

Ellingham House Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	110473
Inspection date	28/07/2009
Inspector	Anne Mitchell
Setting address	Ellingham, Ringwood, Hampshire, BH24 3PJ
Telephone number	01425 473723
Email	hb@ellinghamhouse.co.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 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

Ellingham House Day Nursery opened in 1996. It is privately owned and managed and operates from several rooms from a converted house in a rural location. There is also a separate building that houses the pre-school for the older children. All areas on the ground floor are fully accessible and the baby unit operates on the first floor. The nursery serves the local and wider area.

The nursery is registered on the Early years Register, as well as the compulsory part of the Childcare Register. A maximum of 86 children may attend the nursery at any one time, all of whom may be in the early years age group. There are currently 172 children in the early years age group on roll. This includes 79 children who receive funding for early education. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The nursery welcomes children who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The nursery opens five days a week all year round. Sessions are from 08.00 until 18.00.

There are 29 staff who work directly with the children. Of these, 23 hold relevant childcare qualifications. The nursery also employs a chef and assistant to prepare children's meals. The nursery receives support from the local Early Years.

Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall, the quality of the provision is outstanding. Children's individual needs are very effectively met throughout the nursery through the staff's excellent knowledge of their interests, preferences and specific requirements.

There are successful systems in place to monitor and evaluate practice and these take into account the views of children, families and staff at all levels. Children are making excellent progress towards the early learning goals and flourish in this caring and homely environment.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- continuing to develop systems to ensure that the next steps for children's development are consistently recorded.

The leadership and management of the early years provision

There are rigorous and robust systems in place to ensure that all adults are suitable to have access to children. Many members of staff have attended safeguarding training, and staff at all levels have a secure and confident knowledge and understanding of how to protect children from harm and neglect.

Regular and effective risk assessments ensure that children are safe in the nursery and outside.

The management team value their staff team highly and are eager to promote their personal and professional development. Consequently, staff demonstrate a clear commitment to continued training and there is a secure programme in place. The majority of staff are qualified and experienced in childcare and education. Staff are deployed effectively and the high staff ratio ensures children of all ages enjoy an excellent level of support throughout the day. High quality resources in low level storage enable children to make good choices in their play throughout the day.

The staff and management team are enthusiastic and committed to providing excellent quality care, and put the children first in all they do. Many of the systems to monitor the provision, although informal, are very effective. The owner and manager spend much of their time within the nursery assessing daily practice. All staff are fully involved in the self-evaluation process and the views of parents and their children are used to ensure continuous improvement. In some areas of the nursery, members of staff are responsible for monitoring different areas of learning to ensure children are making the very best use of all resources.

Management and staff have developed a strong partnership with parents and carers. Parents are able to see what the children do each day through the rolling DVD showing in the entrance hall. A comprehensive newsletter provides clear information and nursery news. A well organised website provides additional information, and secure handover systems ensures parents are fully informed of their child's routines and progress. Parents say they enjoy 'good communication through discussion and through daily diary sheets'. They value 'the genuine sense of pride that staff show over children's achievements'. It makes parents confident that staff are genuinely caring. Staff work closely with parents to meet children's individual needs and home routines. The annual summer family barbecue promotes the partnership further.

The quality and standards of the early years provision

Due to the consistently high level of care and affection staff show to children throughout the nursery, children are well settled, and demonstrate excellent levels of confidence and self-esteem. Children are warmly welcomed by their key person and immediately become involved in activities of their choice, or are encouraged to play with their friends. Interaction throughout the whole nursery is very good. Staff engage with all children with genuine interest and enthusiasm, and children are treated equally. Staff are skilled at using open ended questions to encourage children to solve problems and think for themselves. For example, a member of staff asks 'I want to sit opposite X, so where should I be?' Children quickly point to the place she needs to sit. High staff ratios ensure children are always well occupied, and never left without appropriate support or supervision.

