

# Hickory House Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

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**Unique reference number** EY305830  
**Inspection date** 10/10/2008  
**Inspector** Susan Mann

**Setting address** Health Protection Agency, Porton Down, Salisbury,  
Wiltshire, SP4 0JG

**Telephone number** 01980 612634

**Email**

**Type of setting** Childcare on non-domestic premises

## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under Sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006 on the quality and standards of the registered early years provision. 'Early years provision' refers to provision regulated by Ofsted for children from birth to 31 August following their fifth birthday (the early years age group). The registered person must ensure that this provision complies with the statutory framework for children's learning, development and welfare, known as the *Early Years Foundation Stage*.

The report includes information on any complaints about the childcare provision which Ofsted has received since the last inspection or registration whichever is the later, which require Ofsted or the provider to take action in Annex C.

The provider must provide a copy of this report to all parents with children at the setting where reasonably practicable. The provider must provide a copy of the report to any other person who asks for one, but may charge a fee for this service (The Childcare (Inspection) Regulations 2008 regulations 9 and 10).

The setting also makes provision for children older than the early years age group which is registered on the voluntary and/or compulsory part(s) of the Childcare Register. This report does not include an evaluation of that provision, but a comment about compliance with the requirements of the Childcare Register is included in Annex B.

## **Description of the setting**

Hickory House Nursery opened in 1993. It is a rural workplace day nursery run on behalf of the Health Protection Agency by Bright Horizons Family Solutions Ltd. It is situated at Porton Down and is open only to employees of the Defence Science and Technology Laboratory and the Health Protection Agency. The nursery operates from a single storey prefabricated building that is accessed by ramps. There are four playrooms. Children have access to a fully enclosed outside play facility.

The nursery is registered to care for a maximum of 65 children aged from birth to under five years in the early years age group and five children aged between five and under eight years on the Compulsory Childcare Register. There are currently 72 children on roll. This includes 19 children in receipt of funded nursery education. The nursery supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, and those who speak English as an additional language.

The setting opens five days a week all year round. Sessions are from 08.15 to 17.30. Children attend for a variety of sessions.

There are 13 full-time and three part-time staff working with the children, of whom 13 hold an appropriate early years qualification. The manager and deputy manager are supernumerary. There is also an onsite cook. The setting receives support from the Local Authority.

## **Overall effectiveness of the early years provision**

The nursery demonstrates exemplary practice and organisation to ensure all children thrive and make exceptional progress. Children enjoy superb experiences because staff fully appreciate the uniqueness of each child and tailor their care, learning and development to meet their needs fully. The nursery is dedicated to continuous improvement, and takes highly effective steps to review the provision and implement initiatives and improvements so that children receive a dynamic experience that is fun and educational.

## **What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?**

To further improve the high quality early years provision the registered person should consider:

- continue to develop existing systems of collaborating with other providers over the provision of EYFS for children who attend more than one setting.

## **The leadership and management of the early years provision**

The leadership and management of the nursery have excellent systems in place to monitor the provision of care and education which means it is of a consistently high standard. The parent company, Bright Horizons, provides very good support and guidance for the management of the nursery. The process of self evaluation is ongoing and given a high priority. Children, parents and staff are given frequent opportunities to contribute to this which ensures that the nursery provision successfully meets the needs of children and their families. The nursery liaises with other providers so that children who attend more than one setting benefit from a collaborative approach to their care and education. This process has just begun and the nursery has identified the need for this to be developed further. The special educational needs coordinator is very experienced and knowledgeable about providing very strong support for children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. She works well with the manager, staff team and parents to ensure children receive a well planned provision in liaison with the relevant external agencies. All children demonstrate an exceptional sense of belonging and involvement in nursery life.

The nursery manager is exceptionally enthusiastic and highly capable in her role to maintain consistently high standards, and she is given excellent assistance from the deputy manager and senior staff. A generous staffing ratio and very good deployment of staff means that children benefit considerably from a superb level of support and adult interaction. The nursery has very good systems in place to allow staff to maximise their potential and skills. There are robust procedures in place for recruitment, induction and appraisal. Training and development is a well planned process that is ongoing for all staff.

Policies and procedures are comprehensive and very well written to provide an excellent framework for the running of the nursery. These are regularly reviewed to ensure they reflect current legislation and requirements. The organisation of health and safety checks is exemplary so that children benefit from a wholly safe environment. The deputy manager oversees a number of rigorous checks and risk assessments which identify hazards and limit risk.

