

# Hickory House Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

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**Unique reference number** EY305830  
**Inspection date** 28/07/2010  
**Inspector** Lorraine Sparey

**Setting address** Health Protection Agency, Porton Down, Salisbury,  
Wiltshire, SP4 0JG

**Telephone number** 01980 612634

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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.

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## Description of the setting

Hickory House Nursery opened in 1993. It is a rural workplace day nursery run on behalf of the Health Protection Agency by Bright Horizons Family Solutions Ltd. It is situated at Porton Down and is open only to employees of the Defence Science and Technology Laboratory and the Health Protection Agency. The nursery operates from a single storey prefabricated building that is accessed by ramps. There are four age appropriate playrooms. Children have access to fully enclosed outside play areas.

The nursery is registered on the Early Years Register and the compulsory part of the Childcare Register . A maximum of 65 children aged from birth to under eight years may attend at any one time. There are currently 80 children on roll, all of whom are in the early years age group. This includes 17 children in receipt of nursery education funding. The nursery supports children with special educational needs and disabilities, and those who speak English as an additional language.

The setting opens five days a week all year round. Sessions are from 8.15am to 5.30pm. Children attend for a variety of sessions.

There are 23 staff working with the children, of whom 15 hold an appropriate early years qualification. The manager and deputy manager are supernumerary, and there is an onsite cook. The setting receives support from the local authority.

## The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is outstanding.

Children are exceptionally confident and highly motivated to learn in the rich and vibrant learning environment. Dynamic, highly skilled staff and excellent communication with parents ensures that children's uniqueness is valued and supported. Individual learning plans enable children to make very rapid progress in all areas of their development and learning. As a consequence all children flourish and thrive within the setting. There are detailed and comprehensive systems to ensure continuous improvement because the setting has clear visions to ensure that outcomes for children are extremely positive.

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

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

- reviewing the lunchtime arrangements to ensure that all children are not waiting too long for their food.

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

Highly effective and successful systems ensure that children are safeguarded throughout the nursery. Staff demonstrate clear knowledge and understanding of the settings policies and procedures to follow in the event of a concern being raised. Regular discussions at staff meetings, in-house and external training ensures that staff develop a secure understanding of protecting children from harm and neglect. Comprehensive and detailed risk assessments are completed throughout the nursery. The health and safety officer ensures that the environment is safe, secure and well maintained promoting children's safety at all times. Rigorous and robust recruitment and vetting procedures ensure that adults working with the children are suitable to do so. All the required documentation is well organised to ensure that the setting delivers exceptional quality care and education. The setting's manager is inspirational and an exceptional role model to all staff throughout the nursery. They work really well together as a team providing high levels of support to each other, which in turn means that children are extremely well supported.

The setting uses the space both inside and outside successfully, enabling children to regularly to move around the different learning environments, ensuring that the curriculum is stimulating and motivating for all children. An extensive range of high-quality resources are provided throughout the nursery which are accessible to the children. Staff have highly effective procedures to ensure that all resources are safe, clean and well maintained. For example, a toddler is enjoying playing with the car lift on a garage which snaps. A member of staff immediately explains to the child that they may hurt themselves and she quickly finds alternative toys to maintain the child's interest and enjoyment. All staff have exceptional knowledge of children's individual needs, family members and their home lives, ensuring that they provide resources and play opportunities to fully support their sense of belonging, building their self-esteem and confidence. A wide range of good quality resources provide positive images of all aspects of our diverse society, promoting children's understanding of valuing differences.

Highly successful systems are in place to monitor and evaluate the whole provision to ensure children are making progress in all areas of their development and learning. Parents, children and staff are fully involved in these to ensure their views provide a valuable asset to the management's assessment. Children are encouraged to take photographs of areas of the nursery they enjoy playing in and other areas that were not quite so appealing. As a result, staff work with the children to create a vibrant construction area with a wide variety of building materials. Staff also introduce a garden area and invite parents to be involved in sharing their skills and knowledge with the children who have enjoyed growing carrots, potatoes and other vegetables. The setting values contributions from the early years team and any suggestions are quickly implemented. Parents' report that their views are welcomed and they are confident to discuss any improvements they feel will benefit the children. For example, parents requested a review of the menu. As a result the management team consulted with various people including a nutritionist and the Caroline Walker Trust to ensure the food provided was of the

highest quality and nutritionally beneficial for all children.

