

# Harlequins Private Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	223216
<b>Inspection date</b>	12 March 2008
<b>Inspector</b>	Alison Edwards
<b>Setting Address</b>	1a George Street, Enderby, Leicester, Leicestershire, LE19 4NQ
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<b>Type of inspection</b>	Integrated
<b>Type of care</b>	Full day care

## ABOUT THIS INSPECTION

The purpose of this inspection is to assure government, parents and the public of the quality of childcare and, if applicable, of nursery education. The inspection was carried out under Part XA Children Act 1989 as introduced by the Care Standards Act 2000 and, where nursery education is provided, under Schedule 26 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.

This report details the main strengths and any areas for improvement identified during the inspection. The judgements included in the report are made in relation to the outcomes for children set out in the Children Act 2004; the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding; and, where nursery education is provided, the *Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage*.

The report includes information on any complaints about the childcare provision which Ofsted has received since the last inspection or registration or 1 April 2004 whichever is the later.

### The key inspection judgements and what they mean

*Outstanding: this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality*

*Good: this aspect of the provision is strong*

*Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound*

*Inadequate: this aspect of the provision is not good enough*

For more information about early years inspections, please see the booklet *Are you ready for your inspection?* which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk).

## THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE AND NURSERY EDUCATION

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

The quality and standards of the care are good. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are good.

### WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Harlequins Day Nursery opened in 1999. It is privately run and offers full day care to a maximum of 20 children up to the age of five years. It operates from a two-storey listed building in the village of Enderby in the Blaby district of Leicestershire and serves the surrounding area. Babies and toddlers are based in a ground floor playroom with adjacent nappy-changing and toileting facilities. Older children are based in a first floor playroom with an adjacent cloakroom. Office, reception, laundry and kitchen facilities are provided on the ground floor. There is an enclosed garden for outdoor play.

There are currently 27 children on roll. This includes 10 three- and four-year-olds, funded to receive nursery education. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The nursery supports a small number of children with disabilities and/or learning difficulties. The nursery opens within the hours of 07:15 and 18:00 from Monday to Friday for 51 weeks of the year. Including the proprietor, there are 10 regular staff working with children. Of these, five hold early years qualifications at Level 3 and two hold qualifications at Level 2.

## THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

### **Helping children to be healthy**

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in clean, warm and well-maintained premises, so helping to promote their well-being. They show growing awareness of how to keep themselves healthy, for example, as one child reminds another to cover her mouth to "catch the cough". Staff follow good hygiene practices when changing younger children's nappies, for example, using disposable gloves and aprons, and cleaning changing surfaces between use. These procedures help to reduce risks of cross-infection. Parents are reminded of revised national advice on exclusion periods for specific illnesses and infections, so helping to reduce risks of contagion. First aid supplies are readily accessible throughout the nursery. A rolling programme of training ensures most staff maintain current paediatric first aid qualifications. Parental consent is sought to take children to hospital in the event of any emergency. These arrangements help to ensure staff are able to act in children's best interests in the event of any accident or sudden illness.

Children across the age range usually benefit from daily or twice daily opportunities to enjoy energetic play in the fresh air in the enclosed garden or through visits to a local park. Children enjoy steering wheeled toys, running freely with streamers, or climbing on a large climbing frame, so enabling them to exercise their large muscle skills. Within the premises, younger children experience different sensations and textures as they climb and slide on a smaller frame sited below a selection of tactile streamers. They develop their coordination as they handle balloons or sturdy plastic bottles filled with lentils, glitter or water. They show growing dexterity as they pick up and crunch cornflakes, or make finger patterns in cocoa powder, when helping to prepare crispy cakes. Older children use pencils, crayons and brushes with growing control as they make their own imaginative pictures of horses, snakes or family members, or as they fit construction pieces together. However, they less consistently make purposeful use of small tools such as pencil sharpeners, hole punches or sticky tape to fully extend their dexterity.

Staff take careful account of information about any specified health or dietary requirements when planning and preparing children's meals. These are varied, appetising and nutritious, so helping children to develop healthy eating habits. For example, children enjoy healthy snacks such as rice cakes and chopped fruit, with lunches such as roast chicken and vegetables followed by rice pudding and afternoon teas such as crackers, cheese, salad vegetables and dips. Older children are confident in pouring their own drinks of milk or water, whenever they want a drink, so ensuring they take sufficient fluids. Younger children are encouraged to drink freely from their own individual water beakers. These are frequently refreshed, and readily accessible throughout the day. Children begin to learn about aspects of healthy eating and food preparation within their daily routines. For example, pre-school children put pictures of the fruit and vegetables that they enjoy on a wall chart, or help make banana smoothies and cheese scones.

