

Holders Farm Kindergarten

Inspection report for early years provision

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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*.

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Description of the setting

Holders Farm Kindergarten is privately owned and opened in 1971. It operates from two rooms on the ground floor of a converted house in Chelmsford. A maximum of 26 children may attend at any one time. The kindergarten is open each weekday from 9.30am to 3.30pm during school term time. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 54 children from two to under five years on roll. Children attend from the local and wider community. The setting supports a small number of children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, and also supports a small number of children who speak English as an additional language.

The setting employs 12 members of staff. Of these, six staff, including the manager hold appropriate early years qualifications. One member of staff is currently working towards a recognised early years or social care qualification. The setting receives support from the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership (EYDCP), National Day Nurseries Association (NDNA), Pre-School Learning Alliance (PSLA) and works closely with the area Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCO).

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children's welfare needs are met to a good standard within this provision. Staff know the children well and provide a balance of adult-led and free-play opportunities to enable children to make progress across all six areas of learning. The setting is further developing systems to enable it to review and evaluate its practices and procedures which will enable clearer identification of areas for improvement.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- ensure children have access to fresh drinking water at all times (Safeguarding and promoting children's welfare). 24/03/2010

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

- review the organisation and planning of the indoor and outdoor learning environment to provide children with opportunities to initiate their own play and follow their own interests
- review the organisation of snack and meal times to ensure every child

receives an enjoyable and challenging learning and development experience that is tailored to meet their individual needs

- use information gained from observations consistently when planning children's next steps in their learning and development towards the early learning goals and involve parents and others in this process.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children are suitably safeguarded as staff demonstrate sound knowledge about their roles and responsibilities with regards to protecting the children in their care. All adults working and living on the premises are vetted and proof of their clearance is held on file. The premises are kept safe and secure as staff follow clear safety procedures and ensure that the main door is kept locked when children are present. Visitors to the premises are monitored.

The setting has operated on this site for over 30 years under the same management. Many of the staff have worked at the provision for a number of years and talk confidently about their positions. The owner has some plans for the future of the setting which include embedding the changes introduced by the Early Years Foundation Stage and ensuring that staff continuously update their knowledge through training and in-house discussions. The setting is developing systems for reviewing and evaluating practices and procedures to ensure some continuous improvement. However, this system is in its infancy and has not identified some areas for improvement with regards to enabling children to self-direct their play and learning.

All children and their families are valued and respected within this setting. Staff endeavour to celebrate the children's differing needs and backgrounds. The registered person works very closely with outside agencies to enable her to meet every child's needs, for example, she has good links with the area Special Educational Needs Coordinators and liaises effectively with professionals such as speech and language therapists. Toys and resources are easily accessible to enable children to freely self-select play materials. The setting is, however, very well-stocked which can result in the main playrooms appearing overwhelming. Staff are suitably deployed to enable them to supervise and support children well.

The setting has good links with other professionals working with children within the Early Years Foundation Stage age group. It is beginning to further develop links with other settings in the local area. Parents are very complimentary of the care and education their children receive from the kindergarten. Some comments received from parents during feedback point to a gap in the provision's systems for sharing information with parents about their children's learning and development and enabling them to play an active role in identifying their children's next steps in learning.

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

The quality of the provision for children's welfare, learning and development is good as staff know the children in their care well. Children enjoy their time at this kindergarten, playing joyfully with the large range of toys and play equipment on offer to them. They have opportunities to freely choose their play experiences for part of the day. Staff provide some adult-led activities which are generally based around a theme or topic. The sessions are structured to ensure that children sit together in a large group for their mid session snack and group activity. Whilst there are benefits to this part of the day, the organisation of snack and large group time does not facilitate children's natural development of independence skills. Children are very sociable and thoroughly enjoy participating in role play. They congregate in the home corner and devise intricate games, negotiating roles and planning their play. They talk confidently to each other and share real and imaginary situations with staff and their peers. Many children learn to recognise letters and sounds and some begin reading before they leave the provision to go to school. They write clearly and even young children within the setting are beginning to write recognisable letters. Staff are beginning to embrace the changes introduced by the Early Years Foundation Stage and to follow children's interests to help inform their planning. The clearing away of resources to make room for large snack and group time can inhibit the children's natural flow. Staff observe children's play and use their observations to plot children's progress against the development matters format. At present, however, this system does not provide adequate opportunities for staff to identify children's next steps in learning and to use this information productively to inform individual planning.

Children are and feel safe within the provision as staff carry out regular safety checks both indoors and outdoors. A clear record of the checks is kept and monitored by the registered provider. Children develop knowledge about keeping themselves safe as they follow the staff's directions and guidance. Children are encouraged to develop habits which promote their good health, for example, they understand the importance of hand washing and know that they must follow this practice before eating snacks and meals. Children enjoy being active and regularly participate in large group activities which enable them to move in different ways. They play outdoors most days in the premises garden. At present this system does not enable them to move freely between the indoor and outdoor areas and when playing outdoors their participation in activities which promote all six areas of learning is limited. Children are not currently provided with opportunities to access fresh drinking water at all times.

Children are settled and comfortable within the kindergarten. They part from their parents and carers with ease and approach staff confidently. They develop a good sense of belonging within the setting. Children's self-esteem is developed by kind and caring staff offering praise and encouragement throughout the day. Children are encouraged to explore their feelings through discussions with staff and in the large group activities. Opportunities to explore other people's differing needs are provided by staff, for example, during a topic on festivals and celebrations, children learn about Chinese New Year. They use the internet to source

information about the celebration and find out which Chinese animal they are born under. Some toys, books and resources reflect diversity and enable children to develop their knowledge of others.

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

How well does the setting meet the needs of the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?	2
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	3

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

How effectively is the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
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	3
The effectiveness of partnerships	2
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

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	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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