

# Hartley House Childcare Unit

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	117120
<b>Inspection date</b>	05 December 2007
<b>Inspector</b>	Christine Slaney
<b>Setting Address</b>	Charfield Drive, Egguckland, Plymouth, Devon, PL6 5PS
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<b>Registered person</b>	The Trustees of Hartley House Childcare Unit
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Integrated
<b>Type of care</b>	Full day care, Out of School 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?

Hartley House Childcare Unit opened in 1986. It operates from a classroom within a Community College in Eggbuckland, on the outskirts of Plymouth. It is run by a voluntary committee and provides full day care and out of school care during school term times. Out of school care is also provided during the school holidays. The unit serves the local area and children from Eggbuckland Vale Primary School, Widey Primary School and Manadon Vale Primary School are escorted to the out of school club by staff from the centre.

There are currently 29 children from birth to five years on roll. This includes 13 children in receipt of nursery education funding. The setting supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and children for whom English is an additional language. The group opens five days a week for 50 weeks of the year. Sessions are from 09:00 to 11.30 and 12.30 to 15.00. Lunch is available between 11.30 and 12.30. The after school club opens five days a week from 15.00 to 18.00. Care in the school holidays is available five days a week between 8.00 and 18.00.

Nine staff work with the children. Six staff members hold appropriate qualifications and one staff member is currently on a training programme. The group receive support from the local authority.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

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

The provision is good.

Children enjoy a healthy lifestyle. This includes daily opportunities for outside play. As a result they experience fresh air and exercise everyday. In addition the group is looking to further improve the immediate outside play area. This would enable children to independently access in a safe and secure environment. Children use a variety of large and small equipment, which promotes their muscle development. Children also make good use of the indoor environment. This means they move with confidence, safely negotiating obstacles including equipment like tables and chairs.

Children learn at snack time to make healthy choices. They are frequently offered snacks like apples, bananas grapes, cucumber and peppers. In addition, they pour their own drinks and self select their own cups. Children who have special dietary needs have their requirements appropriately met, by staff who work closely with parents in order to remain up-to-date in their knowledge.

Children's health is well promoted. This is because staff protect them from the spread of infection through good health and hygiene procedures. For example disposable gloves and aprons are worn when nappies are changed. Children are increasingly independent in their own personal care. For example, they identify when the paper towel dispenser is empty and needs to be refilled. As a result, children learn the procedures for their own personal hygiene. There is a clear sickness policy, which ensures parents know that children must not attend if they have infectious illnesses.

Children's medication and accidents are well managed. Staff hold current first aid certificates and first aid resources are easily available. Children's health needs are further supported because there are clear monitoring processes in place. These include written consent signed by parents for seeking medical advice or treatment. These ensure parents are informed of accidents and administration of medicines or first aid.

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

The provision is good.

Children are safe and well cared for due to the vigilant approach of staff regarding safety. The premises are clean, well maintained and secure and there are clear procedures in place to ensure the doors are locked at all times. In addition, visitors to the building are requested to sign in and carefully monitored.

Risk assessments of the setting are clearly recorded and includes monitoring accidents. Children are also appropriately protected when they are out on outings due to the risk assessments in place and the appropriate staff ratios used. Fire safety equipment is checked regularly and fire drills are frequently practised. These further promote children's safety in an emergency. Staff in the after schools club supervise children well, for example, collecting children from their teachers at the end of the day. However, the procedure for collecting children at the end of

school initiate events, like choir or football practice is less clear. This means there is a risk of inappropriate and rapid action, leading to a lack of safety for some children using the after schools club.

Children use the equipment and resources independently. These are in good condition, low-level facilities and furniture enable children to access these activities safely.

Staff have a good understanding of their responsibilities in safeguarding children. There is a comprehensive child protection policy of which all staff are thoroughly aware.

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

The provision is good.

Children are happy and well occupied. They benefit from the friendly and welcoming atmosphere and as a result settle quickly to play. Activities and experiences are varied and interesting. Staff use the Birth to three matters framework to plan activities. They have correctly identified the need to continue to develop their knowledge and understanding of the framework to ensure they support children's own interests. Children and staff share good relationships with the adults who work alongside them. Children use a good range of play provision and resources. These are organised effectively to enable children to access them independently. Children particularly enjoy playing with treasure baskets. These include a range of natural materials which children thoroughly enjoy exploring.

#### **Nursery Education.**

Teaching and learning is good. Children are making good progress towards the early learning goals in all areas of learning. The staff team are dedicated and committed to providing good education. They have a secure understanding of the Foundation Stage and interact well with the children. This means children are keen to learn and eagerly explore the activities that are set out for them. These include craft, construction and role play like dressing up as super heroes. Children are able to access the computer independently and use simple programmes.

Children are confident, independent and have good self-esteem. This is because staff give children time to settle into the setting at their own pace. Children are showing increasing levels of independence as they select and carry out their own activities. This includes their own health and hygiene needs, for example, children spontaneously ask staff to replace paper towels in dispensers when these are empty. Children's own curiosity as learners is developing. Staff recognise the importance of engaging children's own interest, for instance, there are opportunities for children to participate in adult led activities like snack time and child initiated play like role play. This means children become engrossed and complete activities. They become proud of their own achievements, which include making crowns for Christmas. Children help to tidy away and staff offer encouragement and praise. Children concentrate well during a range of play opportunities, which include well known routines, such as, circle time. However, some children can be distracted by frequent interruptions. This is because circle time activities are located next to the kitchen area. Children move confidently, with good control and co-ordination. They show an awareness of space both for themselves and others, for example, they avoid obstacles like tables and each other as they move around the room.