### **Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe**

The provision is good.

Children are very settled and relaxed in the welcoming and attractive premises. Available space and equipment is organised well to meet their needs. For example, labelled pegs, low benches and shoe racks enable children to develop independence in dealing with their outdoor clothes. Easy access to a cloakroom enables older children to develop growing independence in toileting. The two playrooms are well-organised, with lots of well-labelled and accessible storage for toys and books, so enabling children to access these safely and independently. Many well-captioned

displays of children's independent paintings and drawings create an attractive and stimulating environment, and show children that their creativity is valued.

A secure boundary, together with an electronic buzzer access system, help to minimise risks of children leaving the premises unsupervised, or of unauthorised adults gaining access. Many sensible precautions are in place to help maintain children's safety. For example, hinged gates in the foyer and on the first floor landing controls children's access to the stairs. An additional child-height hand rail helps older children make safe and confident supervised use of the stairs. Vision panels in internal doors minimise risks to children playing nearby, and hot drinks are kept out of children's play rooms. Staff show a sound awareness of the procedures to be followed in the event of an emergency such as a fire or a child going missing. Risk assessments are used to identify any particular hazards arising in specific areas of the premises or through particular activities, such as water play. These assessments provide a useful basis for staff to identify positive steps to reduce any such hazards. Children are helped towards a growing awareness of safety issues within their play and activities, for example, through visits by local community police officers, or discussion of stories such as 'Red Riding Hood' or 'Jack and the Beanstalk'.

Staff are aware of what child abuse and neglect mean and of their responsibility to notify the relevant agency of any concerns about a child. However, the current child protection policy does not fully reflect nationally agreed procedures with regard to the steps to be taken in the event of any allegation against a member of staff. Consequently, this potentially limits the nursery's ability to act in children's best interests should any such allegation arise.

### **Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do**

The provision is good.

Children across the age range benefit from confident and relaxed relationships with staff in which they are recognised as individuals. This helps to ensure that they feel valued, and that activities and experiences are suited to their interests and needs. Staff prioritise spending time listening and talking with children. They confidently introduce and support flexible and spontaneous play opportunities to build on children's interests. For example, adults working with toddlers build on their interest in a length of sari fabric to develop simple hide and seek games and to provide a simple 'pond' for imaginary ducks to swim on as children enjoy singing about 'Five little ducks'. From an early age, children begin to show sustained interest in their play. For example, toddlers show concentration and enjoyment as they explore the textures of breakfast cereal and cocoa powder with their fingers, or use sturdy spoons to stir the syrup mixture and fill paper cases when making crispy cakes. Staff often make imaginative use of good quality play equipment and found materials to create a stimulating environment for children. For example, toddlers experience different textures and sensations as streamers of cellophane, ribbon and metallic paper tickle their faces as they clamber and slide on a low climbing frame sited beneath them.

### **Nursery Education**

The quality of teaching and learning for the nursery education programme is good. Staff have a sufficiently clear understanding of the 'Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage' to enable them to develop programme of activities and experiences providing generally balanced coverage across all aspects of learning. They are often confident in making good use of children's own ideas and interests to develop meaningful play and learning opportunities. For example, they extend children's interest in playing with dolls into sustained and purposeful hospital role

play by tactfully suggesting use of relevant dressing-up clothes and props such as a medical kit to care for the dolls. Staff make effective use of observations of children's activities and skills to track children's development within individual aspects of learning and to identify specific steps to help them make further progress. However, these records are not yet fully effective in providing a clear overview of children's overall progress through the stepping stones towards the early learning goals.

Children's personal and social skills are developing well. They learn that they are recognised and valued as individuals when staff take account of their preferences at meal times or show interest and awareness as they talk about events and experiences at home. Children take growing responsibility for themselves as they pour out their own drinks or select and put away their preferred play materials from well-labelled low storage drawers. They learn to cooperate and negotiate with others as they register their interest in taking turns on the computers. They handle toys and play materials with care. They begin to recognise each others' feelings and individuality, for example, as they observe and discuss the emotions represented in photographs of different facial expressions.