Staff engage with babies at all times, with lots of cuddles, verbal interaction, positive facial expression and gestures to aid communication. Babies explore the

baby gym, shake the percussion and play peek-a-boo with key adults. In small groups they play with dough to promote their physical development and fine motor skills. They enjoy moving through the ball pool, smiling at their key person as they pop up to say hello. Home routines are followed regarding eating, sleeping and nappy changing to ensure a consistent approach to their care. After a free play session, the toddlers come together and sing, and talk together about what they did at the weekend. They talk about farm animals then sing a song, making farm animal noises and using signing to support their communication. Children participate with enthusiasm. In the second toddler room, they make flags to put on their sandcastles, or use their imaginations in the popular role play area. They gently rock the baby dolls and put them gently into the carry cot. Staff here have recently introduced a photo timeline of the daily routines to promote children's understanding and support children with additional needs. Children push their toes into the sand and build castles with different shaped containers. They engage affectionately with their key person, and are very much at home in this environment. In the conservatory children use their imaginations well, brushing a doll's hair and pretending to wash hair with shampoo, and drying it with the dryer. One child gently brushes her friend's hair, being careful not to pull. Outside children play with bean bags, bats and balls, and mini-stilts in the garden. They learn to take turns on the swing and count the pushes as their friends have a swing.

Children in the pre-school also enjoy an excellent level of interaction. Adults give clear instructions for an interactive music session. The member of staff explains that she will point to children one by one while they all sing, when it is their turn to choose an instrument from the basket. Children are attentive and follow instructions well. They use the percussion instruments, playing loud and quiet, fast and slow, high and low, and talk about 'opposites'. Children are skilled at following rhythms, and participate enthusiastically. Children enjoy gardening activities, growing runner beans, strawberries and sunflowers. They have planted and grown cress and monitor how the vegetables in the nursery garden are growing. In the playground, children make marks with chalk and water with brushes. They have good imaginative skills. One child says to her friend 'You be the mouse and I'll be the goat. I'll show you how to do little jumps. Look'

Children are involved in planning activities. Staff will record things children say and are interested in, and plan from this. For example, children become interested in balancing the soft bricks on their head, during a construction activity, so additional activities are planned around this and extended to challenge more able children. Each child has a record of development, which follows them through the nursery. It gives a clear picture of each child's development, and is illustrated with photographs. Parents have regular opportunities to see this record and are invited to add comments or to work in partnership with key staff to determine children's next steps. Staff are now following new systems to record children's next stages of development, and although staff are very clear about each child's progress, these are not yet consistently recorded.

There is strong liaison between the nursery, parents and other professionals to promote a consistent approach to children's learning and development. Staff have developed effective systems to share information about children's progress with

other childcare providers that children may attend, as well as liaising closely with specialists providing additional support for some children.

Children's health and safety is very effectively promoted in all areas of the nursery. Excellent hygiene routines ensure children are protected from the spread of infection, and learn about healthy lifestyles from an early age. They enjoy plenty of fresh air and exercise in the outdoor play areas and extensive grounds, visiting the nursery's pony and the two sheep, and learning about the local area. Home cooked meals are provided to ensure children have a balanced and nutritious diet. Children eat together with staff who provide good role models. Children eat with enthusiasm and relish their food. They clean their teeth after lunch. One child says 'It keeps my teeth and gums nice and healthy!' Staff remind children 'Don't forget, running is for outside, we walk inside don't we?' Consequently, they are very clear about rules to keep themselves safe indoors and in the garden. Children are skilled at manoeuvring themselves and wheeled toys in the garden, avoiding accidents. They apply sun cream and wear hats in the sun. A child tells an adult 'You have to wear a hat to stop getting a headache!'

Children's behaviour is exemplary. Staff throughout the nursery are consistent in their approach to managing children's behaviour and use positive strategies to encourage children to behave well. They use lots of praise, both verbal and non verbal, such as clapping, smiling and thumbs up. Children are good at taking turns and sharing, and are very caring towards one another. Their confidence and self-esteem is extremely well promoted through ensuring they are provided with activities that are of particular interest to them.

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?	1
How well does the provision promote inclusive practice?	1
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement.	1

Leadership and management

How effectively is provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	1
How effective is the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement?	1
How well does the setting work in partnership with parents and others?	1
How well are children safeguarded?	1

Quality and standards

How effectively are children in the Early Years Foundation Stage helped to learn and develop?	1
How effectively is the welfare of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage promoted?	1
How well are children helped to stay safe?	1
How well are children helped to be healthy?	1
How well are children helped to enjoy and achieve?	1
How well are children helped to make a positive contribution?	1
How well are children helped develop skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being?	1

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Annex B: the Childcare Register

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

Met