

Snapdragons Nursery & Out of School Club (Weston)

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	EY253622
Inspection date	19/01/2010
Inspector	Angela Cole / Barbara Walters
Setting address	Henley Lodge, Weston Road, Bath, Avon, BA1 2XT
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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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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.

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Description of the setting

Snapdragons Day Nursery and After School and Holiday Club is one of six settings in a group of privately owned nurseries. It opened in 2003 and is located in a large detached house near Victoria Park in Bath. Children have access to areas of the house on three floors and there is a large enclosed garden with a play area suitable for all weather use. The after school club and the holiday play scheme operate from the hall and annex. Children are collected from local schools, such as St. Stephens, St. Mary's and Newbridge. The nursery is open all year round, including bank holidays, with the exception of the Christmas period, it operates from 7.30am until 6.30pm each weekday. The after school club runs from 3pm to 6pm each weekday, while the holiday play scheme runs from 8am to 6pm each weekday during school holidays. The nursery has several pets including two rabbits, a chicken, a hamster and indoor fish.

The nursery is registered by Ofsted on the Early Years Register and on the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. A maximum of 146 children in the early years age range may attend the nursery at any one time. There are currently 250 children on roll; of these 220 children are within the early years age range and some in part-time places. The nursery currently supports a number of children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and a number of children learning English as an additional language.

The owner employs two qualified managers who oversee the day-to-day running of the nursery. The nursery employs 51 members of staff, four of whom are part-time; of these, 28 staff hold appropriate early years qualifications and eight staff are working towards a qualification. There is a qualified teacher who has achieved Early Years Professional Status and two staff are working towards this. Two staff have gained and two are working towards a Foundation Degree in Early Years. The nursery provides funded early education for two, three and four-year-olds.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Well developed knowledge of children's individual needs ensures that staff successfully promote all aspects of children's welfare and learning. Children are safe and secure at all times and enjoy exploring the world around them. The partnership with parents, other providers with whom children have contact and other agencies is a key strength; this contributes significantly to ensuring that all children's needs are met well and they get any additional support they need. As a result children make good progress given their age, ability and starting points. In-depth self-evaluation by the managers and the senior staff team ensures that priorities for future development are identified and acted on, resulting in a service that is responsive to the needs of all families.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- extend the planning to further develop outdoor play in all areas of learning throughout the year
- extend monitoring systems to ensure that children continue to make progress towards each early learning goal.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The nursery is well organised. All required policies, procedures and records are in place, clear and up to date. The confident management well supports the committed staff who enjoy their work, communicate well together and are clear about their delegated roles and responsibilities. Good systems are in place for staff recruitment, induction and regular appraisal, ensuring that the strengths of the adults and areas for development are identified. As a result, the teams of well-qualified staff are motivated, enthusiastic and keen to develop and improve what they offer to the families using the setting. Children are safeguarded effectively through staff knowledge and understanding of required procedures. They receive training and have a secure understanding of the indicators of abuse and neglect. The nursery staff record detailed risk assessments on the premises, high quality resources and types of outings to reduce hazards and ensure the safety of the children.

The nursery effectively promotes equality and diversity. Children's needs are very effectively met as staff are considerate towards their individual requirements and ensure they are happy and relaxed. Staff encourage children to learn about diversity by using signing to help them communicate and by supporting them to be considerate towards one another. Partnership with parents and carers and other agencies is strong. Overall, there is good exchange of detail about the children between the key staff and families so that individual needs are effectively met. Ongoing information is shared through informal feedback at the end of the session, by letter and email; also in the many attractive informative displays. Parents attend regular meetings with the children's key persons to discuss and contribute to their child's progress records. Parents speak highly of the quality of care their children receive and the caring attitude of the staff. Where some children attend other registered settings good links have been built with most of these providers. These ensure that all adults involved with the children contribute to the continuity of their learning and care.