There are systems in place to monitor teaching methods and practice, for example, regular appraisals and self assessments take place. The planning system has recently been changed to include a child-centred approach. This provides a balanced curriculum, which provides good

support to enable each child to progress at their own individual pace. In addition, there are plans to introduce more opportunities for children to enjoy letters, sounds and phonics to the curriculum. Staff have a good knowledge of the children's starting points, because they discuss them with parents prior to children starting. Staff regularly observe and assess children's progress. Consequently, children are proud of their achievements, raising their self esteem and helping them to make good progress towards the early learning goals. Children's achievements and developments are monitored appropriately and transition records are used.

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

The provision is good.

Children are very warmly welcomed, valued and included in a child friendly environment, where their self esteem is well promoted, for example when they can see their art work displayed. Displays, books and other resources and activities encourage children's awareness of cultural diversity. Children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are given effective support. Children develop a strong sense of belonging to the group. This is because each child has their own special place in which to keep their things.

Children behave well. They enjoy helping to tidy up and put equipment away. Children consistently receive praise and encouragement. This helps develop children self-esteem. Children's social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is fostered.

Partnership with parents and carers is good. Parents are informed about the curriculum and involved in their children's progress. They receive comprehensive information about the setting, which includes regular newsletters and prospectus. There are daily opportunities for verbal exchange of information to help children's individual needs. This means, children receive good levels of continuity of care between home and the setting.

### **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

Children are cared for by a team of dedicated and qualified staff who work together to provide smoothly run sessions. As a result, children know what to expect and settle quickly. Children benefit from playing in a child friendly environment where appropriate supervision is given. There are good staff recruitment procedures. All documentation including registers, children's information records and parental consents are well maintained and confidentially stored.

Leadership and management is good. There are effective systems in place to monitor and maintain the good quality provision for nursery education. This includes staff appraisals and an ongoing self-assessment document, as well as participating in a quality assurance scheme. The setting is pro-active in keeping up-to-date with changes and information regarding children's learning. Staff regularly attend training to develop their roles and knowledge of various aspects of children's care and education. They seek advice and support from local authority advisors as required, and maintain good links with the school. This helps children make a smooth transition to school. The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

### **Improvements since the last inspection**

At the last inspection of the quality of care, the group were asked to review and update documentation to ensure policies and procedures remain appropriate to the group. This means

parents are now more aware of relevant procedures including recording fire drills. In addition the group were asked to review the procedures for hygienically maintaining the carpets, particularly in the baby room. The baby room area has now been refurbished, as a result the carpets are now clean and hygienic.

At the last inspection of the quality of nursery education, the group were asked plan to provide opportunities for children to develop an understanding that information can be retrieved from books and for children to use climbing equipment more frequently. The planning system has recently under gone a big change and now links more effectively to children own interests. It is difficult to see the impact as the system is still very new. However, the pre school supervisor is very aware of the importance of ensuring children have opportunities to climb and retrieve information from books. In addition, the setting was asked to devise a system to ensure all parents receive sufficient information and evidence of their child's progress towards the early learning goals. In discussion with parents they are now more aware of their children's progress and the early learning goals.

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

Since the last inspection Ofsted received two complaints that required the provider to take action in order to meet the National Standards. The complaints related to National Standard 1: Suitable person, National Standard 2: Organisation, National Standard 3: Care Learning and Play, National Standard 4: Physical Environment, National Standard 6: Safety, National Standard 11: Behaviour and National Standard 12: Working in Partnership with Parents and Carers.

The first complaint raised concerns that unchecked individuals were being left unsupervised with children, adult child ratios were not being met, there is insufficient space for outdoor play, a baby room was being used by older children and had inadequate space, children were not being supervised at all times, insufficient steps taken to promote safety when children played outside and staff have inadequate behaviour management techniques. Ofsted conducted an unannounced visit and evidence was found that some National Standards were not being met. As a result, Three actions were set under National Standard 1, National Standard 2 and National Standard 6. The provider responded detailing the steps they have taken to address the issues which Ofsted considered appropriate. In view of this Ofsted took no further action.

The second complaint raised concerns that adult: child ratios were not being met and concerns regarding the deployment of staff within the setting. Ofsted carried out an unannounced visit. During this visit the inspector observed the interaction between staff and children and reviewed the documentation for the setting. As a result five actions were set under National Standard 1, National Standard 2, National Standard 4, National Standard 7: Health and National Standard 14: Documentation.

The provider responded to the actions and Ofsted conducted further visits and identified that the provider had addressed the actions and was satisfied that the National Standards were being met. The provider remained qualified for registration.

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"

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### 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):

- continue to develop staff's knowledge and understanding of children under three years of age
- ensure the procedures for transporting children from school events to after school are clear

#### 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):

- continue to develop the learning environment to ensure children have good opportunities to explore, experiment plan and make decisions for themselves. Include large group activities like circle time.

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)