

Hippy Kids Playschool

Unique reference number (URN): 2768105

Address: South Portslade Community Centre, Church Road, Portslade, Brighton, BN41 1LB

Type: Childcare on non-domestic premises

Registered with Ofsted: 03/01/2024

Registers: EYR, CCR

Registered person: HIPPY KIDS LTD

Inspection report: 2 December 2025

Exceptional

Strong standard

Expected standard



Needs attention

Urgent improvement



⊗ Safeguarding standards not met

Leaders have not ensured that there is an open and positive culture around safeguarding. This puts children at significant risk of harm. Leaders do not always follow their own safer recruitment procedures or meet the requirements of the early years foundation stage when employing new staff. Leaders do not carry out relevant checks to ensure existing disclosure and barring checks remain up to date and suitable. They do not seek references for all staff prior to them commencing employment. This means they do not ensure staff are suitable for their roles before they have access to children and their families. Furthermore, risk assessments put in place to protect children from unvetted staff are not effective, as these staff support children with intimate care routines without supervision.

All staff demonstrate a secure knowledge of how to identify and act on a child welfare concern. They are clear on what constitutes to a concern about a colleague's conduct and what to do should concerns arise. They fully understand internal and external reporting processes, and how to refer concerns in a timely manner in line with local safeguarding partnership guidance. Staff report they feel those responsible for safeguarding are approachable which supports them to raise concerns without fear.

How we evaluate safeguarding

When we inspect settings for safeguarding, they can have the following outcomes:

- Met: The setting has an open and positive culture of safeguarding.
- Not met: The setting has not created an open and positive culture of safeguarding. Not all legal requirements are met.

Expected standard

Achievement

Expected standard

Children, including those who face barriers to their learning, make good progress from their starting points across all 7 areas of learning and development. Staff understand applying a sequential approach to help children to build on existing skills and continually make progress, providing the praise, encouragement and support to enable them to succeed. Children make appropriate progress as they develop their communication and language skills. This supports children's growing vocabulary and confidence to share their own thought and ideas through discussions. Children who receive additional support to develop their communication and/or language skills benefit from attending additional nurture groups within the playschool. These target children's individual stages of progress and provide additional focused time to further strengthen their skills.

Effective arrangements are in place to support children's transitions between rooms at the playschool. Staff communicate children's development and next steps to ensure children's transitions are smooth. In addition, when children are ready to leave for school, leaders ensure important information is shared in preparation for their transition, including children's achievements and developmental stages.

Behaviour, attitudes and establishing routines

Expected standard

Leaders and staff have high but appropriate expectations of children's behaviour and attitudes to learning. Leaders promote positive attendance patterns to ensure children benefit fully from their time at the playschool. The staff know how to promote children's engagement, following their interest and immediate curiosities. As a result, children are generally well engaged. Staff are positive role models, and support children to understand rules, boundaries, and how to stay safe. For example, staff give children gentle reminders about staying safe on the stairs, children listen and respond well.

Staff are positive role models to children, and as such they develop secure social skills. For instance, children support each other to climb up low-level steps in the garden by holding each other's hands. Staff reinforce this positive behaviour through praise and encouragement. Staff recognise when some children, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities need adaptations to support and understand their own behaviours. As a result, all children's emotions are well considered.

Children of all ages build warm attachments to their key person as well as other staff. Babies enjoy comforting cuddles, and older children are confident to seek out staff to share their achievements or ask for support if needed.

Children's welfare and wellbeing

Expected standard 

Children enjoy their play and learning in spaces that welcome and engage their individual curiosities. Staff demonstrate a secure understanding of all children and families who attend. As a result, children's individual care needs are well considered by responsive and attentive staff. For example, staff know and follow babies' individual feeding and sleep routines. This promotes consistency in the care routines between the playschool and home which positively impacts children's wellbeing.

Staff promote positive hygiene routines. They ensure children wash their hands before mealtimes, and support children to develop healthy practices such as covering their mouths when coughing. This supports children's understanding as they develop healthy routines. Generally, children have appropriate opportunities to develop their independence. For example, children confidently self-select resources and get ready to go outside. This helps children develop everyday life skills and prepare them for their next stage of learning.

The forest garden is well risk assessed and staff supervise children in the area well. As such, children explore the area safely as they learn to test out their own limits. Staff provide encouragement as older children climb trees. They ask children if they feel safe to see if they can try to reach the next level. These experiences help children to make their own decisions and keep themselves safe with staff guidance.

Curriculum and teaching

Expected standard 

Leaders have an accurate understanding of the quality of the curriculum. They promptly identify and implement improvements to continually evolve the quality of teaching. This is having a positive impact as leaders model and coach staff during everyday practice. As a result, generally, staff implement the curriculum well and interactions that children receive are engaging and support children's development. Staff use effective assessment processes to prevent children from falling behind and respond to any gaps in children's learning.

The curriculum is designed to support children's development, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities or those who face other barriers to learning across all 7 developmental areas. Staff are clear on what they want to teach children next and why. This ensures all children are well supported to continually build on existing skills and learn new things. Staff prioritise the development of children's physical skills, as well children's involvement, incorporating their interests and curiosities. This supports children to feel valued as they develop a positive sense of self.

Children's communication and language is well supported. Staff personalise and adapt interactions to meet children's individual stages of development. Staff narrate play and introduce new words in context through everyday activities. For instance, during a focused nurture group, staff carefully weave mathematical concepts and language into the activity. As a result, children confidently use words such as 'teeny-tiny', 'gigantic', and 'more than' as

they also develop early mathematical knowledge. Children enjoy purposeful back-and-forth discussions as they develop their conversational skills. This supports all children to become confident communicators.