## **The quality and standards of the early years provision**

Children of all ages are given fabulous opportunities to discover all areas of learning and development through a wealth of exciting activities and play. They are highly motivated to become inquisitive learners because the facilities, staff and systems in place to plan and monitor their progress are superb. Each room provides a vibrant learning environment that is organised exceptionally well to enable children to select activities and resources independently in each area of the curriculum so that they become very self assured. Well presented displays of children's work adorn the walls of each room which shows children their efforts are valued and celebrated. The large and secure outdoor area is used by all children throughout each day. It is extremely well resourced, with a soft surface play area, a garden section for planting and growing, and a large playground.

Children make excellent progress because systems used throughout the nursery for providing learning and development are wholly robust. Staff are motivated and

skilled so they provide dynamic support for children's education. Children and staff demonstrate great affection and warmth for each other, which helps foster children's happiness and development. Children's progress is observed and assessed so that key persons can accurately plan their next steps of learning. The nursery embraces parental involvement in their child's learning so that children benefit from a consistent approach to their care and education. They enjoy regular key conference meetings with staff and contribute to their child's observation records by sharing achievements or anecdotes from home. The nursery shares planned next steps so that parents can support this at home if they wish.

Children make rapid progress through a successful mix of child-initiated play and adult-led activities so that all areas of learning are fully covered. Planning of the curriculum is based on observations made of children so that it is relevant and enjoyable. Throughout the nursery, staff give a high priority to developing children's speech and language. For example, in the Tittlemice room, staff have excellent and clearly spoken verbal interactions with babies, who babble happily in response. In the Bobtails, children aged between two and three years smile and laugh with one another as they sing familiar rhymes and action songs, such as 'Wind the Bobbin Up'.

Staff plan activities very well so that children gain the maximum enjoyment and learning from them. For example, in the outdoor area, a group of children are wholly engaged in a planting activity. Every learning opportunity is seized and developed because the staff member has planned the activity very well. Children explore the composition of the soil, the creatures living in the ground and the effect of rain on the earth. Children recollect an activity when they painted flowers as they plant tulip bulbs in the garden, building on the knowledge they gained from this art activity.

Children demonstrate exceptional relationships with one another as they develop friendships. For example, a group of children in the Tiggywinkles room chat animatedly to one another about what they watched on television in their homes as they play with pieces of clay. In the Puddleducks, a young child shows great happiness at seeing a child arrive and quickly settles to play alongside him. They learn about the wider world through activities and events that are relevant to their own experiences. Younger children have parties to celebrate their birthdays and when they leave. Older children develop their learning about the Jewish religion when the role play area becomes a synagogue for a while and they learn about the traditions and practices.

All aspects of children's welfare are promoted in an exemplary manner. Robust procedures to safeguard children are in place and staff are confident in their knowledge of the correct procedures to follow should they have a concern about a child. Children thrive at the nursery because great attention is paid to promoting their good health. Children relish the nutritious meals that are prepared on the premises from fresh ingredients by the nursery cook. They learn how to maintain their own hygiene well by learning how to wash their hands properly to prevent the spread of germs. Children develop an extremely good understanding of how to keep safe. They know to take care when playing in the sand, and when using the large wooden blocks so no one gets hurt.

## Annex A: record of inspection judgements

### 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*

### Overall effectiveness

<b>How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?</b>	Outstanding
How well does the provision promote inclusive practice?	Outstanding
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement.	Outstanding

### Leadership and management

<b>How effectively is provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?</b>	Outstanding
How effective is the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement?	Outstanding
How well does the setting work in partnership with parents and others?	Outstanding
How well are children safeguarded?	Outstanding

### Quality and standards

<b>How effectively are children in the Early Years Foundation Stage helped to learn and develop?</b>	Outstanding
<b>How effectively is the welfare of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage promoted?</b>	Outstanding
How well are children helped to stay safe?	Outstanding
How well are children helped to be healthy?	Outstanding
How well are children helped to enjoy and achieve?	Outstanding
How well are children helped to make a positive contribution?	Outstanding
How well are children helped develop skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being?	Outstanding

Any complaints about the inspection or report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

## **Annex B: the Childcare Register**

The provider confirms that the requirements of the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are:

Met

## **Annex C: complaint/s made to Ofsted**

This section of the report includes details of any complaint/s made to Ofsted when:

- we took action for the provider to meet the requirements of the Early Years Register; or
- we asked the provider to take action in order to meet the requirements of the Early Years Register; or
- the provider had already taken any necessary action to meet the requirements of the Early Years Register.

We will not report on any complaint where the provider met the requirements of the Early Years Register or did not require any action by Ofsted or the registered provider.

### **Detail of the complaint/s**

There have been no complaints made to Ofsted since the last inspection.

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.