Staff throughout the setting develop exceptionally positive relationships with all parents and carers. They receive detailed and comprehensive information about their children's time within the setting and their progress towards the early learning goals. Parents feel thoroughly involved in their child's learning and development. There are excellent systems in place to enable parents to know exactly what is happening in the nursery at any given time. Newsletters are e-mailed on a weekly basis discussing what the children have been doing and the plans for the next week. Good quality information is provided on notice boards around the nursery. There are formal parent consultation meetings every six months to discuss their child's progress. Parents report that they feel the staff are exceptionally approachable and clearly know their child's individual needs and personalities. Parents state they 'Value the shared approach and seamless transition' throughout the nursery as their children move between the various rooms. They particularly value the family atmosphere that is embedded throughout the nursery. The setting has highly effective systems to share information with other early years settings and professionals to ensure a cohesive approach to children's care and learning.

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

Children are eager to come into the setting and quickly become absorbed in their play. They are confident and highly motivated to try new experiences. Staff provide a rich curriculum and the environment is extremely child-centred to ensure children quickly gain a strong sense of belonging. As a result, children make very rapid progress in all areas of their development and learning. Children's individual needs and interests are planned for and highly skilled staff ensure that all activities are age-appropriate and offer effective challenges for all children. Children in the pre-school room show an interest in pirates after a child brings in their favourite story 'Night Pirates'. They enjoy drawing pictures of pirates and maps of islands where treasure is buried. Staff support and extend children's learning. A child excitedly shows a visiting adult their pirate wall display, explaining that the picture of the skull and cross bones is the pirates' flag, and talks about the various interpretations made by the children. Younger children enjoy exploring the ramp and steps equipment. A child shows great pleasure as they stand on the top calling 'Hello' as parents and other children arrive. Children are fascinated with butterflies they find in the garden. A child points to the butterfly saying 'It's got eyes on its wings'.

Children throughout the nursery show extreme consideration and care to their peers, the adults and the resources. For example, some of the children have recently had new siblings. They benefit from good quality role-play where they look after dolls. A child carefully puts sun cream on their doll before going outside; others carefully wrap their babies in blankets cuddling them. Toddlers enjoy choosing and singing a variety of songs. They enthusiastically join in with the words and familiar actions. Children's language throughout the nursery is developing exceptionally well. With the younger children, staff narrate their play,

so supporting and developing their skills. Older children are extremely confident and engage in conversation with their peers and adults. Children confidently tell a visiting adult about their holidays. They talk about going to France on a ferry which was a slow ferry and how they had to have lots of sleep before they got there. Others excitedly talk about their families. A child is eager to share that it is their daddy's birthday and he is going to have a big cake.

Staff initiate a broad range of adult-led activities supporting and extending child-initiated play. They plan and provide high-quality activities and play opportunities closely linked to children's individual age and stage of ability and their interests or preferences. Staff undertake regular high quality observations of their key children. They also use information provided by parents to effectively plan the next steps in children's learning. Clear evidence of children's progress is recorded in their individual files which are accessible to parents at any time. There are highly effective systems to monitor all children's progress to ensure that they reach their full potential and to demonstrate how any possible gaps in children's achievements are addressed.

Children with additional needs are exceptionally well supported within the setting. Staff work extremely closely with parents and other professionals to ensure that children's individual needs are met and they are valued and fully included member of the group. Children have excellent opportunities to learn about the wider world through purposeful and meaningful activities linked to various festivals, most of which are pertinent to children that are attending. The setting recently celebrated a Kurdish festival 'Newroz Day'. Children show high levels of interest and are keen to participate in activities linked to the celebrations. Staff help them in creating a memento with photographs and explanations about the festival. Children's behaviour is exemplary throughout the nursery. Minor disputes between the younger children are quickly addressed. Children benefit from the staff being extremely positive role models in the way they speak to the children and behave themselves. Good manners are promoted throughout the nursery and children are encouraged to wait at lunchtime with their peers until everybody has served their lunch. Occasionally, this leads to some of the younger children finding it difficult to wait.

Children follow extremely successful routines and practices to promote their understanding of healthy lifestyles and keeping themselves safe. They know and understand why they follow good hygiene routines. Their physical development is exceptionally well promoted both within the indoor environment and the excellently resourced outdoor area. Children enjoy running up and down the small mounds shrieking with excitement. They understand about safety issues such as using the equipment safely because staff give clear explanations and encourage the children to think about consequences from an early age. Throughout the nursery, and particularly for babies, children's emotional needs are met exceptionally well. Staff develop excellent relationships to enable the children to feel comfortable and secure. Photographs of the children's families are displayed at child height to support them feeling valued and to promote their security and self esteem.

## 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>	1
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	1

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

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	1
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	1
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	1
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	1
The effectiveness of safeguarding	1
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	1
The effectiveness of partnerships	1
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	1

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

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### Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

<b>Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	1
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	1
The extent to which children feel safe	1
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	1
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	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