

Catherine House Day Nursery School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	255135
Inspection date	09/12/2010
Inspector	Liz Grocott
Setting address	2 Birchfield Way, Yew Tree Estate, Walsall, West Midlands, WS5 4LG
Telephone number	01922 613211
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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

Catherine House Day Nursery School opened in 1992 and is one of six privately owned nurseries. It operates in a converted two storey house on the Yew Tree estate in Walsall, West Midlands. The nursery is close to schools, parks, shops and public transport. The nursery serves the wider community. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area. Access is on ground floor level, with pre school aged children cared for on the first floor. There is no lift access. The nursery is open each weekday from 8am to 6pm all year round. The nursery is registered on the Early Years Register and on both parts of the Childcare Register. A maximum of 50 children may attend the nursery at any one time. There are currently 63 children on roll aged from three months to four years. The nursery is in receipt funding for nursery education. The nursery currently supports children who speak English as an additional language. There are 12 permanent members of staff, including the manager, plus a bank of relief staff. All have appropriate early years qualifications. The nursery receives support from a teacher mentor from the local authority and has achieved a Quality Counts accreditation at Level 2.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children are well cared for, happy and secure in this inclusive setting which ensures that all children and families are valued. They generally make good progress in their learning and development because staff are knowledgeable about the early learning goals and generally use assessments and observations well to plan learning experiences. Excellent partnerships with parents and carers ensure the individual needs of children are met. Self-evaluation ensures that priorities for development are identified and the nursery is continually improving in all aspects of the service to promote positive outcomes for children. Partnerships with others is generally satisfactory.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- improve working together with other settings to ensure there is a two-way flow of information
- use assessments to plan more effectively and consistently for the next steps in children's developmental progress and regularly review this approach

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Effective leadership and management means that children are safeguarded. Children are well protected because the staff have a good understanding of

possible indicators of abuse or neglect. They are aware of the procedures to follow should they have a concern about a child. Staff regularly update their safeguarding training to ensure children continue to be protected. Robust recruitment procedures ensure appropriate checks are carried out on all staff to confirm they are suitable to work with children which helps safeguard children's welfare. An in-depth induction also ensures staff are familiar with the routines and practices of the nursery before they come into contact with children. CCTV, risk assessments and policies and procedures all combine to further protect children.

The setting provides a service that is inclusive for all children and their families. They are rightly proud of their newly acquired 'Me Too' award for being a setting that is accessible and friendly to those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Resources, including staff are well deployed throughout the day. Toys are placed at low-level in labelled boxes so that children can become confident and independent learners and successfully return resources when they have finished playing. Staff are guided by a strong management team who have a clear vision for the setting. They are well aware of their strengths and areas for development and appropriately use the local early years service to support them. A range of resources in each area, as well as positive images on display and celebrating different festivals help children to learn about, value and respect similarities and differences in society. Children who speak English as an additional language are well supported because staff ask parents for words in their child's first language to communicate effectively. The nursery also has a multi-lingual talking pen which can talk to the child in their home language. This helps communication, particularly when children are new to the setting.

Parents and carers are well informed about their child's progress and development due to excellent relationships. They are consulted via questionnaires and their views appropriately responded to. For example, one parent suggests a topic about scarecrows. The children make scarecrows and then act out the story about, 'The scarecrow who didn't scare'. Parents and carers have regular opportunities to join their children for lunch promoting the bond between home and nursery. They support fundraising activities and parent representatives meet regularly to discuss issues. All parents are invited into nursery to share any particular skills they have to benefit children's learning. Parents speak highly of the nursery and in particular the individual care given and communication about achievements. They are encouraged to share their knowledge about the children and what they do outside nursery. Staff use this information to follow children's interests and give parents ideas of how to extend children's learning at home. The nursery establishes good partnerships with others who work with children in the provision. The nursery has not established effective partnerships with others who provide Early Years Foundation Stage, to ensure they can work together to provide continuity and support more effectively individual children's learning and progression.

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

Children generally make good progress in their learning and development because staff are well informed and knowledgeable about the Early Years Foundation Stage. Staff have positive relationships with children and provide a warm, welcoming environment in which children's welfare and learning are effectively promoted. They use children's interests and their knowledge of each child's progress to plan a range of individual, stimulating activities which cover all areas of learning. This helps to narrow the achievement gap. Children are challenged and staff have high expectations of what children can achieve. Staff generally observe and record children's play and achievements, however these are not always effective in clearly identifying the next steps in all children's learning. The curriculum is enhanced by visiting teachers delivering French and music sessions.

Staff provide a good range of thought-provoking learning experiences both indoors and outside. Children choose to spend a good deal of time outside where they can explore using all of their senses. Suitable clothing is provided to enable them to do this. Outdoors children use their imaginative skills making dens and hunting for bugs on 'bug island'. They dig in the soil and practise their coordination balancing on wooden slats. Children's knowledge and understanding of the world and keeping themselves safe is enhanced when they go for walks in the local community looking out for hazards and spotting dangers. Children enjoy exploring with different media, such as gloop, jelly, mashed potato and spaghetti. They practise their fine motor skills by using the mouse on the computer, scissors, paint brushes and pencils.

Children make good progress in their communication language and literacy. They register themselves each morning by making their mark and staff use these records to see the progress they make, now the marks form letter shapes. They enjoy stories and listen avidly when they are being read by staff, joining in with discussions about the characters. Children show a keen interest in problem solving. For example, why the water has turned cloudy after spaghetti has been added and why rain makes a different noise if you put foil over your head instead of an umbrella. They learn simple subtraction during a baking activity when they are asked 'if there are four eggs and only two are needed, how many will be extra?' Children learn about living things through first-hand experiences as they grow tomatoes and tulips in the outdoor area. They watch hens eggs hatch into chicks in an incubator and caterpillars turn into butterflies in a butterfly garden. This meaningful learning really helps the children to understand life processes. Staff take photographs and form them into books so that children can recall these exciting events.

Children's behaviour is exemplary. They clearly know what is expected of them and are kind and caring to their friends. They play cooperatively together and consider one another during their play. Children are encouraged to adopt healthy lifestyles. Effective health and hygiene policies and procedures are routinely followed by staff to protect children from any cross-infection and to promote their well-being. Children are aware that if they don't wash their hands before they eat the 'germs

will get into their tummies and make them sick'. Children chat socially together at mealtimes and enjoy serving each other, laying tables and pouring their own drinks. They have a good choice of healthy balanced food including, vegetarian cottage pie, lentil bolognaise and italian bean casserole. Fresh fruit is provided as snacks between main meals and drinks are available throughout the day whenever children want them, helping to keep them hydrated.

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

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	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	3
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	1

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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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