

Playdays

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number

EY336454

Inspection date

06/10/2009

Inspector

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Setting address

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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*.

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Description of the setting

Playdays is a privately owned and managed Day Nursery. It opened in 2006 and operates from premises in the town centre of Thetford, Norfolk. The building is accessed by a low step with babies and toddlers being cared for on the first floor. It is open each week day from 8.00am to 5.30pm for 50 weeks of the year. All children share access to a secure, enclosed outdoor play area.

The day nursery is registered on the Early Years Register. A maximum of 33 children may attend at any one time aged three months to five years. There are currently 53 children attending in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). The setting is in receipt of government funding for early education and welcomes children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and children with English as an additional language. There are 12 members of staff, including the proprietor, who work with the children. Of these, nine hold appropriate early years qualifications, one is a qualified cook and two are near completion of a level two early years qualification. The setting has some links with local schools and other early years providers that the children attend to ensure continuity of care.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is satisfactory.

Overall the quality of the provision is satisfactory. The helpful leadership from the proprietor alongside an enthusiastic, caring staff team helps to ensure children are happy and confident. Children's learning and development is beginning to be appropriately supported however, planning of activities and staff teaching skills are not yet consistently effective. Children as individuals are valued and respected and the day-nursery team work in close partnership with parents and other professional services to ensure children's care needs are met. Children's welfare is given positive support to ensure they feel safe and their health is well promoted. The setting has started to develop an understanding of their strengths and areas for development to further improve the children's learning however, self-evaluation systems are not entirely inclusive or secure at this time. Documentation kept is accessible although suitability records are not up to date.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To fully meet the specific requirements of the EYFS, the registered person must:

- ensure the information used to assess the suitability of staff records the date on which criminal records bureau disclosures were obtained (Safeguarding and promoting children's welfare).
- 28/10/2009

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

- make learning plans for each child based on the information gained from observations underway, ensuring all activities are age appropriate and when planning remember that children learn from everything including routine activities such as refreshments and when undertaking their personal care
- look at children's involvement in their learning as well as the nature and quality of adult interactions, specifically looking to develop adults skills and consistency in asking open questions to actively support children's critical thinking skills
- strengthen self-evaluation systems to more effectively maintain and further improve the learning experiences for the children, making sure that parents and children's views are understood and considered.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children are safe and secure at this setting. Detailed risk assessments are completed with regard to the indoor, outdoor environment and any outings to ensure the facilities are safe and potential hazards to children are minimised. The nursery is welcoming but security is good as children are only allowed to go home with those people included on the registration forms by parents. Everyone working at the nursery are vetted to ensure their suitability to be around children and families, although vetting records held do not include the date on which disclosures were obtained, to provide a clear idea about when checks were undertaken. The setting has a sound understanding about their safeguarding responsibilities towards young children. Staff have an up to date awareness of the possible signs of child abuse and the accessible written procedures, displayed for parents, can be quickly followed to ensure children are protected.

The setting manager has an evaluation system in place that has led to some improvements being made to children's learning experiences and some recommendations from the last inspection being addressed. However, the system has not yet been entirely effective in tackling all aspects of the children's learning, such as planning of activities and the evaluation systems used do not sufficiently include children's or parents views. The setting manager and staff team demonstrate a clear willingness to improve the service as they are undertaking updated training about how children learn and recognise the value of having outside support from their Local Authority advisor. Staff attendance at training from the 'Forest Schools Initiative' has had a significantly beneficial effect on children's experience of outdoor play and the setting provide a rich range of activities that foster children's physical development and knowledge of the natural world.

