

Inspection of Playhouse Nursery

The United Free Church, Station Road, RADLETT, Hertfordshire WD7 8JX

Inspection date: 23 October 2024

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

Staff greet children warmly on arrival. The cheerful and relaxed atmosphere ensures that children feel comfortable and settle in quickly. Children demonstrate that they feel happy, safe and secure. They welcome the meaningful interactions from staff and invite the inspector to join them in their play. Staff recognise the utmost importance of gathering lots of initial and ongoing information from parents about their children's interests and needs. This means that staff plan a curriculum that prioritises children's own choices and changing fascinations. Staff remind children of the expectations in place as needed, such as to remain seated while eating and to use good manners. Children and staff often celebrate each other's achievements with 'high fives', boosting children's self-esteem. Staff teach children to be independent individuals from a young age. Children confidently manage their personal needs with minimal support and know to clear away their plate when they have finished eating.

Children are curious learners who explore their environment with ease. They search for insects outdoors. Staff support children to handle these with respect as they carefully place them in a magnifying pot to study them closer. Staff teach children about insects preferred habitats and challenge them to count the spots on the ladybugs. Children are excited to participate in experiments. They make predictions of new colours they can create by mixing different coloured food colouring together. Children work out how to use pipettes to suck up vinegar and squirt it into a container containing bicarbonate of soda. They show high levels of awe and wonder as the liquids fizz together and creates a new colour.

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

- Leaders and staff implement an ambitious and well-sequenced curriculum that helps all children make good progress. It embraces children's individual interests and encourages children to be in control of their own learning. Staff know children very well. They build on children's prior knowledge and deepen their understanding to ensure that new skills and concepts are fully embedded.
- Children's behaviour is good and appropriate to their stage of development. Staff provide children with opportunities to learn about emotions through stories and activities. They encourage children to take turns and be respectful towards each other. The use of a sand timer helps children to understand when it is time to share popular resources. However, staff do not consistently encourage children to consider their own and others' feelings during minor disagreements to help them develop self-regulation skills.
- Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) make good progress from their starting points. Staff work closely with parents and other professionals to help them make the best possible progress. Any additional

funding the setting receives is used well to support children's individual needs.

- Staff cultivate good hygiene habits and an understanding of healthy lifestyles. Children are fully involved in preparing their own snack and nutritious lunch. This motivates children to try new foods. Outdoors, they joyfully develop their large-muscle skills, adeptly using the slide and persevere to walk on low level stilts. They develop good dexterity in their hands as they work out how to untangle a length of string that becomes tangled in apparatus.
- Overall, children are developing good communication and language skills. Staff provide children with time to answer questions asked of them to build on their increasing vocabulary. Children express a strong love of books. They delight in snuggling up to staff to listen to their favourite books being read to them. Staff skilfully use the contents of the story to encourage children to recall experiences. Children thoroughly enjoy circle time together and become excited as they sing songs linked to items in the song sack. However, staff do not fully support children who speak English as an additional language to use their home language during their play to enhance their speaking skills.
- Leaders are pro-active in supporting staffs ongoing professional development. They frequently observe staff practice and provide guidance to consistently raise the quality of teaching. Strong partnerships with sister settings prove successful in sharing knowledge and skills.
- Partnerships with parents is strong. There is a good two-way flow of communication. Parents speak with staff at drop-off and collection times. They also have access to written information and photos about their child's development through an online platform. Parents are warmly invited in to the nursery to participate in regular events that help children learn about their own cultural backgrounds. They welcome the ideas that staff provide to support children's continuity of learning at home. Parents speak very highly of the provision their children receive. They are particularly pleased with the 'phenomenal progress' children make. Parents describe the staff as 'amazing' and feel a strong sense of belonging to the nursery community.

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:

- make better use of situations that arise during children's play to help prepare them to self-regulate their emotions
- enhance opportunities for children to hear and use their home language.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY103294
Local authority	Hertfordshire
Inspection number	10359825
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register, Voluntary Childcare Register
Day care type	Full day care
Age range of children at time of inspection	1 to 4
Total number of places	24
Number of children on roll	24
Name of registered person	Breakwell, Jessica Bunny
Registered person unique reference number	RP905623
Telephone number	
Date of previous inspection	12 December 2018

Information about this early years setting

Playhouse Nursery registered in 2002. The nursery is open from 8am until 6pm, Monday to Thursday, and from 8am until 2.15pm on Friday, during term time only. There are seven staff members who work directly with the children; of these, five hold relevant childcare qualifications from at level 2 or above. The nursery provides funded early education for two- and three-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector
Lorraine Pike

Inspection activities

- The manager and inspector completed a learning walk across all the areas of the nursery to understand how the curriculum is organised.
- A joint observation of an activity was carried out by the inspector and the manager. The inspector observed the quality of teaching during activities indoors and outdoors. She assessed the impact this has on children's learning.
- The inspector held a number of discussions with staff at appropriate times during the inspection and also joined children in their play.
- The inspector held a meeting with the manager and provider. She looked at relevant documentation, such as evidence of the suitability of staff working in the nursery.
- The inspector took account of the views of parents spoken to on the day and their written feedback.

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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