Children show sustained interest and enjoyment when listening to stories, whether in large groups or individually. They readily use books independently, for example, when a child looks through a factual book about animals to try to identify a plastic animal from the sand tray. Children are very confident in talking to adults and other children about their experiences and ideas, for example, as they explain that they are painting a blue horse with a happy mouth. Children begin to show an understanding of initial sounds as they participate in games such as 'I spy'. They readily enjoy using mark-making materials such as crayons, felt tips and chalks as they choose to decorate cardboard tubes with zig-zag or circle patterns. They begin to develop purposeful writing in their pretend play when using clip boards in a 'builder's yard'. Many children confidently recognise their own names, for example, as they find their special card on arrival. They sometimes begin to try and write their names, for example, to identify their own paintings and drawings.

Children show confident awareness of shape within their daily activities. For example, a child tells an adult she has made a pair of triangle glasses with a plastic construction pieces, whilst children settling down for register time tell staff they have made a corner shape on the floor, like a square or a rectangle. Children begin to explore size as they compare the lengths of different cardboard tubes or choose appropriate diameter laces and cords to use in threading activities. Children often use number names in their play, sometimes beginning to count reliably to five and above, for example, as they play with plastic animals in the sand tray. They begin to compare and combine numbers as they sort plastic dogs into sets of different sizes and colours, or as they sing different number songs.

A variety of activities, loosely linked to themes such as spring or festivals, help to support children's knowledge and understanding of the world. They learn about their local community as they visit a nearby park or library, or through visits from 'people who help us' such as community police officers. They learn about the wider world as they learn rhymes from Gujarati or taste Chinese food. Children show interest in varied aspects of technology as they confidently use a keyboard and mouse to move images on a computer screen, or as they explain how a blender mixes up milk and bananas. They show excitement and interest in aspects of the natural world, for example, as they freeze plastic animals within ice cubes, or as they try and catch bubbles and streamers blowing in the wind. They sometimes participate in adult-led activities introducing them to simple techniques, such as using split pins to make movable figures. However, they have fewer well-planned and challenging opportunities to freely explore the

use of a good range of small tools and fastening materials, or to fully extend their purposeful and challenging exploration of the natural world, for example, by purposefully exploring what conditions help plants grow, or by comparing magnetic and non-magnetic materials.

Children know that their own imagination and creativity is valued because many of their independent paintings, drawings and collages are carefully displayed and captioned. They make use of a variety of materials and techniques to represent their ideas through colour, texture and form. For example, they use shades of white, blue and black paints, and sparkling items such as glitter, to represent their ideas of winter. Children spontaneously use items such as cardboard tubes to tap out rhythms. They create different types of instruments in adult-led activities, for example, as they make maracas or tissue-box guitars. Staff actively promote children's purposeful and sustained role play, for example, as they help children develop hospital play from their self-chosen play with dolls, or as they build up complex play in scenarios such as a 'builder's yard' over a period of time.

### **Helping children make a positive contribution**

The provision is good.

Children across the age range are confident in their relationships and engaged in their play in this friendly and welcoming environment. They learn to recognise and respect others as they greet each other by name with a 'welcome' song, or as staff gently encourage younger children to share and take turns when using dressing up resources. They show growing awareness of their own and others' emotions. For example, older children independently recreate the expressions shown on an 'emotions' poster as they look at their own reflections in unbreakable mirrors. Older children develop good levels of independence in many self-care tasks, such as putting on their own outdoor clothes or pouring their own drinks. Children behave appropriately in a range of different situations, for example, as older children listen attentively to a group story or as younger children readily sit sociably together to eat at snack and meal times.

Throughout the nursery, children enjoy using a variety of resources and play materials helping to introduce them to aspects of diversity. For example, toddlers show pleasure in dressing up in child-sized saris or Chinese jackets, whilst pre-school children show sustained interest when completing jigsaw puzzle portraits of children with different skin tones and hair styles, or when playing with miniature figures with a variety of mobility aids. Children are introduced to aspects of different cultures and religions when they taste Chinese or Indian foods, listen to stories linked to Diwali or Chinese New Year, or make diwali and Chinese lanterns. Staff recognise that children may have a range of disabilities and/or learning difficulties and readily work with parents and other relevant professionals to support children's inclusion. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Parents speak positively of the nursery's friendly and personal approach, which enables them to feel confident in the care offered to their children. Initial visits enable them to view the facilities, meet staff and gain an initial overview of the arrangements for their children's care. Staff take account of parents' knowledge of their children's individual needs and preferences. For example, they seek and record information about children's personal and contact details and about their preferred care routines and activities. This helps adults to work in partnership to support children's needs. Daily care sheets are used throughout the nursery to inform parents of aspects of their children's care, such as what they have eaten and whether they have slept, so supplementing informal discussion between parents and staff at the start and end of the day. Weekly communication diaries enable parents and staff to share more detailed information about children's interests, experiences and skills. Staff are clear on the value of encouraging

parents to discuss any queries or concerns so that any such issues can be resolved quickly in children's best interests. However, the complaints policy does not fully reflect the nationally agreed procedures to be followed in the event of any formal complaint by parents. This potentially limits the nursery's ability to deal with any such incident in children's best interests.

