the provision may not be meeting the legal requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage or where assessment of the provision identifies a need for early inspection
- prioritised where we have received information that the provision is not meeting the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage and which suggests children may not be safe
- scheduled at the completion of an investigation into failure to comply with the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage.

The provision is also registered on the voluntary and compulsory parts of the Childcare Register. This report includes a judgment about compliance with the requirements of that register.

Inspection activities

- The inspector observed activities in all rooms and the outside area.
The inspector held meetings with the manager of the provision, the nominated
- person and a representative of the voluntary management committee. She carried out a review of the session with the manager.
The inspector looked at children's assessment records and planning documentation.
- She checked evidence of suitability and qualifications of practitioners working with children, the provider's self-evaluation information and improvement plan.
- The inspector took account of the views of parents and carers spoken to on the day.

Inspector

Kelly Eyre

Full report

Information about the setting

Playtarium at St Jo's was registered in 2010 on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. It is situated within St Joseph's Catholic Infant School in Luton, Bedfordshire. It is managed by a voluntary management committee and has links with the host school. The setting serves children attending this school and the nearby junior school. It operates from three main rooms and there is an enclosed area available for outdoor play. There are currently 11 staff working directly with the children. Of these, one holds an appropriate early years qualification at level 2 and five hold qualifications at level 3 or above. The setting opens Monday to Friday during school term times. Sessions are from 7.45am until 8.45am and from 3.15pm until 6pm. Children attend for a variety of sessions. There are currently 88 children attending, of whom 16 are in the early years age group. The setting supports a number of children who speak English as an additional language and children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. The setting receives support from the local authority.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- build on the opportunities to use the daily routines, such as snack time, to further develop children's independence
- enhance the opportunities for children to increase their awareness of the relevance of healthy lifestyles, with particular reference to the effects of exercise.

Inspection judgements

How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend

Practitioners ensure that they understand each child's interests and needs. This enables them to offer children pertinent support and well-planned activities. As a result, children are happy and enthusiastic about their play. Practitioners utilise good teaching techniques. They are well supported and have a thorough knowledge of the Early Years Foundation Stage. They meet with parents and gather a wide range of initial information about the children. This enables them to understand children's current developmental stages and to plan relevant activities and resources that support their progression. The setting's good daily communication means that parents can update practitioners on their child's progress and activities at home. Parents are also supported well in extending their child's learning. For example, the setting uses a social media site to post practical ideas and information about activities to try at home. Many of these use everyday objects and are free or low cost, enabling all to participate.

Children are supported in making good progress because practitioners skilfully adapt their teaching techniques. They understand that children need time to relax after a busy day at school. Children balance this need well with opportunities for children to participate in a wide range of activities that support their development. The manager ensures that activity planning is flexible and informed by children's interests. This means that the activities appeal to children and encourage them to participate. Practitioners observe children as they play, keeping written records of their observations. They then assess this information, in order to plan further activities and thereby, promote each child's development. The flexible planning procedures means that children are offered balanced opportunities to initiate their own play and to participate in structured activities. This supports them in playing an active part in their learning and offers them the experience of working in a structured environment. As a result, they develop skills that support them in school. Good interaction from practitioners means that children's imagination and language skills are extended. For example, a practitioner joins children playing on the tyres and encourages them to talk about their play. Children explain that they are hiding from dragons and the practitioner encourages them to describe these. They become animated and eagerly describe how the dragons breathe fire, how big they are and how some of them are 'rainbow dragons with sharp teeth'. The well-considered access to resources means that children independently extend their play and learning. For example, children playing outside select resources from a large holdall. They then explore the environment as they use the magnifying glasses and notepads to record their findings.

Children who speak English as an additional language are supported well. Practitioners work with parents to learn key words in the child's home language. A practical display shows these words and how to pronounce them, enabling practitioners to use them in their daily interactions with children. Practitioners also make use of picture prompts to support children in extending their English vocabulary. Similarly, children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are supported well. Clear assessments of their needs means that the manager arranges relevant support for each child. This enables them to actively participate and benefit from the play opportunities that are offered. Children's personal, social and emotional development are promoted well. They are encouraged to understand and respect the needs of others and to work together. This supports their interactions and they show positive attitudes to learning, which they carry through to school. For example, a group of children work together to organise a board game. They carefully explain the rules to younger children and help them to participate. Children are offered a wide variety of opportunities that promote their physical development. For example, they learn to balance and be aware of the space around them as they use the large outdoor play equipment. Thoughtful planning means that children gain a realistic and meaningful understanding of diversity. For example, they celebrate the different cultures of the children present. They cook traditional dishes from the children's home countries and learn to greet each other in the languages spoken by the children.

The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children

The key-person system is used well and supports good partnership working with families and the school. As a result, children are secure and settled because practitioners know them well and understand their needs. Children show their appreciation of practitioners'

company as they enthusiastically include them in their play and chat with them about their day at school. Children are actively encouraged to express their preferences, views and requests. For example, practitioners provide an 'Our Ideas' book, where children can leave feedback and write or draw their requests for equipment or activities. This sensitive procedure means that even quieter children are able to participate and make their views known. Consequently, children learn how to communicate appropriately and they feel positive about themselves, carrying this attitude through to their school life.

