

Inspection of Pre-School Playhouse

Stafford Road, Ruislip, Middlesex HA4 6PD

Inspection date: 5 August 2025

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 show that they feel happy, safe and secure in the nursery's warm and welcoming environment. Babies develop warm, caring bonds with the staff looking after them. They enjoy plenty of opportunities to explore different textures, such as ice, and their language is extended through conversations with staff. For example, children are learning new words such as 'freezing', 'icy' and 'slippery' as the ice melts.

Staff foster social development by supporting children as they form friendships, resolve conflicts and learn to share. They observe children closely and tailor activities to match each child's interests, stepping in with encouragement or guidance when needed. Babies are happy and settled, supported well by caring key workers. Staff provide sensory experiences that spark curiosity and build early understanding of the natural world. Children eagerly dig soil, patting it into pots and using watering cans to explore changes in texture. These activities promote children's small physical development and exploration well.

Leaders design a rich and engaging curriculum, offering children a wide range of meaningful experiences that support their understanding of the world. For instance, children visit the nearby farm and take bus trips around the local community. Staff build on what children already know as they encourage them to recall these events as they discuss similarities and differences when reading stories and singing songs.

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

- Leaders work alongside staff to give guidance and support when required. The team is well qualified, and experienced practitioners mentor new trainees who are also studying towards relevant qualifications. Staff comment that they feel well supported, and they value the time the management provides during quieter sessions to reflect, review and plan for the children's learning.
- Children have many opportunities to learn about their emotions and behaviour. For example, staff provide watercolour activities with the aim of helping children to express their feelings. Children show sustained concentration as they eagerly use pipettes to draw up vibrant-coloured water, demonstrating good control for their fine motor skills. They carefully transfer the coloured water into jars containing matching beads in yellow, blue and red. Staff prompt children to discuss which colours reflect how they feel, which helps to promote and support their understanding of feelings through meaningful, hands-on exploration.
- Staff receive some supervision routinely and have regular opportunities for ongoing training. However, while coaching and mentoring systems are in place, they do not yet focus sharply enough on ensuring that routines are consistent, especially at mealtimes, so that staff receive clear feedback on their practice.

- Parents play an active role as partners and consistently speak highly of the provision. They appreciate the welcoming approach of the staff team and express how happy their children feel at the nursery. Staff regularly update parents about their child's progress through parents' meetings, daily discussions and email communication. This ongoing exchange provides parents with opportunities to contribute to their child's learning at home.
- Staff generally provide strong support for children's communication and language development. Many demonstrate effective practice by singing songs and reading stories with enthusiasm. However, there are inconsistencies in staff engagement during less-structured activities. For instance, during free play in the garden, some staff do not engage purposefully with the children to take time to model language appropriately.
- Staff teach children about being healthy, and they promote children's independence skills well. For example, children are encouraged to wash their hands before meals and after using the toilet, and older children help with getting the tables ready for lunch. Children enjoy the freshly prepared and nutritious meals on offer and often request second helpings.
- Staff provide children with many opportunities to be imaginative and to develop their physical skills. Younger children show enthusiasm as they climb onto the wooden pirate ship, inventing adventures together while sharing ideas and laughter. Older children demonstrate excitement and confidence as they navigate the outdoor area on wheeled toys, negotiating space with increasing control and coordination. Children celebrate one another's achievements and are heard cheering their friends on as they kick balls and take part in running games. Across these activities, children engage fully and immerse themselves in purposeful play that supports both social and physical development.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

There is an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts children's interests first.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- develop methods of coaching and mentoring to ensure there is a fully consistent approach to promoting children's good health, especially at mealtimes
- strengthen the consistency of staff's interactions with children to support their individual learning needs.

Setting details

Unique reference number	139099
Local authority	Hillingdon
Inspection number	10398420
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register
Day care type	Full day care
Age range of children at time of inspection	0 to 4
Total number of places	61
Number of children on roll	72
Name of registered person	Pre-School Playhouse Limited
Registered person unique reference number	RP910087
Telephone number	01895 624454
Date of previous inspection	21 October 2019

Information about this early years setting

Pre-School Playhouse opened in 1993. It is situated within the grounds of Ruislip Gardens Infant School in the London Borough of Hillingdon. The pre-school operates for 51 weeks of the year. The hours of opening are Monday to Friday from 7.30am to 6.30pm. The pre-school receives funding to provide free early education for children aged from nine months to four years. There are 23 staff, of whom 17 hold a qualification at level 3.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Rochelle Anderson

Inspection activities

- The inspector took account of the parents' views and considered their feedback as part of the inspection process.
- The inspector observed staff's interactions with children during activities, indoors and outdoors.
- The leaders and inspector conducted a joint observation of a planned activity.
- During the inspection, the inspector engaged with staff to learn how they support children in their learning and ensure their understanding of safeguarding policies and procedures.
- The inspector had meetings with the manager and provider. She looked at a sample of policies and procedures, staff qualifications and evidence of 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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