

# Hertswood Centre Playscheme

Inspection report for early years provision

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**Unique reference number** 130528  
**Inspection date** 14/04/2009  
**Inspector** Anneliese Fox-Jones

**Setting address** Hertswood Leisure Trust, Hertswood Centre, Potters Lane,  
Borehamwood, Hertfordshire, WD6 5LG

**Telephone number** 020 8387 5600

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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 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).

Children only attend this setting before and/or after the school day and/or during the school holidays. The judgements in this report reflect the quality of early years provision offered to children during those periods.

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

Hertswood Centre Play scheme is a registered charity run by Hertsmere Leisure. It opened in July 1996 and operates from a leisure centre in Borehamwood, Hertfordshire during school holidays. Children have access to the sports hall, squash courts and dance studio. Supervised outdoor activities are organised in the playing fields behind the centre and a shaded tarmac area is used to set up a bouncy castle. Access to the centre is at ground level directly from the car park and there is a lift access for rooms used on the first floor.

The scheme operates during school holidays, Monday to Friday from 08:30 to 17:30. The play scheme is registered on the Early Years Register and both the compulsory and the voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. A maximum of 70 children in the early years age group may attend at any one time. The scheme also accommodates children over eight years. The setting supports a number of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and offers 'assisted' places through Hertfordshire's Children, Schools and Families.

Some members of permanent staff are employed by Hertsmere Leisure and work in the crèche or on term time leisure activities for children. Many of the remaining staff team are students. They develop their skills in childcare through local authority and in-house training.

## Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is satisfactory. Hertswood Centre Playscheme provides a welcoming, safe and generally inclusive environment where children acquire and develop skills in most areas of learning despite weaknesses in some systems of recording. Children experience close and warm relationships with each other and staff which help them to feel secure and settled. Staff generally promote children's welfare through the implementation of appropriate policies and most documentation, as well as their general awareness of children's individual needs. The provision uses effective self-evaluation to set targets for future development.

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

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

- review the system for observing children's learning and achievements so that parents can be more effectively informed.

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

- improve staffing arrangements to ensure safety and to meet the adult:child ratios (Staffing arrangements) 25/05/2009
- maintain appropriate records which include an accurate daily record of the children's hours of 25/05/2009

attendance and the names of the children's key workers. (Documentation)

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

The play scheme is led and managed efficiently on a day-to-day basis. Some effective policies and procedures ensure children's welfare, care and safety are promoted. However, accurate attendance records of children's times of arrival and departure are not currently maintained. Staff attend induction training prior to the holiday play scheme commencing in many core areas, such as safeguarding and health and safety. They have a sound understanding of safeguarding issues. For the majority of the time staff are deployed appropriately to supervise children and ensure routines run smoothly but there are times when the adult to child ratio is not suitably maintained. Consequently this has a negative impact on children's safety. However, children play safely as the management team ensure that robust risk assessments are in place, so as to minimise any hazards to children, including specific sports activities, on and off site.

Most previous recommendations have been addressed and action taken has generally been satisfactory. The day-to-day management team are beginning to reflect on and review their practice in order to make changes and improvements that have a positive outcome for children, such as acting on comments from parents and children and continuing to develop new activities for the children. They recognise that not all improvements can be made immediately but demonstrate some vision for future developments.

The play scheme generally promotes inclusive practice by providing equal chances for children and encouraging all children to participate in activities whilst providing alternative choices for those who wish. Staff work closely with parents to ensure they obtain information relating to children's individual needs and are able to meet these appropriately. Children and their families from all backgrounds are welcomed into the group. Parents and carers receive useful information about the play scheme and the activities that are planned for the children. They have some opportunities to discuss and contribute to their children's achievements and have regular contact with some staff. Although this does not include an effective key person system. Consequently, effective systems are not fully established for observing, sharing information and ensuring children's experiences are tailored to meet their individual needs.

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

Children are happy in the setting and enjoy taking part in a variety of activities. An awareness of hygiene is promoted appropriately because children are encouraged to wash their hands before eating and they enjoy a healthy snack of fruit, such as cucumber and satsumas, provided by the play scheme. Children's good health is promoted through their ability to eat in comfort and the many opportunities to be physically active, such as the organisation of games, soft play sessions and access

to a variety of sports equipment. Drinking water is made accessible so that children are not at risk of becoming dehydrated.

Children access a sufficient range of resources which support most aspects of their learning. The provision offers activities based around sports and creative arts although there are some opportunities to extend children's learning in other areas of learning. For example, children are developing valuable social skills as they learning to share resources and respect others needs. They use their counting skills as they play games, such as basket ball and rounders. They show enthusiasm to build with Lego and construct using various materials. Children show interest in the activities on offer and are happily engaged throughout most of the day. They enthusiastically take part and enjoy using the soft play equipment, often taking challenges in climbing, balancing and problem solving, whilst manoeuvring various large soft shapes.

There is a sufficient mix of adult-led and freely chosen activities so that children learn to work in a team but are also able to explore independently. Staff plan a variety of activities each week so that children know what is on offer each day. For example, children enjoy parachute games, relay races and creative activities. Whilst this supports children in enjoying and achieving and learning skills for the future this is sometimes impeded by weaknesses in monitoring and sharing information about children's progress towards the early learning goals. These systems are in their early stages; the provision has begun to make a few simple observations of what children are doing. However, how this is used to plan appropriate activities so that children move on in their learning and how staff will exchange this information, is not in place.

Children are kept appropriately safe in the setting because they are signed in and out by parents or carers, they wear coloured wrist bands, are taught road safety when they are out and are kept secure once on site, ensuring no unauthorised access to the building. All activities are risk assessed so that members of staff in charge can minimise any potential risks to children. Children are supported appropriately to behave well and they are regularly made aware of playing safely through following the settings 'Golden Rules'. Praise and encouragement are used to promote children's self-esteem and confidence.

## 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

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

### Leadership and management

<b>How effectively is provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?</b>	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?	3
How well are children safeguarded?	3

### Quality and standards

<b>How effectively are children in the Early Years Foundation Stage helped to learn and develop?</b>	3
<b>How effectively is the welfare of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage promoted?</b>	3
How well are children helped to stay safe?	3
How well are children helped to be healthy?	3
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

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## 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.(Records to be kept) 25/05/2009

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.(Records to be kept) 25/05/2009