

Hobby Horse Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number

150061

Inspection date

08/12/2008

Inspector

Charalambos Loizou

Setting address

The Old Canteen, Russell First School, Russell Street, Stony
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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

Hobby Horse Pre-school opened in 1984 and now operates from a converted school building in the grounds of the local First School in Stony Stratford, Milton Keynes. The group is open each weekday morning from 09.15 to 11.45. Children have access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

The pre-school is registered on the Early Years Register and both the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. A maximum of 30 children may attend the pre-school at any one time. There are currently 29 children in the early years age group on roll. Of these, 11 children receive funding for nursery education. Children attend from the local and surrounding areas. There are currently no children on roll who speak English as an additional language. The pre-school employs four full-time staff, and one part-time member of staff. Four have an early years qualification and one is working towards relevant qualifications.

Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

This is a satisfactory pre-school setting. The staff ensure that the children enjoy learning and play in a safe, secure and welcoming family environment. Well qualified staff are committed to ensuring the children's welfare and have established good links with parents and carers. Children of all backgrounds and abilities are welcomed and their efforts valued. There have been adequate improvements to the pre-school since its last inspection and its track record demonstrates satisfactory capacity to maintain continuous improvement.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To further improve the early years provision the registered person should:

- use more robust assessments of children's development to plan the next steps in their learning
- provide more challenging tasks and improve the way the staff question the children to extend children's thinking and learning
- improve self-evaluation to help identify priorities for improvement and develop more efficient administrative procedures to keep policies and practice up to date

The leadership and management of the early years provision

The staff are committed to the children's welfare and safety and are well organised. This is reflected in the efficient way resources are prepared and set out before each session. There are effective systems in place to register the children and to check them out when parents collect them, and these ensure that the children are safe and secure in the setting. The trustees and manager provide a good range of information about the pre-school and this is accessible to parents

and on display during each session. Safeguarding arrangements are fully in place and key staff are always on duty who hold paediatric first aid qualifications, as well as having appropriate qualifications to supervise and care for children in the early years age group. All the staff have undergone enhanced checks to ensure that they are suitable to work with children. All the recommendations from the previous inspection have been addressed. However, assessments of the children are not sharp enough to extend their learning and development or to challenge children of different ages and abilities. The staff know the children well and there are good relationships with parents and carers, as well as with other nurseries, including the host school and neighbouring Nursery Centre. The manager and staff share ideas and reflect on what works well or what could be improved, for example, new snack time arrangements have been put in place to provide better opportunities for the children to eat a snack and socialise with their classmates. This level of reflection is beginning to be part of routine self-evaluation but is not yet embedded in practice to ensure that clear priorities for improvement are established. As yet, self-evaluation is not systematic or robust enough for the trustees and manager to establish core areas for development, although their commitment and that of the staff underpins a clear determination to secure continued improvement.

The quality and standards of the early years provision

The children enjoy their time at the club and make satisfactory progress. Appropriate books and resources are set out for them to choose, although the reading area is not always as accessible as it should be when the children have time to choose where to go. Activities are stimulating and varied and include drawing, writing, reading, role play and exploring shapes and large spaces outdoors. Adults are vigilant and ensure that children are safe and occupied. There is room for improvement in the way adults question the children. There are missed opportunities to extend what the children are doing or to pose questions that will lead to further investigation. The children have good opportunities to handle books, talk about stories, sing nursery rhymes or share stories with an adult. This helps to develop their confidence and communication skills. There are good routines in place to ensure the children are safe with good sight lines to help supervise them when they move from one area to another. The staff support the children well and have established good relationships. The children do particularly well learning about healthy living by growing vegetables and eating healthy snacks. There is a good balance of welfare and care so children settle into routines, although assessments are not always linked to the six areas of learning or to specific outcomes, such as the extent to which the children learn skills or achieve. Some children find it difficult to settle or choose an activity they can engage in for sustained periods, also reflecting shortcomings in the way adults assess and monitor the children's choices and preferences. Children cooperate well with others. The staff take good account of parents' views and have established a good working partnership with parents, carers and other settings. The range of activities and opportunities offered during each session prepares children adequately for the future as well as helping them to make a positive contribution to the local community. Cultural diversity is celebrated well with special topics and themes, as well as opportunities for the children to engage in role play or listen to

stories from around the world. Visits to the shops and local community help the children to understand their place in their community.

Annex A: record of inspection judgements

The key inspection judgements and what they mean

Grade 1 is Outstanding: this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality

Grade 2 is Good: this aspect of the provision is strong

Grade 3 is Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound

Grade 4 is Inadequate: this aspect of the provision is not good enough

Overall effectiveness

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?	3
How well does the provision promote inclusive practice?	3
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement.	3

Leadership and management

How effectively is provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	3
How effective is the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement?	3
How well does the setting work in partnership with parents and others?	2
How well are children safeguarded?	3

Quality and standards

How effectively are children in the Early Years Foundation Stage helped to learn and develop?	3
How effectively is the welfare of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage promoted?	3
How well are children helped to stay safe?	3
How well are children helped to be healthy?	2
How well are children helped to enjoy and achieve?	3
How well are children helped to make a positive contribution?	3
How well are children helped develop skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being?	3

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

Annex B: the Childcare Register

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