The setting has a sound and sensitive approach to partnerships with parents and others to support continuity of care for the children. All parents' views about their children's needs are respected with regard to eating and sleeping, although evaluations with parents generally about the service or children's learning are not yet securely in place. Most procedural documentation is accessible to provide reassurance to parents about their children's safety and staff work well with parents and/or other professionals to ensure children's needs are met. A written

daily diary and an informal daily 'chat' is welcomed by most parents as an effective way of sharing information about children's and babies care. Parents make many positive comments about the nursery including the fact that staff and the manager are 'caring', 'easy to talk with' and that children and babies 'get very excited' and 'love coming to play'. The setting demonstrates a strong commitment to providing an inclusive service and children and families learning English as an additional language are welcomed, valued and well supported to integrate into the nursery.

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

Children and babies make sound progress in their learning and development under the EYFS. Staff and the manager are caring, considerate and genuinely enjoy the children's company which ensures children are secure at this setting. Support from the local advisors and a willingness to 'get it right' from the staff team has helped the setting to begin to understand how to ensure that children's learning is self-directed however, systems to plan for children's individual learning are not yet fully effective. As a result, activities taking place for each child are not always age appropriate on a day to day basis. Children are happy to come to nursery and show their growing confidence as they separate from parents on arrival and get down to 'playing'. Those less sure about saying goodbye to their parents and/or carers are well supported with a comforting cuddle from staff, which quickly gives them the reassurance they need to settle. Children are keen to explore the inviting play environment. The setting has organised its clean, safe play resources well so that children can choose what they wish to play with from the low level storage units, promoting their independence skills. Messy play for all ages that attend the facility with paint, water, sand and a range of craft materials, helps provide fun opportunities for babies and younger children to develop their senses and older children to demonstrate their growing creative skills.

Home play equipment used by all ages helps to foster children's imagination. Babies are keen to explore the empty pans and cups, popping items in and out to see what happens and toddlers delight in the opportunities to pretend to drink tea. Older children re-enact familiar roles such as a caring parent with the dolls. Children communicate well and are beginning to vocalise in often more than one language. Rhymes and communication, used by bi-lingual staff in dual languages, helps new children whose native language is other than English to quickly settle and start to learn new English words and those with English as a first language begin to recognise key words in other tongues such as, Polish and Portuguese. Books and favourite stories are offered to all children as a way of engaging them in early literacy skills. Older children are enthralled as they sit outside on the circle of logs calling out familiar words from favourite stories and even babies take books from a low level shelf, being keen to hold the hard backed books, looking at the images, pointing and vocalising sounds. A good deal of thought has gone into making sure that all children can be included in routine activities such as eating and undertaking their personal care with the availability of shared meal times, different size chairs, tables and style of crockery to promote inclusion and independence. However, during these routine activity periods children are not entirely effectively supported in developing their learning and understanding about

the purpose and benefit of attending to personal hygiene and eating healthy foods.

The setting have a good 'community spirit' with staff working well as a team to attend to the care of the children. However, during play staff do not consistently support children with their critical thinking skills and many opportunities are missed to ask open questions and develop children's ideas. Childrens health is generally well promoted. A nutritious menu helps children to eat well at breakfast, snack time, dinner and tea with the easy availability of drinking water at all times so children can refresh themselves when needed. Daily fresh air offered through outside play, digging up vegetables in the garden and regular outings, exercises children's lungs and gives them good opportunities to develop their physical skills. Younger children are able to rest in comfort and safety when they need to conserve their energy and promote their bodies growth. Children are considerate and developing a rich understanding about others and the wider world to foster their future tolerance of difference. All children, regardless of age, gender or ability are included in events and the setting ensures children are surrounded by positive imagery of wider society and celebrate world festivals.

Children are well-behaved as they are starting to self-direct their play and are engaged in busy activity. Staff praise the children frequently and set a clear boundary regarding acceptable behaviour for children who are temporarily unkind or destructive as part of their expected development stage. Children are caring and considerate towards friends as they help to find hats and offer a cuddle when appropriate.

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?	3
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	3

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

How effectively is the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	2
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding	3
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	3
The effectiveness of partnerships	2
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	3

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

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Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	3
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	3
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	3

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