

Highfield Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number

EY306881

Inspection date

02/03/2009

Inspector

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Setting address

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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).

Description of the setting

Highfield Pre-school opened in 2001 and operates from three rooms in its own building. Children have access to an enclosed outdoor play area. The nursery is situated in a residential area on the outskirts of Harpenden in Hertfordshire. It is open each weekday from 09.00 to 15.00 during term times only.

The nursery is registered on the Early Years Register. A maximum of 40 children may attend the nursery at any one time. There are currently 28 children aged from two years nine months to under five years on roll, some in part-time places. The nursery currently supports a number of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and a number of children who speak English as an additional language.

There are four members of staff, all of whom hold appropriate early years qualifications to at least NVQ Level 3. One member of staff holds a teaching qualification. The setting provides funded early education for three and four-year-olds.

Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good. Highfield Pre-school offers all children a welcoming and stimulating learning environment in which they are valued and respected as individuals. Effective steps are taken by the setting to evaluate its provision for children's welfare, learning and development and this means that plans for the setting are well targeted to bring about further improvements to children's learning and development. Children's individual needs are very effectively met in close partnership with their parents and other professionals and the setting has made links with other providers so that the continuity of children's care and learning is well supported when they move to another setting.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- ensure that the identified next steps in children's learning are more clearly linked to the Early Years Foundation Stage and to the planning.

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

- carry out and record a full risk assessment for each type of outing, which includes an assessment of the required adult to child ratios. (Safeguarding and promoting children's welfare) 16/03/2009
- ensure all records are easily accessible and available for inspection by Ofsted. (Documentation) 16/03/2009

The leadership and management of the early years provision

Children's welfare, care and safety are promoted well. Staff are well qualified and work extremely well together as a team. As a result, sessions run smoothly and children are fully and effectively supported in their play and learning at all times. The pre-school strives to provide and maintain the highest quality of care and education for all children and is currently in the process of renewing their accreditation in the 'Herts Quality Standards quality assurance scheme'. Their self-evaluation has allowed them to accurately identify their strengths and areas for improvement and the feedback that they seek from parents and carers forms an important part of this ongoing monitoring process. For example, parental questionnaires are sent out to seek feedback on issues such as the effectiveness of the pre-school's system of rewarding children with stickers and parents and carers are invited to come in for 'Play and Observe' sessions with their child and are asked to fill in a form to evaluate and comment on their experience.

Staff work closely with children's parents and carers to develop a good understanding of children's needs when they first begin to attend and ensure that they are always available to discuss any issues with parents and carers if this is required. Newsletters and displays keep parents and carers well informed about the day-to-day running of the nursery and each term they have a meeting to discuss and share their children's assessment records with the staff so that they can continue to support and extend their learning and development at home. Parents and carers who do not see staff on a daily basis are provided with a daily diary so that two way communication is maintained and they can be included in their children's care and development.

Robust recruitment and vetting procedures ensure that children's welfare is safeguarded. The group's policies and procedures are effective and most of the required documentation for the safe and efficient management of the setting is in place. However, the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) requirements to have written risk assessments for outings and to ensure that all records are easily accessible for inspection by Ofsted are not met.

The quality and standards of the early years provision

The pre-school promotes children's welfare, learning and development very effectively. Children's safety is prioritised and furniture, equipment and toys are good quality, well-maintained and meet all children's needs. Effective measures are in place to minimise the risks both inside and outside and discussions with staff about practical experiences within their everyday routines help children learn to keep themselves safe. Staff understand the signs and symptoms that would give rise to concerns about children's welfare and well-being, and appropriate procedures are in place to safeguard children. Robust hygiene procedures ensure that children's good health and well-being is consistently promoted and that all necessary steps are taken to prevent the spread of infection. In addition, children enjoy healthy snacks, are encouraged to develop good hygiene routines and to think about the importance that these play in developing a healthy lifestyle.

Children enjoy a wide range of interesting and challenging play experiences with a good balance between adult-led and child-initiated activities both in and out of doors. These help them to make good progress towards the early learning goals in all areas of learning. The staff demonstrate very good teaching techniques and their interactions cleverly help to motivate and engross children in activities and encourage them to develop thinking and reasoning skills. Regular observations and assessments of what children know and can do help staff to identify any particular needs and to plan the next steps in children's learning. In addition, their record keeping systems allow them to track children's progression towards the early learning goals so that their learning and development can be appropriately monitored over time. When children move on, these records are shared with their next setting to facilitate the continuity of care and learning. However, because the identified next steps for children's learning are not yet sufficiently linked to the EYFS or to the planning of activities, staff cannot always monitor and ensure these learning needs are being fully and effectively met in all areas of learning. Children with additional learning and/or development needs are clearly identified and are well provided for, and children with English as an additional language are well supported so that they can make good progress given their different starting points and capabilities.

The indoor environment is bright and attractive and is carefully laid out to provide flexibility for children to play in small and large groups and to allow them to access resources and activities independently so that they can pursue and explore their own particular learning interests as they wish. Staff provide effective and timely intervention if children require support but also encourage their independence whenever possible and therefore children are developing high levels of confidence and self-esteem. All the children behave well and show good levels of involvement and cooperation as they work together to help to tidy away the toys or enthusiastically join in a whole group singing session. They enjoy regular opportunities to use a computer to develop good mouse skills and they learn to understand what they see going on in the world around them as they develop role play scenarios with each other in the imaginative play area or use puppets to develop their own stories.

Children develop good communication and literacy skills through the daily opportunities they have to look at books and to experiment with mark-making and are learning to recognise their written name as they find their name card to put onto the registration board on arrival and departure. They develop creative skills as they make models, paint and glue collages and they extend their physical skills, both outside on resources such as bikes, swings and a climbing frame as well as inside during music and movement sessions.

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 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.