Parents provide details about their child's abilities and needs by talking with practitioners and completing a practical 'All about me' form. This enables practitioners to understand each child and to help them to settle into the setting. Children's transitions within the setting are well considered. They play in mixed age groups but are supported by their key person. This also provides natural opportunities for children to learn from each other and to develop social skills that support their interactions as they move through school. Practitioners are well trained and are knowledgeable about safety issues. They confidently encourage children to assess risks as they play, so they build up their understanding of how to keep themselves and others safe. For example, when children invent a game where they lift each other on bean bags, they are encouraged to consider the risks. They discuss these and talk about working as a group, looking at the surface under the bean bag and not lifting this too high off the ground.

Children are generally supported in developing their self-care skills. For example, they help serve themselves with some snack items and make independent choices about what to play with. However, their independence is not consistently promoted to the optimum. For example, a practitioner fetches and pours their drinks for them and not all children are sure how to tidy away their plates and cups after snack time. Practitioners support children well in developing a good understanding of how to manage their own behaviour. Children are offered clear explanations about this and they are encouraged to think about how their actions affect others. Children follow the good example set by practitioners and show a genuine kindness and concern for each other. For example, older children jumping from one tyre to another pause in their play to show younger children how to copy them and jump safely. Children gain a good awareness of the importance of some healthy lifestyle choices. For example, they participate in cooking activities, where they discuss healthy eating. However, their awareness is not promoted to the optimum. For example, opportunities are not fully used to help them understand the effects of exercise.

The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision

Children's welfare is promoted well because there are thorough safeguarding arrangements in place. All practitioners have attended training in this area and they have a good understanding of the process to follow should they have any concerns about children. Robust procedures ensure that all practitioners are suitable to work with children, both when they start at the setting and on an ongoing basis. Practitioners carry out thorough risk assessments to ensure that hazards are minimised or removed. This means that children play safely and enjoy their time at the setting. The manager and practitioners maintain an honest approach to the continuous evaluation of their daily practice. They

include feedback from parents and children in this, giving them a representative view of their strengths and areas for improvement. They then use this information to develop clear action plans that lead to improvements in the provision for children. Recent changes include the provision of additional outdoor play equipment, in order to offer children further opportunities. For example, children develop their creativity and imagination as they use pop-up tents to pretend to go camping.

The manager works well with the voluntary management committee and they set high standards for the setting. They implement good procedures to ensure that practitioners are well supported in their work. For example, practitioners have regular supervision sessions and are supported in attending further training. The nominated person also organises sessions where practitioners share their knowledge with each other. This has a positive impact on children. For example, as a result of attending play work training, practitioners report that they are now better able to support children in making more independent choices and developing their own play. All practitioners work well together to ensure that they are meeting the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. For example, they use their regular team meetings to review their practice and check that they are consistently promoting children's well-being and development. The manager's good ongoing monitoring enables her to identify any areas where children require further support. She, therefore, supports practitioners in planning appropriately and ensuring that all children are included and make good progress.

Practitioners are experienced and they have a good understanding of the support available from other professionals. They can, therefore, seek further help for children and families when needed. Information is shared well with other providers caring for the children and this is a strength of the setting. They meet weekly with the school Family Support Worker, share assessment information with teachers and liaise with teachers, in order to meet the needs of individual children. This enables all to adopt a consistent approach to promoting children's welfare and development. The setting's good partnership working with parents ensures that they are kept well informed of their child's progress and activities. For example, they receive practical newsletters that detail events and the current planning.

The Childcare Register

The requirements for the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are **Met**

The requirements for the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are **Met**

What inspection judgements mean

Registered early years provision

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	Outstanding provision is highly effective in meeting the needs of all children exceptionally well. This ensures that children are very well prepared for the next stage of their learning.
Grade 2	Good	Good provision is effective in delivering provision that meets the needs of all children well. This ensures children are ready for the next stage of their learning.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	The provision is not giving children a good standard of early years education and/or there are minor breaches of the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. It will be monitored and inspected within twelve months of the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	Provision that is inadequate requires significant improvement and/or enforcement action. The provision is failing to give children an acceptable standard of early years education and/or is not meeting the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. It will be monitored and inspected again within six months of the date of this inspection.
Met		The provision has no children on roll. The inspection judgement is that the provider continues to meet the requirements for registration.
Not met		The provision has no children on roll. The inspection judgement is that the provider does not meet the requirements for registration.

Inspection

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted 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.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY419651
Local authority	Luton
Inspection number	879981
Type of provision	
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 17
Total number of places	24
Number of children on roll	88
Name of provider	Playtarium Committee
Date of previous inspection	13/06/2012
Telephone number	07508846582

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Type of provision

For the purposes of this inspection the following definitions apply:

Full-time provision is that which operates for more than three hours. These are usually known as nurseries, nursery schools and pre-schools and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. They are registered on the Early Years Register and pay the higher fee for registration.

Sessional provision operates for more than two hours but does not exceed three hours in any one day. These are usually known as pre-schools, kindergartens or nursery schools

and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. They are registered on the Early Years Register and pay the lower fee for registration.

Childminders care for one or more children where individual children attend for a period of more than two hours in any one day. They operate from domestic premises, which are usually the childminder's own home. They are registered on the Early Years Register and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Out of school provision may be sessional or full-time provision and is delivered before or after school and/or in the summer holidays. They are registered on the Early Years Register and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. Where children receive their Early Years Foundation Stage in school these providers do not have to deliver the learning and development requirements in full but should complement the experiences children receive in school.

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Piccadilly Gate
Store St
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M1 2WD

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