The nursery's self-evaluation, including steps taken to promote improvement, is good. The recommendations and action raised at or since the previous inspection have been effectively tackled in terms of improved outcomes for children, including their safeguarding and educational programme. The nursery has achieved several quality assurance awards; these contribute to the in-depth reflection on practice to recognise strengths and identify areas for further development. Views, comments and preferences of staff, parents and children are also given high regard to ensure that the service is inclusive. For example, there has been rapid development

throughout the nursery of children's profiles under new systems for planning and assessment. Areas identified to improve include refurbishing the baby garden and continuing to increase the support for families to be involved; for example, use of a designated parents' room.

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

Children arrive happily at the nursery. Warm reassurance from staff and clear explanations about the day's special activities help new ones to settle well. The children are happy and motivated and make good progress in their learning. They enjoy an attractive stimulating range of activities and play opportunities that support all areas of learning. From a young age they select toys and activities for themselves which supports their growing independence. Children develop their creative skills well as they experiment with sounds of musical instruments, playing them loudly and quietly. They explore freely as they mix paint colours, design their own patterns and investigate textures of wet and dry sand, soft paint and ice shapes. Children of all ages enjoy new challenges. They effectively use their imagination when playing with items in treasure baskets, building a totem pole and producing a dish of 'noodles with meat balls' from keys and ping pong balls. Children become very independent in seeing to their personal needs, such as putting on craft aprons and deciding when to have their drink and snack. Babies and older children enjoy books; generally they listen intently as staff read and join in with their own comments. They speak confidently during circle times about themselves and their families and share stories with each other at meal times.

Staff carefully plan activities based on their close observations of the children's play and interests, though planning for outdoor activities is less effective in winter. They have a secure understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage to use information gained from their observations to support children's learning through play. All children make good progress towards the early learning goals. Their achievements are observed and recorded in the detailed learning profiles, along with their next steps that are shared with parents. Children in the out-of-school club have very good ownership of their learning. Staff work well with them to set their own targets, such as 'publishing' an original story. The children's key persons have a secure understanding about their ages and stages and have begun to monitor their progress towards the early learning goals. The children gaining a knowledge of English as an additional language and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities are fully included in the life of the nursery. Staff make sure that these children know the daily routine by sharing flash cards and giving them the time and opportunity to show they understand what they will be doing next.

The children's good health and well-being are effectively promoted. Their understanding of healthy hygiene is actively fostered through use of pictures of their friends washing their hands; easy to reach soap dispensers and dryers encourage children to take responsibility in 'washing the germs away'. Children are eager to play in the extensive outdoor spaces that contain good quality equipment, including digging areas and a 'builder's yard'. Active play in the garden encourages

children to develop their physical skills as they climb, balance and run freely. They benefit from opportunities each day to go out in the fresh air and enjoy activities that develop their physical control, including the manoeuvring of wheeled toys. Staff ensure that safety precautions are in place so that children can move freely and they support them well, for example, when using the obstacle course. From a young age children learn how to keep themselves safe; they go up and down stairs carefully and handle large items in the garden with increasing control, including bamboo wands, planks and tyres. Children explore their environment as they dig for worms in the vegetable patch and go on visits, for example, to the local park and zoo.

Throughout the nursery, children gain good skills for the future. They learn to negotiate and willingly take responsibility, as toddlers help tidy the play area and older ones clear away their cups and plates at meal times. The staff have a calm and friendly manner. They are a positive role model for the children who gain self-esteem through regular use of praise and encouragement. Staff are highly consistent in their management of children's behaviour, using distraction and explanations that are always appropriate to their age and understanding. For example, adults put their fingers on lips or hands on heads to gain attention and children consider how their friends may feel if they don't share. Children benefit from the staff's enthusiasm and their close interaction and involvement in the play. Their language development is well fostered as they talk with adults throughout the day. They gain good early reading and writing skills, for example, recognising words on colour cards and making marks in sand and on chalk boards. Children enjoy using technology to support their learning. They are keen to solve problems as they include numbers and positional language in their play, confidently taking one away in songs, such as 'Five speckled frogs'. Pre-school children gain good self-help skills; they are confident to make decisions so are well prepared for transition from the nursery to school.

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	2

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	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	2
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	2

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

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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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Annex B: the Childcare Register

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

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