The partnership with parents and carers of children in receipt of funding for early education is good. Prospective parents receive a useful summary of the areas of learning in the nursery's prospectus and regular newsletters contain additional details of current themes and activities. This information helps parents to gain an overview of the Foundation Stage of children's learning. Parents are able to view their children's developmental folder on request, so enabling them to see photographs, observation notes and a check list of their children's progress. Parents' evenings are held twice a year, enabling parents and staff to more systematically review a report of children's progress and suggested next steps for their development.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

Effective recruitment procedures are in place to ensure that only cleared staff have unsupervised access to children. Staffing is carefully organised to ensure that good adult:child ratios are maintained in all areas of the nursery at all times. This helps to ensure children are consistently well-supervised and cared for. Daily attendance registers clearly record which children present at any time, and which staff are on duty within the nursery. There are clear records of children's individual personal and health details, and of their contact details, so helping to underpin their care effectively. Accident and medication records contain required details and are shared with parents, so helping adults work in partnership to meet children's needs. Policies and procedures are readily accessible and are generally effective in helping to underpin children's care effectively.

The leadership and management of early education is good. An induction programme helps to ensure that new staff are aware of their responsibilities for children's welfare within the nursery. Ongoing appraisal systems enable staff and management to review and agree areas for individual continued professional development to extend staff's early years skills and knowledge. The nursery makes use of the advice of local authority support staff to help monitor the effectiveness of its provision and to identify future action plans to further enhance children's care and learning. Overall children's needs are met.

## **Improvements since the last inspection**

At the last inspection, the provider was asked to improve day care provision by ensuring that the pillar in the ground floor room did not pose a hazard, that staff records were readily accessible, that parents signed records of any accidents on the day of the incident, and that procedures were developed to be followed in the event of any outings, or of a child being lost.

Padding is now securely fixed around the lower part of the supporting pillar in the ground floor play room, so reducing risks of children injuring themselves. Systems are now in place to ensure that parents sign any accident records on the day of the incident, so helping to ensure adults share information relevant to children's welfare. A checklist has been developed to help staff identify appropriate precautions and equipment for the safe conduct of any outings. Staff records are now readily accessible, identifying the clearances undertaken to ensure adults' suitability to work with children.

At the last inspection, the provider was also asked to improve the nursery education provision by improving access to, and presentation of, resources for reading and writing. Children now readily use a variety of interesting fiction and non-fiction books which are easily accessible to them in an attractive book corner. They often use purposeful writing in their pretend play, for example, as they use clip boards in a builder's yard, and readily use a selection of materials such as pencils, wax crayons and felt tips in independent mark-making.

### **Complaints since the last inspection**

Since the last inspection there have been no complaints made to Ofsted that required the provider or Ofsted to take any action to meet the National Standards.

The provider is required to keep a record of complaints made by parents, which they can see on request. The complaints record may contain complaints other than those made to Ofsted.

## **THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE AND NURSERY EDUCATION**

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

The quality and standards of the care are good. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are good.

### **WHAT MUST BE DONE TO SECURE FUTURE IMPROVEMENT?**

#### **The quality and standards of the care**

To improve the quality and standards of care further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- ensure the child protection policy fully reflects nationally agreed procedures with regard to the steps to be taken in the event of any allegations against staff
- ensure the complaints policy fully reflects the nationally agreed procedures with regard to the steps to be taken in the event of any formal complaint by parents.

#### **The quality and standards of the nursery education**

To improve the quality and standards of nursery education further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- develop the use of records of assessment to give a clearer overview of children's progress through the stepping stones towards the early learning goals across all areas of learning
- develop the presentation of resources and activities to provide optimum challenge, progression and independence for children's learning with particular regard to the use of small tools and fastening items and the exploration and investigation of materials and natural processes.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Complaints about Ofsted Early Years: concerns or complaints about Ofsted's role in regulating and inspecting childcare and early education* (HMI ref no 2599) which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)