

Garden House Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspector

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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

Garden House Day Nursery was registered in 2010 and is managed by the trustees of Alton Convent School. Alton Convent School is an independent school for children aged from three to 18 years, which also provides wrap-around care for children aged three and four years. The nursery is located within the walled garden in the grounds of Alton Convent School in Alton, Hampshire. The nursery has a playroom and sleep room within a separate purpose-built building for children under two. Children aged two to three years have use of two rooms in an adjacent building, which they share with three to four-year-olds who are on the school register. There are enclosed areas available for outdoor play and children have access to the extensive grounds covering 19 acres which includes wooded walks. They use the school's sports hall for PE and the creative arts building for dancing lessons. The school's music teacher visits the nursery to provide music lessons. Children using the nursery come from the local area. On this occasion only provision for children between the ages of six months and two years nine months was inspected.

The nursery is registered on the Early Years Register, and may care for a maximum of 26 children at any one time between the ages of six months to rising three-year-olds. There are currently 18 children on roll who attend for full or half days. Children attend all day or at various times throughout the day. The nursery is open between 8.00am & 6.00pm for 51 weeks per year, closing between Christmas and New Year and for bank holidays. The nursery supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and those who have English as an additional language.

There are eight members of staff who work with the children and the manager, who is supernumerary. All staff hold early years qualifications between Level 2 and degree level except one, who is currently attending Level 2 training. The nursery receives support from the local authority.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

The nursery safeguards children very effectively through ensuring all staff receive immediate training in child protection, and by implementing rigorous risk assessment and recruitment procedures. The manager develops a strong team of staff who work collaboratively to help identify and deliver ambitious but achievable targets for the development of the nursery. They create an inclusive environment where children have their individual needs quickly identified and met, and where their home cultures and languages are valued and reflected. Staff develop good relationships with parents and act upon feedback they have sought from them, providing a responsive service. Staff plan and provide a wide range of activities and promote good outcomes in children's learning and development.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- review planning to ensure appropriate levels of challenge are always provided during adult-led activities, particularly in specialist areas
- ensure child-initiated activities are sufficiently used to extend two-year-olds' thinking and understanding through sustained adult interaction.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The manager develops and implements policies for the nursery that ensure children are exceptionally well safeguarded. The premises are very secure and all staff undergo rigorous recruitment procedures. Senior staff have advanced safeguarding training, and all other staff receive immediate training as part of their induction. They always discuss safeguarding at team meetings to reflect on procedures. Staff rigorously risk assess the children's environment and review their assessments regularly. They provide resources and activities that help children develop high levels of awareness of how to manage suitable risks. Children's health benefits greatly from having free access to outdoor areas where they have space and resources that promote energetic play. Babies follow their home routines which helps them flourish, and older children enjoy well-planned and nutritious menus that also provide plenty of carbohydrate for energy. This supports children's health and safety very well.

The leadership team demonstrates high levels of ambition and drive. The manager receives excellent support from the head teacher as she implements her clearly defined development plan. She seeks and acts upon feedback from the local authority advisory team, staff and parents as she evaluates the nursery. She is implementing an ambitious action plan for the future development of the nursery. New developments include the parent library, a nursery web site and brochure, and a programme of events for parents. The manager appraises staff and ensures those with less experience or knowledge receive good support and mentoring. She implements the staff training plan to ensure the nursery's needs are given priority, but which also allows staff to build on their interests. Staff show excellent levels of motivation and attend weekend team-building days and training. This helps drive forward the development of the provision very well.

The manager organises the use of resources well. She establishes an effective key person system whereby each member of staff supports a small group of children. Staff provide an excellent range of sustainable resources which include many that are natural or recycled. Children's rooms are well organised in activity areas with a wide range of accessible resources. There are bright displays and some labels reflect children's other languages. Older children have free access to indoor and outdoor areas throughout the day, although babies access is a little more restricted as it is not always prepared for immediate use in the morning. The manager plans

to adapt some adult-led activities and the use of space to further improve outcomes for children, such as through providing younger children with a separate area for PE and a separate base room.

The staff establish good relationships with parents and displays and photographs help to reflect an inclusive setting where all are welcome. There are sensitive settling-in procedures whereby parents may stay with their children until they are ready for separation, and which help them develop trusting relationships with staff. Parents share the nursery's policies and access many information leaflets and books in the parent library. Staff value parents' contributions and act upon their suggestions, such as by providing a direct line and email address for the nursery. Parents receive clear information about their child's day through written and verbal exchanges. They share their children's learning journals and some parents contribute to these, providing a clear picture of children's interests and progress for staff and parents to build upon. The manager is developing a brochure and website to share information with parents about the nursery, and a programme of events for parents to participate in such as stay-and-play sessions, information evenings and coffee mornings. Children take home the nursery's teddy, and record in the journal his adventures to share on his return. This helps create links between the nursery and home. No children attend other settings, although staff are aware of the need to ensure they establish a two-way link if they should in order to provide continuity in their care and learning. They have good links with other agencies to ensure children with special educational and/or disabilities receive appropriate support.

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

Children very much enjoy their time in the nursery and develop good relationships with staff and other children. Staff plan and provide a stimulating range of activities that encourage the children to explore and be curious. All staff use the Early Years Foundation Stage practice guidance effectively and staff with less knowledge or experience work closely with another more experienced member of staff, which ensures every child is effectively supported. Each child's key person carefully tracks their progress and plans activities to promote their next possible steps in learning and development. These identified aims are also shared during team meetings to support planning for the group. Staff use their observational assessments to identify any delays in children's development, and ensure any further assessment of children's needs are carried out by liaising closely with parents and involving outside professionals. This leads to children making good progress in their learning and development.

Babies develop a sense of belonging as they quickly settle in the nursery. Staff are very attentive and babies show confidence as they begin to put more space between themselves and their key person as they move between indoor and outdoor areas. Outside they love to watch the older children through the fence as they play, touch the mobiles hanging in the tree as staff hold them up, or explore the tent and tunnels. Staff model language and actions as they describe to the babies what they are doing or sing songs. They model activities as they show

babies how to make sounds by tapping instruments which babies then copy. Older children make choices and show high levels of independence as they initiate their own play and exploration, using an extensive range of resources. They show good levels of cooperation and problem solving as they negotiate with one another and organise guttering to provide a run for small cars. Staff help children learn how to resolve minor disagreements, but do not always take advantage of children's self-initiated play to extend their understanding through sustained interaction. Staff use children's interests to stimulate learning in other areas, such as by encouraging them to explore different textures by hiding pictures of their favourite trains in jelly, to learn about space and shape by making train models, or to develop numeracy skills as they group and count trains. This encourages children to try new activities, and extends their experiences and learning.

Children develop very healthy life-styles and excellent understanding of how to play safely. Staff use distraction successfully to help reluctant younger children come to terms with having a nappy change by giving them a special toy, singing songs and engaging eye contact as they smile and praise them. Children show a love of exercise as they play energetically outside in the fresh air for much of the day and go on walks in the grounds with staff. This stimulates healthy appetites and they enjoy well-balanced meals and snacks. Babies sleep and feed according to their home routines, and they flourish in the nursery. Children have a snack all together at the moment but a more flexible snack time is identified for development so they can finish an activity without interruption and choose when to have a drink and snack. Children have excellent opportunities to manage appropriate risks. They work together as they learn how to move heavy logs safely or carry large cable reels using long cardboard tubes. They know how to maintain control over their wheeled toys as they ride them down the sloping playground, and avoid colliding with others. This helps them learn how to control risk.

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	1

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	1
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	2
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	2
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	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	1
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	1
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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