

Beechwood Childcare - Mill Lodge Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

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| Unique reference number | 250013 |
| Inspection date | 26/03/2010 |
| Inspector | Edgar Hastings |
| Setting address | Mill Lodge Infant & Junior School, Aqueduct Road, Shirley, Solihull, West Midlands, B90 1BT |
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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

Mill Lodge Day Nursery opened in 1997. It operates from a purpose-built building located in the grounds of Mill Lodge Primary School in the Shirley area of Solihull. Currently, there is no access provision for adults and children who may have disabilities. Facilities include three base rooms, kitchen, toilet and office. There is a fully enclosed garden area available for outside play. The nursery is part of a privately owned group of childcare facilities, and serves the local and surrounding areas. It supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and children who speak English as an additional language.

The setting also operates an out of school and holiday service from the main school building. There are currently 45 children from birth to five years on roll and this includes 21 funded children. Up to 39 children under the age of five may attend at any one time, and not more than twelve may be under two years of age. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The group opens five days a week, Monday to Friday, all year round, closing only for bank holidays and a week at Christmas. Sessions are from 7.30am to 6.00pm. The out of school service operates five days a week during school term times and school holidays. Sessions are from 7.45am to 8.45am and from 3.30pm to 6.00pm, during term time and 8.00am to 6.00pm during school holidays.

The setting is on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. There are eight members of staff who work with the children. All of the staff team have recognised childcare qualifications. The nursery has links with the host school and the Children's Centre.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

The setting provides a very secure and enjoyable learning environment that enables children to make good progress in their learning and development. This is an inclusive setting which meets the individual needs of children well, and provides very good support for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and those for whom English is an additional language. The partnership with parents is strong and the setting works well with the school, the Children's Centre and other outside agencies to ensure children receive any additional support they need. The leadership is good because managers have a clear vision for future development, and consequently demonstrate a good capacity to maintain continuous improvement.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- ensure the outdoor area reflects the six areas of learning by providing

opportunities for children to develop counting skills.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The manager demonstrates good leadership and management and has created a number of improvements to raise the quality of the provision through careful assessment of the setting's needs. Effective safeguarding policies and procedures are in place with rigorous vetting procedures for appointing staff following the Safer Recruitment guidelines. The staff receive good quality child protection training in conjunction with the school and regular risk assessments are carried out to ensure the safety of premises and equipment. There are sound procedures in place for keeping the accommodation secure and for monitoring access, and for handing over children safely to parents and carers at the end of the sessions.

The children's bathroom has been refurbished and now provides much improved facilities. A garden area has been developed so that children can be involved in growing plants and observing and investigating nature first hand. The provision of a canopy allows for a number of activities to be provided out of doors regardless of the weather. All recommendations made at the time of the last inspection have been addressed and the risk assessments for outdoor play have been updated, as well as a review of planning and assessment arrangements which have been carried out so that they can now be used effectively to identify children's next steps in learning. An accurate system of registering child and staff attendance on a daily basis is now maintained. Plans identified for the future include the provision of a sensory room and an outdoor sensory area. Self-evaluation is being used effectively to identify areas requiring further development and the views of staff and parents are sought for ideas that will help improve the provision further.

There is a strong emphasis on ensuring staff have the necessary skills and knowledge to meet the children's needs, and the setting is driving improvement forward at an excellent level. Consequently, training opportunities have been provided and encouraged so that all staff are now trained to a high standard. Two staff are now working towards a foundation degree, and a comprehensive staff development programme is in place and available for all staff. In addition, all staff are trained in first aid, food hygiene and child protection. The learning environment is organised to meet the needs of children of different ages, with specific areas for the under twos, the two to threes and the three to fives; with a wide range of good quality resources provided to meet their needs appropriately and effectively.

