

# Houghton Nursery Group

Inspection report for early years provision

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**Unique reference number**

EY334729

**Inspection date**

12/10/2009

**Inspector**

Carys Millican

**Setting address**

Houghton Nursery Group, Jackson Road, Houghton,  
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**Type of setting**

Childcare on non-domestic premises

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## 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.

Please see our website for more information about each childcare provider. We publish inspection reports, conditions of registration and details of complaints we receive where we or the provider take action to meet the requirements of registration.

## **Description of the setting**

Houghton Nursery Group is managed by a committee and operates from a purpose-built building situated near to the main road in the village of Houghton. The setting is open each weekday from 8am to 6pm for 50 weeks of the year. During term time the setting provides a breakfast club between 8am and 8.45am, nursery care between 9am and 3.30pm for early years children and an after school club between 3.30pm and 6pm. During school holidays the setting provides a holiday play scheme each week day between 8pm and 6pm for children between the ages of two and a half and 11 years old. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

The setting is registered on the Early Years Register and the voluntary Childcare Register and Voluntary part of the Childcare Register. A maximum of 26 children aged two and half years to 11 years may attend the setting at any one time. There are currently 15 early years children on roll who attend a number of sessions. The nursery group gets funding for the provision of free early education to children aged three and four.

The setting employs seven staff including an administrator. The six staff who work directly with the children hold appropriate early years qualifications. The setting is a member of the Pre-school Learning Alliance and the National Day Nursery Association.

## **The overall effectiveness of the early years provision**

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Houghton Nursery Group provides children with an excellent start in their learning and development by effectively implementing the Early Years Foundation Stage. Staff recognise children's unique qualities and build on their individual interests in order to provide an interesting, stimulating and an inclusive environment within safe, secure and well resourced play areas. Children are supported well by a team of experienced practitioners who ensure learning is fun and enjoyable. Satisfactory partnerships are in place with parents, other agencies and the local school which enhance the children's time at the nursery and supports their progress and learning. The management have a clear vision for embedding ambition and driving improvement through the self-evaluation processes that are effectively used to ensure the ongoing development and continuous improvement of the setting.

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

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

- review the procedures for gathering information regarding children's starting points and the process for identifying the next steps for individualised learning in planning

- continue to encourage parents involvement in their children's learning at home
- continue to further develop children's understanding in ways of looking after the environment.

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

The management ensure children are kept safe and secure. Robust safeguarding policies and procedures are effectively implemented by dedicated persons and fully trained staff who understand their role and responsibility. A regular reviewed set of policies and procedures that ensure the smooth running of the setting are available for parents and staff in the reception area. The rigorous recruitment procedures in place ensure children are cared for by suitable persons. The staff's ongoing suitability is addressed during annual appraisals. Detailed risk assessments and thorough health and safety practices ensure children are safe indoors, outside, and on outings. Staff complete safety checks before children arrive and before they use areas of the building. Fire safety procedures are discussed with visitors on arrival and practiced with children twice a term.

The manager is a highly motivated and experienced practitioner. She has a clear vision for the future development and improvement of the setting. Staff's personal development plans ensure children are well cared for by highly qualified practitioners. They are highly committed to improving their knowledge and everyday practice by regularly attending core subject training sessions and additional courses. The manager and staff members work effectively as a team. They regularly meet to discuss child issues, planning, resources, and observations. The manager is confident about the strengths of the setting and the areas for improvement and actions taken to improve are well targeted. These action plans containing information discussed during staff meetings, recommendations from past inspections and from advisory team reports and committee discussions. Systems are in place to obtain suggestions and feedback from parents, who are regularly consulted using questionnaires. This information not only informs the nursery's action plan but also the self-evaluation process.

The nursery establishes positive relationships with parents and carers to ensure each child's needs are well met. Parents find the staff very friendly and approachable. They feel that they are kept informed about their children's ongoing development, achievement, and welfare. However, limited information is recorded about children's developmental starting points. Weekly diary sheets are completed by staff which enable parents to make invaluable comments on their children's learning, however, entries by parents are limited and opportunities that encourage parents to support children's learning at home are not fully promoted. The setting has established links with the local school. This enables a smooth transition into the school for all children when required.

Children access a well organised, inclusive and welcoming learning environment. They are supported by experienced key worker staff who provide an extensive selection of accessible resources and a good balance of activities. Children's work

is creatively displayed. Positive images, resources and activities support children's understanding of difference and diversity of the world around them. The manager and staff effectively promote equality of opportunity and work with parents and other agencies to support children's diverse needs. Children, parents and carers feel valued and develop a sense of belonging. They are warmly welcomed into the setting by staff who take the time to talk to them about their child.

## **The quality and standards of the early years provision and outcomes for children**

Children enjoy their time spent at the nursery. They are happy, confident, independent individuals who benefit from the care, activities and play opportunities provided. Children are supported well by qualified practitioners who have a secure understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage. They form strong attachment to their key worker who are aware of their individual needs and interests to support them to achieve good outcomes. Children play in spacious, well resourced playroom where they can independently access suitable age-appropriate resources. An indoor-outdoor classroom is effectively created allowing children free access to fresh air at all times. Resources are stored in labelled containers in low level storage units within language rich continuous play areas. Children make good progress towards the early learning goals. Staff monitor children's play and planning is sufficiently flexible to allow for spontaneous events so staff can respond to children's ideas and interests, for example, cooking pasta, and baking tarts. Staff complete observations as children play which identify the next steps in their learning although this individualised learning is not detailed in the planning. Staff monitor the environment and routines to ensure all children are included and their individual needs are well met.

Children are well behaved and enjoy each others company. They show a sense of achievement as the staff constantly praise them in front of others. Staff follow consistent behaviour management techniques so children know what is expected of them and therefore display positive behaviour. Children have fun and enjoyment. They learn about number, shape and colour spontaneously in activities. They look at letter formation and rhyming words whilst reading books and they play in a language rich environment. Children competently use tools to create pictures and their creativity and imagination are extensively well developed. Children access numerous construction materials to build and design. Their learning is skilfully developed by staff challenging children as they play and using open-ended questioning. This encourages children to think for themselves and promotes language and communication skills.

Children enjoy physical activities. Staff create an indoor-outdoor environment where children access the outdoors as and when they want to with different activities compared with indoors. They independently help themselves to trikes and prams, water and painting easels. Staff support children in all activities constantly praising them thus boosting self-esteem and confidence. Children develop a strong sense of security. They are confident in the company of adults and become self-assured. New children settle easily into the everyday routine of attending nursery.

Children begin to understand the importance of healthy living, hygiene practices and healthy lifestyles. Staff encourage independence and self-help skills such as washing and drying hands and pouring their own water or milk at snack time. The welfare of the children is of paramount importance to the staff therefore they learn safe practices, for example, road safety when they walk to the local farm. Children enjoy sitting together at snack time to eat their healthy snack. Packed lunches are stored appropriately and staff discuss healthy contents with parents. Children are beginning to learn about how to look after the environment such as recycling paper and unwanted clothing.

## 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*

### The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

<b>How well does the setting meet the needs of the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?</b>	2
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	2

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

<b>How effectively is the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?</b>	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	2
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding	2
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	2
The effectiveness of partnerships	3
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	3

### The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
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### Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

<b>Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	2
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	2
The extent to which children feel safe	2
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	2
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	2

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