Inclusion

Expected standard 

Those with lead responsibility for inclusion work together with the staff team. Together, they recognise children who have various barriers to learning. This includes but is not restricted to, children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. As a result, these children are swiftly identified and effective, tailored support is in place. There is a focus on all children and their families receiving support and guidance to ensure all children receive the best start to their educational journey.

Leaders take time to ensure parents and/or carers receive guidance as well as tailored support to navigate various referral processes to external professionals. Parents report they are well informed and included, reporting their children make very good progress. They credit this to the staff and the ongoing support their children receive. Reasonable adjustments are also well considered. Personalised adaptations made in collaboration with parents and a graduated approach is used to ensure children's bespoke care and learning needs are continually met and promote their ongoing progress.

Generally, leaders are proactive in accessing additional funding to ensure children have full access to any further support. Leaders carefully consider and reflect on the use of any early years pupil premium funding to ensure it is used to achieve the best outcomes for individual children.

Urgent improvement

Leadership and governance

Urgent improvement 

Leader's oversight and governance are not sufficient because they have not ensured all staff recruited for their roles are suitable. Leaders have not followed their own recruitment and vetting procedures which leads to significant breaches to the early years foundation stage requirements. This directly impacts on children's safety, as additionally, leaders do not ensure risk assessments in place for unvetted staff are effective in practice. As a result, unvetted staff support children with intimate care routines unsupervised.

Leaders are reflective and can identify priorities for improvements, such as supporting consistency in the delivery of the curriculum and quality of interactions. They are ambitious for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and those who face other barriers to learning. They understand the important role they play to ensure each child receives the support needed to succeed.

Staff benefit from regular supervision meetings, which focus on wellbeing and provide opportunities to support staff's continued professional development. Staff have access to a variety of opportunities for training and to achieve further qualifications. This helps them

support children's learning as well as improve their own personal effectiveness. Staff report leaders are supportive and approachable, creating an open and transparent relationship between staff and leaders.

Compulsory Childcare Register requirements

This setting has not met the requirements of the compulsory part of the Childcare Register.

How we check if a provider meets the requirements of the Compulsory Childcare Register

When we check if settings meet the Compulsory Childcare Register requirements, they can have the following outcomes:

- Met
 - Not met
-

What it's like to be a child at this setting

There are significant breaches to the safeguarding and welfare requirements that compromise children's safety. Recruitment and vetting procedures are not followed. Leaders do not ensure all staff have their suitability assured before commencing employment. In addition, risk assessments in place to ensure these staff do not have unsupervised access to children are not effective.

Children demonstrate they are happy and content at the playschool. They form close attachments to staff who are nurturing and respectful in their interactions. All children develop self-confidence and independence, to be ready for their next stage of learning. Children have access to a broad curriculum that includes all 7 areas of learning. Staff know what children have already achieved and what they need to learn next. This supports all children, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, or children who face other barriers to learning, to make their own individual progress. Children's interests and immediate curiosities are a focus. As such, children show high levels of enjoyment and engagement as they play, explore and learn. Leaders understand the importance of children's attendance to ensure children fully benefit from the opportunities they offer.

Children of all ages particularly benefit from the well-thought-out outdoor space which is regularly accessed daily. Children have an abundance of opportunities to develop their physical skills. For instance, children climb, balance, swing, and manoeuvre their whole

bodies confidently. This supports children to develop their core-muscle skills. There are further opportunities for children to build on their fine manipulative skills. For instance, children eagerly explore play dough as they manipulate it, rolling and stretching the dough. These opportunities increase children's dexterity and hand-eye coordination as they develop their small muscles. Staff carefully support children to take safe risks. For instance, children confidently climb trees and safely learn to navigate the forest, that their outdoor space provides. This supports all children to learn how to keep themselves and others safe.

Next steps

To meet the requirements of the Early years foundation stage and Childcare register the provider must take the following action by the assigned date:

Action	Completion Date
take action to ensure robust and effective recruitment and vetting procedures are in place to ensure the suitability of all individuals who have access to children and their families	16/12/2025

About this inspection

The inspector spoke with leaders, including those responsible for designated safeguarding roles, those with special educational needs coordinator responsibility, and practitioners during the inspection.

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.

Inspector:
Natalie Moir

About this setting

Unique reference number (URN): 2768105

Address:

South Portslade Community Centre, Church Road
Portslade
Brighton
BN41 1LB

Type: Childcare on non-domestic premises

Registration date: 03/01/2024

Registered person: HIPPY KIDS LTD

Register(s): EYR, CCR

Operating hours: Monday,Tuesday,Wednesday,Thursday,Friday : 08:00 - 18:00

Local authority: Brighton and Hove

Facts and figures used on inspection

This data was available to the inspector at the time of the inspection.

 This data is from 2 December 2025

Children numbers

Age range of children at the time of inspection

1 to 4

Total number of places

45

Our grades explained

Exceptional

Practice is exceptional: of the highest standard nationally. Other settings can learn from it.

Strong standard

The setting reaches a strong standard. Leaders are working above the standard expected of them.

Expected standard

The setting is fulfilling the expected standard of education and/or care. This means they are following the standard set out in statutory and non-statutory legislation and the professional standards expected of them.

Needs attention

The expected standards are not met but leaders are likely able to make the necessary improvements.

Urgent improvement

The setting needs to make urgent improvements to provide the expected standard of education and/or care.

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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Textphone: 0161 618 8524

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