

The University Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number EY378136
Inspection date 24/02/2009
Inspector Anneliese Fox-Jones

Setting address University of Hertfordshire, College Lane, HATFIELD,
Hertfordshire, AL10 9AB
Telephone number 07775 816 620
Email l.1.scales@herts.ac.uk
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

The University Day Nursery is run by the University of Hertfordshire. It has been running for many years and re-registered when it moved to new purpose built premises in 2008. It is situated on the campus of Hatfield University. The accommodation is all on one level. It operates from four main base rooms. Children have access to a spacious 'Piazza' play area and have an outside play area which is fully enclosed and secure. Also within this area is a separate sleep room, separate kitchen and staff's cloakroom facilities. Children can attend for a variety of sessions. The nursery primarily serves staff and students on the university campus.

The setting is registered on the Early Years Register and on both the compulsory and the voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. A maximum of 62 children in the early years age range may attend at any one time. There are currently 46 children on roll in the early years age group. The nursery opens five days a week all year round, except for bank holidays and one week at Christmas. Sessions are from 08:00 and 18:30 Monday to Thursdays and until 17:30 on Fridays. Full-time and sessional care is offered. The nursery currently employs 16 staff. There are 14 members of staff who have early years qualifications, with three staff members qualified to degree level and one working towards a further child care qualification.

Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good. The environment is secure and appealing, and planned particularly well so children have a broad range of experiences that support all areas of their learning and development. Partnerships with parents, carers and others are successful in promoting strong links between the children's home and the nursery and in ensuring children's individual needs are met. There are good procedures to promote children's welfare and they are making good progress in their learning and development. Most documentation required for the safe and efficient management of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) are in place. Outcomes for children are positively promoted through the settings effective monitoring, evaluation and reflective practice; for example, they have identified plans to develop an enriching outdoor environment.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- plan and provide more opportunities and resources for outside play which are easily accessible, challenging and enable children to explore, use their senses and be physically active and exuberant.

To fully meet the specific requirements of the EYFS, the registered person must:

- conduct a full risk assessment identifying aspects of 12/03/2009

the environment that need to be checked on a regular basis and ensure risk assessments for each type of outing are also dated and reviewed. (Suitable premises, environment and equipment) (Also applies to both parts of the Childcare Register)

The leadership and management of the early years provision

Staff are guided by a strong management team who have a clear vision for the setting. The manager values her staff team and knows and utilises their skills well. A high proportion of staff are exceptionally well-qualified in early years, including to degree level. Effective policies and procedures are in place to ensure children's welfare, care and safety are promoted and an effective system of checks ensures that all staff are suitably qualified and vetted. They are deployed well to support children and ensure routines run smoothly. The team are beginning to reflect on and review their practice in order to make necessary changes and positive improvements for children, such as acting on parent questionnaire feedback, developing free-flow play between indoors and outdoor areas and consistency in planning and observation throughout the nursery. Professional development is encouraged and staff have opportunities to update their knowledge through attending appropriate courses.

There are effective safeguarding procedures in place. Staff know what to do if they have any concerns and they supervise children closely. Staff are vigilant and effective steps are taken to ensure children are cared for in a safe and secure environment. Most documentation is in place and well-organised. However, risk assessments are not systematically monitored to ensure all potential hazards are minimised and extended to include any outings.

The nursery promotes inclusion well by providing equal chances for all children. As a result, children are happy and confident in their play and develop a strong sense of belonging as they feel included and welcomed into the setting. Parents and carers receive some useful information about the nursery and the activities that are planned for the children. Staff involve parents in their children's learning through the information displayed, regular newsletters, daily verbal communication and inviting them to share any items, skills or news that they might have. Parents complete an initial profile showing children's needs and routines when they start and this is reviewed as their children change rooms and progress through the nursery. Parents receive detailed termly written reports about how their child is achieving and progressing. Consequently, there are effective ways of sharing children's learning and development information with parents. Children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are fully included and positively welcomed into the setting.

The quality and standards of the early years provision

Staff provide a stimulating play environment which encourages children to become confident and independent learners. They use the EYFS framework to plan activities which are adapted to meet the individual needs of children. They understand that every child has differing capabilities and work closely as a team and with parents to ensure children's needs are met. An effective key worker system helps staff respond to children's individual interests and to build strong relationships. Curriculum planning is linked to the six areas of learning and is informative for all staff and parents to see. Staff monitor children's learning through observing and assessing children to identify progress and achievements and this information is used to inform future planning. The indoor environment is organised well so there is a variety of activities on offer and children learn to make decisions as they move around their space. They particularly enjoy the opportunities to be creative using a variety of different materials, such as play dough, chunky chinks, cornflour, sand and lentils. However, planning for the outdoors does not currently extend from the indoor environment. This means that children are less able to freely explore all aspects of their development. Staff support children well; they join in their play and interact to encourage children's thinking and communication. Older children are challenged effectively in their learning because staff have a sound knowledge of the EYFS and displayed plans ensure they have clear learning intentions and direction. Children are at ease in a calm environment where staff respond promptly and appropriately to the children's individual needs.

Children explore as freely as they can and with interest, playing independently and in groups, thereby developing good relationships with their peers. Children have many opportunities to become familiar with the written word as they see print in their environment through books, signs, attractive displays and enjoy mark making in their play. Children self-register on arrival with their own name labels and see their name displayed on their own pegs and drawers. Children listen and respond with enjoyment when listening to stories and are developing language for thinking. For example, in 'Mr Wolf's Pancakes', younger children delight in mixing and tasting a variety of different pancakes and older children walk to the shops to buy their ingredients before they can make theirs. Children's physical skills are fostered well with many opportunities to exercise, such as walks around the campus, garden play and sessions taught by a peripatetic teacher for 'Yoga Mites' and 'Tiny Mites' exercises. Children develop confidence and understanding in problem solving, reasoning and numeracy with mathematical concepts reinforced through a varied range of activities which involve numbers, shapes and patterns. They are interested to explore 'measuring worms' to compare colour, size and length, as they are effectively questioned by staff who are competent in extending the children's knowledge and thinking. When using resources such as tape recorders, computers, push and effect toys, children of all ages become aware of the use of information technology. Staff promote an awareness of diversity through discussion, resources and various activities planned throughout the year which help children learn and value themselves and others in society.

Children are made aware of playing safely through the setting's 'Golden Rules' and

adults consistently reinforce children's understanding of these. Children are kept safe in the setting because staff maintain suitable safety precautions such as regular fire drills and practical discussions on road safety to ensure potential risks to the children are minimised. Children make positive relationships because behaviour is well-managed. Children enjoy a healthy snack and a balanced diet. Staff ensure that all dietary needs are met appropriately. Menus are displayed and shared with parents. Mealtimes are used as a time to encourage independence and social interaction.

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?	2
How well does the provision promote inclusive practice?	2
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement.	2

Leadership and management

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

Quality and standards

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

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:

Not Met (with actions)

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

Not Met (with actions)

The registered provider does not meet the requirements of the compulsory and or voluntary part/s of the Childcare Register.

To comply with the requirements of the compulsory part of the Childcare Register, the registered person must take the following action/s by the specified date:

- Take action as specified in the early years section of the report. (Safeguarding and promoting children's welfare)

12/03/2009

To comply with the requirements of the voluntary part of the Childcare Register, the registered person must take the following action/s by the specified date:

- Take action as specified in the early years section of the report. (Safeguarding and promoting children's welfare)

12/03/2009

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 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.