The setting has very good links with a number of outside agencies that enable good quality support to be provided to assist children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. A number of professionals are involved in supporting these children as a result of the early identification of their needs by the setting's staff, and plans are drawn up to provide the appropriate level of support to meet each individual's needs. The support includes speech and language therapy, physiotherapy and assessments made for children with delayed learning and development. There is excellent attention paid to recognising and valuing diversity

through the celebration of a number of recent festivals including Diwali and the Chinese New Year. The setting has provided a wealth of multi-cultural resources and books, and has displayed pictures of people from other countries from around the world.

There are strong links with the school to ensure the smooth transition of those children who will be transferring at the age of five. Information is shared and there are opportunities for the children to visit. The staff enjoy shared training opportunities with the school. The setting also has good relationships with the Children's Centre, where advice and guidance on children's development are shared. Parents are very supportive and value the quality of provision made for their children. Communication is good, parents say, because they are kept well informed about their children's progress through frequent face to face discussions and the daily diaries that are sent home each day. Parents' views are sought through the use of questionnaires and they accompany their children on visits and support social and fundraising events. Newsletters keep them informed about events, and detailed planning information is displayed in the entrance area of the nursery.

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

The staff know the children well and give them a warm welcome on arrival. The strength of the relationships ensures children feel comfortable and secure in this setting. Children are very confident in the nursery and are able to make their own choice of activity in the well-resourced environment. A strong emphasis is placed upon children developing independence and following their own interests. At times children will opt to work alone when they have found something that particularly interests them, whilst at other times they are glad to join in and share an activity with other children such as assembling a floor jigsaw puzzle. Resources are well organised and ensure children have access to all the areas of learning, except in the outdoor area where resources to support children's development and understanding of numeracy are currently not in evidence. However, there is a good balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities to ensure all children are engaged in learning through play and through investigation.

Overall, children are making good progress in learning. Their fine motor skills are developed well through their involvement in a range of activities. Children enjoy cutting and sticking and associated creative activities, mark-making using a range of different media and carefully fitting construction kits together to make various structures. At snack time children recognise their own names in order to register and can pick out a number of letter sounds. Children demonstrate good listening skills as they listen intently to a story being read to them. They join in appropriately, and talk excitedly about what they can see and identify in the pictures. They count accurately the number of horns on some of the imaginary animals, and can recognise accurately a number of colours, for example blue, red and purple. When using the computer they are developing good mouse control skills in order to operate some of the early learning programmes. In the baby room a range of colourful toys provide a stimulating environment. Good interaction with

staff shows children are secure and enjoy learning through play. Small climbing apparatus encourages children to explore in a variety of ways, and the nursery's walls show evidence of the creative experiences children have had using paints to make hand prints and other designs. Adults encourage children to talk and get them to repeat names of children and some of the objects they are handling, and this supports their progress well.

Outside the children enjoy being active with a wide variety of equipment to motivate their activity. There is lots laughter as they enjoy rolling hoops down the grassy bank. They enjoy the large climbing apparatus as they investigate its tunnels and platforms. The recently developed garden is another source of interest because they have been involved in planting seeds. They understand why it is necessary to have a scarecrow. Hunting for worms is also fun and adults extend the children's learning effectively by engaging them in discussion about the way they move and something of their lifestyle. These are enjoyable experiences for the children and they are learning effectively as a result.

The setting has developed a good set of policies and procedures to ensure all children's welfare needs are met. Safety is given high priority in the setting, and children are developing an extremely strong sense of their own safety as a consequence. They are aware of how to play safely because of the simple rules that have been introduced, to which they have contributed. Talks by the community police about stranger danger and by the fire service on safety in the home reinforce children's awareness of their own personal safety and consequently they feel exceptionally safe. Healthy lifestyles are effectively promoted through snack and lunch times when a well-balanced and nutritious menu is offered. Good hygiene procedures are in place, and opportunities for regular physical activity are provided. Behaviour is good and children are very cooperative and have established strong relationships with each other and with the staff. They respond positively to adults' instructions and join in enthusiastically when it is time to put equipment away. They are developing good personal social skills, and their overall good progress will contribute well to their future development.

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

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| 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

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| 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 | 1 |
| 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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| 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

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| 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 | 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