

Barkway Preschool

Barkway VA First School, 84 High Street, Barkway, ROYSTON, Hertfordshire, SG8 8EF

Inspection date

Previous inspection date

20/01/2014

Not Applicable

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This inspection:

2

Previous inspection:

Not Applicable

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

- The manager uses effective methods to monitor children's progress both individually and within their key groups to identify any gaps in learning and ensure that all the seven areas of learning are promoted through interesting and challenging experiences that meet the needs of all children.
- There is a strong key person system which supports engagement with all parents. They contribute to the initial assessments of children's starting points and are kept well informed about their children's progress. Parents are strongly encouraged to support and share information about their children's learning and development at home.
- The outdoor area offers varied and imaginative experiences for children, supporting all areas of their learning.
- Teaching is good. Practitioners are sensitive to children's feelings and give young children time to think further and solve problems on their own as part of their daily play.

It is not yet outstanding because

- Practitioners occasionally do not fully engage and develop the concentration skills of some of the youngest children during some group times.

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 the pre-school, outside area and talked with the staff.
- The inspector viewed the areas of the premises and garden used by children in the setting.
The inspector looked at children's assessment records, planning documentation, evidence of suitability of staff members, and a range of other documentation, including the safeguarding procedures.
- The inspector took account of the views of parents, as recorded in written questionnaires and during discussion with some parents present at collection.
- The inspector reviewed the provider's self-evaluation form as provided prior to the inspection.

Inspector

Lindsay Hare

Full report

Information about the setting

Barkway Preschool was registered in 2013 and is on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. It is situated in Barkway, a village near to Royston, Hertfordshire, and is managed by a committee. The pre-school serves the local area and is accessible to all children. It operates from a classroom within Barkway First School and there is an enclosed area available for outdoor play.

The nursery employs five members of childcare staff. Of these, four hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3.

The pre-school opens Monday to Friday during term-time only. Sessions are from 9am until 12pm or 1pm if children stay for lunch. Children attend for a variety of sessions. There are currently 24 children attending who are all in the early years age group. The pre-school provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- develop further strategies to encourage two-year-olds or those new to the setting to focus their attention and concentration, particularly at group times.

Inspection judgements

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

Children enjoy a good range of learning experiences that reflect their individual needs and interests, and so captures their interest and imagination. They are generally engaged in their play and are active learners. However, strategies to focus the attention of the very young children and those who are new to the setting are not always fully implemented, especially at group times. Therefore, some of these children sometimes lose concentration, tend to become distracted and so are not yet always gaining the most from their learning. Practitioners are well qualified and skilled at quickly getting to know the children in their care. The assessment of children's learning is thorough and helps to ensure that each child is developing in line with expectations, based on their age and ability. Observations are used to identify children's next steps and inform the planning. Parents share what their children do and enjoy at home and are encouraged to contribute to the planning and children's ongoing learning. For example, practitioners and parents add children's achievements to the 'wow' board and share information about what the child has been doing both at home and in the setting. This enables practitioners to gain a complete picture of all children's achievements and, therefore, effectively plan for children's learning needs. Practitioners have successfully completed detailed assessments

in relation to the progress check for children aged two. This is shared with parents and is used to identify any areas where children's progress is less than expected and develop plans to address any concerns.

Practitioners use effective teaching methods, such as signing and modelling language, to help all children communicate. For example, they use repetition and ask open-ended questions to encourage children's responses, supporting them in becoming confident talkers. Practitioners have also introduced further resources, such as visual signs showing the written word, symbols, signing and photographs, to support children in communicating their needs. Young children copy new vocabulary that they hear repeated, such as when using positional language about being 'on top of the climbing frame and behind the bike', and are beginning to link these words to their actions. Practitioners are also using the 'Letters and Sounds' programme to aid children's language and communication skills further. They are sensitive to the feelings of children as they offer support, but wait for the child to think and respond, before intervening. Therefore, children's independence and self-confidence is fostered. For example, children persevered in pushing their straw through the milk carton, once staff point out which end of the straw to use. Pre-school children understand how to use books appropriately, turning the pages as they 'read' a story and enjoying discussing how people in the photographs might be feeling. Children enjoy the well-resourced outdoor area. They use materials to make camps and dens and discuss what they might hear in the garden, using photographs as prompts. Practitioners extend this activity by recording and displaying children's comments. There are lots of opportunities for children to develop early literacy skills, both indoors and outdoors. They use chalkboards and drawing materials, water bottles to spray patterns on the wall and ground outside, as well as writing how old they are on the wipe-boards in the maths area.

