

Inspection of Abington Vale PlaySchool

10 Bridgewater Drive, Bridgewater Drive, Northampton, Northants NN3 3AF

Inspection date: 10 May 2021

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	Inadequate
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What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is good

Children demonstrate positive attitudes to their play and learning. On arrival, they enthusiastically greet their friends and staff and settle quickly to their chosen activities. This demonstrates that children are happy to attend the playschool and feel safe. Those children who display signs of anxiety are well supported by staff. This is because staff work well in partnership with parents and share information about children's care and emotional needs.

Children who have additional needs are particularly well supported at this playschool, and staff have high expectations for all children. Those children who require additional support are quickly identified by staff. This means adaptations to activities enable every child to take part and enjoy their time at the setting. For example, all children develop confidence to explore different textures as they play with shaving foam, sand and paint.

Children behave well. Staff use effective ways to help them manage their feelings. They make use of puppets, books and comfortable quiet areas, both inside and outside, to support children and reassure them. Children understand the 'golden rules' at playschool and talk about why these are in place. For example, to be kind to their friends and to keep everyone safe.

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

- Since the last inspection, significant improvements have been made and embedded in practice. For example, all staff complete safeguarding training. In team meetings they discuss signs and symptoms of abuse and the procedures to follow in the event of concerns about child protection. Throughout the COVID-19 (coronavirus) pandemic, the manager continues to work closely with staff. Together they implement the curriculum to support the children who attended during the lockdown and keep in contact with families whose children did not attend. When children return, staff support them to settle back in and identify any gaps in their learning, planning activities to help them catch up.
- Staff take account of children's interests and have a clear intent for what they want children to learn. Children enjoy dressing up as superheroes. Staff provide them with small superhero figures to support not only their interest but their understanding of numbers and counting. Staff extend children's vocabulary by introducing interesting words. These include 'x-ray vision' and 'infinity'. Children become fully involved and enjoy using the new words they have learned.
- Staff find out from parents about the experiences children have at home and plan activities to broaden these. For example, children help to plant a herb garden. They use their senses to feel the textures of the plants and sniff the mint leaves. Children learn how to care for the plants as staff help them to

understand what plants need to grow.

- The skilled manager and staff identify children who require additional support. They work closely with the parents and outside agencies to provide a consistent approach to children's specific needs. Children who need additional support with their speech and language have activities planned that help them to develop. For example, books and games that promote their speaking skills.
- The playschool has developed a number of speech and language bags. These contain activities for children to do at home with their parents. These bags are also available for younger children and those who speak English as an additional language. This effective partnership results in children making progress and beginning to catch up in their learning.
- Staff are kind and welcoming to children and spend lots of time playing with them. This positive interaction helps children develop secure attachments. Children are confident to approach staff for reassurance or to ask for things they need. Lively conversations take place throughout the day. Staff support children's independence. They show children how to put on the dressing up outfits and how to spread butter on their toast. Staff praise children for their efforts and achievements, which encourages them to persist and keep trying.
- Children know the routines of the day and they respond positively to staff when they remind them about the expectations for behaviour. Children are learning to respect one another and recognise individuality and diversity. They enjoy looking at a world map and talk about the different countries their families originate from. Staff spend time talking to children during their play. However, occasionally, when staff ask questions, they move on too quickly with further questions before children can consider what they want to say in response.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff know how to keep children safe and how to promote their welfare. Refresher safeguarding training is in place for staff. Discussions about the policies and procedures, as well as considering different safeguarding scenarios during team meetings, help staff feel confident about the signs of abuse and neglect. Effective risk assessments are in place. Staff provide careful supervision during activities, which contributes to children's safety. Thorough procedures and checks are in place for the recruitment of suitable staff. Existing staff make an annual declaration to confirm their ongoing suitability to work with children.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- build on staff's questioning techniques to allow children time to think and respond, in order to help them express their own ideas.

Setting details

Unique reference number	220115
Local authority	West Northamptonshire
Inspection number	10132047
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	2 to 4
Total number of places	24
Number of children on roll	38
Name of registered person	Abington Vale Playgroup Committee
Registered person unique reference number	RP522412
Telephone number	01604 603345
Date of previous inspection	6 November 2019

Information about this early years setting

Abington Vale PlaySchool registered in 1992 and is managed by a committee. It is situated in the Abington Vale area of Northampton. The playschool employs seven members of childcare staff. Of these, four hold early years qualifications at level 3. The playschool opens Monday to Friday during term time. Sessions are from 9am until 3.30pm. The playschool provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Melanie Eastwell

Inspection activities

- This was the first routine inspection the provider received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the provider and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the provider.
- The inspector observed the quality of education during activities indoors and outdoors, and assessed the impact this has on children's learning.
- The inspector and the manager completed a joint observation together.
- The inspector and the deputy manager completed a learning walk together.
- The inspector held meetings with the manager, the deputy and a member of staff. She reviewed relevant documentation and evidence of the suitability of staff working in the playschool.
- The inspector spoke with staff and children during the inspection.
- The inspector spoke to a parent during the inspection and took account of their views.

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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