The flexible activity planning involving the children and parents means that children have balanced opportunities to play independently and to participate in adult-directed activities. They, therefore take an active role in their learning and also learn to work with others. Children make progress in line with the expected developmental levels. Planning shows how activities are differentiated to ensure that children's individual needs are met and they are challenged. The thoughtful provision of some resources means that children are encouraged to explore and experiment. For example, children watch as they roll a ball down the ramp, repeating this action several times, before experimenting, using an item of play food. On discovering that this will not roll, they continue to use the balls. Children's interests are followed, for example, practitioners know their key children well and are therefore able to ensure that toys that they enjoy playing with are available on the days they attend. The role-play area is changed frequently to allow children to act out situations and experiences that are familiar to them, such as going to the doctors or garage. Practitioners encourage children to explore numbers in everyday situations, such as counting the pieces as children cut up their lunch. Children show they are competent in using technology, skilfully using the mouse to change tools on the paint computer programme. Consequently, children effectively develop the skills that prepare them for the next stage in their learning and the eventual move onto school.

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

The key person system is very effective in promoting children's emotional well-being and independence and they form appropriate bonds and secure emotional attachments with caring staff. Practitioners obtain detailed information from parents about children's interests and care needs, which they implement into the planning and daily care routine, enabling them to effectively meet the needs of individual children. Children are welcomed into the room by their key person and, those children who find it difficult to separate from their parent often bring their comfort toy to help them feel more secure. Excellent support is provided by practitioners in helping children to settle quickly, for example, sharing the transition from home book with children before they start. Practitioners are good role models, using gentle reminders and careful explanations to support the children in understanding why some behaviour is unacceptable and what the possible consequences might be. Practitioners use opportunities within the children's play to reinforce their understanding of safety, for example, children calling 'fire, fire' into the toy loudspeaker, were asked if they remembered the fire drill they practised and what they need to do if there is a fire.

Children are able to effectively manage their own personal needs relative to their age. Regular cooking activities and snack time enables children to make choices about what they would like to eat as they make their own sandwiches. They develop excellent self-care skills as they serve themselves, open their own milk cartons and clear their plates afterwards. Visual aids in the bathroom and discussion with the nurse who came in to visit, contribute to building children's understanding of good hygiene practices. Practitioners give clear messages to children to develop their understanding of why it is important to have a healthy diet. For example, as children help to prepare chopped fruit and vegetables at snack time they discuss the foods displayed on the posters around the snack table. Children benefit from opportunities to run around and play outside on a daily basis as they have free access to a well-resourced outdoor area, where they can climb, run and practise their physical skills with various equipment. The setting has also introduced additional physical sessions in the school hall for children to practise football skills. Children are becoming aware of the physical effect of exercise on their bodies as practitioners encourage them to listen to their heart beating through a stethoscope.

Practitioners generally provide good support to prepare most children for the transfer to school, for example, they meet with the local class teachers to discuss each child's learning and development and are introducing transition support books for those children moving on to local schools. Therefore, transition arrangements ensure that children's emotional well-being is well supported so that they settle quickly within a new environment and develop relationships with new adults and peers with confidence.

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

Arrangements for safeguarding children are strong and well embedded. All practitioners have received basic safeguarding training and regular discussions at staff meetings ensure that they have a good understanding of the process to follow should they have any

concerns about a child in their care. There are robust recruitment and induction procedures to ensure that all practitioners are suitable to work with children. Comprehensive risk assessments and daily safety checks ensure that the setting is safe and any hazards are removed or minimised. This contributes to children's enjoyment of their time at the setting by enabling them to play in a safe and secure environment.

The pre-school has a strong staff team who are mostly well-qualified and experienced. Consequently, they are able to promote children's good progress towards the early learning goals effectively. Regular appraisals, ongoing supervision and the introduction of peer-on-peer observations are used to support staff in their continuous professional development and in identifying any training needs. Staff have attended recent training and cascade the information gained to the rest of the team so that they can work together to see how it can be applied to improve the setting. The staff's thorough monitoring of the planning and assessment of children's learning means that they have an accurate view of the quality of teaching and how this impacts on children's progress. The pre-school use analysis tools to clearly identify where both individual and groups of children are not making as much progress as they could be and what needs to be done to improve this.

The setting has excellent partnerships with parents, who describe staff as friendly, approachable and keep them well informed about their children's activities. For example, staff share recipes for the cooking the children have done and send out regular newsletters and updates on their webpage. Practitioners have daily verbal exchanges with parents as well as regular opportunities to share information, such as at the stay and play sessions each half term. Parents are fully involved in their child's learning from the start. The setting has established good links with the local schools and the children's centre in order to support children and their families and there are practical procedures in place for sharing information with other early years settings that children attend. This ensures a shared understanding of children's individual needs can be developed. The management has a clear vision for the setting and the thorough self-evaluation includes the views of children, parents and practitioners. This feedback is continually used to inform and develop action plans that will improve the provision for children. For example, current plans include undertaking the Herts Quality Standards accreditation and the provision of longer opening hours developing into wraparound care service for children.

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	EY464652
Local authority	Hertfordshire
Inspection number	926071
Type of provision	Sessional provision
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 17
Total number of places	20
Number of children on roll	24
Name of provider	Barkway Playgroup Committee
Date of previous inspection	not applicable
Telephone number	01763848283

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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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