

# Little Hippos

Inspection report for early years provision

---

**Unique reference number** EY377172  
**Inspection date** 07/10/2010  
**Inspector** Beryl Witheridge

**Setting address** Knockhall Cp School, Eynsford Road, GREENHITHE, Kent,  
DA9 9RF

**Telephone number** 07939 521440

**Email**

**Type of setting** Childcare on non-domestic premises

---

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

T: 0300 123 1231  
Textphone: 0161 618 8524  
E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
W: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

© Crown copyright 2010

## 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).

Children only attend this setting before and/or after the school day and/or during the school holidays. The judgements in this report reflect the quality of early years provision offered to children during those periods.

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.

Please see our website for more information about each childcare provider. We publish inspection reports, conditions of registration and details of complaints we receive where we or the provider take action to meet the requirements of registration.

## Description of the setting

Little Hippos opened in 2007 and operates from one room in Knockhall County Primary School. It is situated in Knockhall, Dartford, Kent. A maximum of 18 children may attend the out of school club at any one time. The out of school club is open each weekday from 7.30am to 9.00am and 3.05pm to 6.00pm term time only. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 29 children aged from four to under 11 years on roll. This provision is registered on the Early Years Register and on both the Voluntary and Compulsory parts of the Childcare Register. Children come from local catchment area. The out of school club can support children with special educational needs, and also children who speak English as an additional language.

The out of school club employs two staff and the owner. All of the staff, including the manager hold appropriate early years qualifications. All staff are working towards a higher qualification.

## The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is satisfactory.

The setting meets the needs of the children attending. The staff offer a warm and friendly welcome and ensures that the children's individual needs are recognised and addressed. The setting is making satisfactory progress in developing their service. Systems are in place to help to assess what works well and what needs to be improved to promote effective outcomes for the children. All staff are involved in evaluation the provision.

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

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

- use systematic observations and assessments of children's achievements, interests and learning styles and to plan relevant and motivating play experiences for each child
- maintain a regular two-way flow of information, knowledge and expertise between parents and other agencies, to help support and extend children's learning and development
- ensure there are effective systems in place to ensure that practitioners and those likely to have unsupervised access to the children are suitable to do so

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

Staff have a sound understanding of safeguarding children and have established clear procedures for dealing with allegations. They are aware how and when to

record information and how to refer any concerns to the appropriate agency. This provides strong safeguards for the welfare of children. There is clear information provided for parents on how to raise complaints or concerns. The staff carry out frequent and regular risk assessments which minimise identified hazards successfully. The recruitment procedures for staff are in place but are not fully rigorous in as much as gaps in the working history are not thoroughly checked out. Staff appraisals are carried out regularly to identify strengths and areas for improvement; staff are able to attend training courses to extend their knowledge and understanding and to upgrade their qualifications.

Resources are generally deployed well as staff extend and improve the range of equipment available for the children. These are easily accessible to the children; activities are planned in advance but children are also able to make choices which helps to develop their independence. All children are included in all activities and practitioners ensure the younger children are included equally as they interact with those who are older. All children are treated as individuals; staff know their specific needs and interests. This helps to ensure their unique learning and welfare needs are met.

The use of self-evaluation is in place and staff are able to identify areas where they feel they need to improve such as the observations and assessment of the early years children, identifying their next steps and using these to lead the planning. The owner and staff have started to evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of the setting so they can plan for future improvements.

The setting does not have a close working relationship with the school so the sharing of the children's needs and progress and continuity of care is not fully established. The partnership with parents is developing. Parents and carers are provided with a range of written information and have daily opportunities to discuss their children's progress although there are no written records of the children's learning and development to share with them.

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

The staff support the children as they arrive eagerly after their school day. They encourage children to make decisions about what they want to do. They talk to them easily about their school day and how they are feeling. Children settle quickly to the different activities available to them. Staff support them in their play by talking to them about the different activities available such as the art and craft then sitting back to let the children do their own work once they are confident in their own ideas. Staff are constantly talking to the children, asking them open ended questions and helping them to develop their imaginations. Younger children mix well with the older children they play happily alongside each other whether involved in art and craft, imaginative play or construction.

The staff promote children's independence and problem-solving capabilities, for example, as they access construction activities. They know when to intervene and

when to leave them to develop their own play. This helps to ensure that children get the right support in their learning and development. Children enjoy physical activity. They are able to use the school playground and take part in activities such as their own version of a 'mini Olympics'. They decide on the games they are going to play and the rules for the games; there is great interaction between them and the winners receive well deserved praise.

Staff have yet to develop the written observations and assessments of the younger children. They talk to parents about the children so as to establish their starting point and work to help develop skills where the children need support in the different areas of learning. Weekly written plans offer a range of experiences that cover all areas of learning and within this, staff ensure that children's interests and current abilities are being promoted.

Children's safety is promoted within the setting. For example, they have established their own emergency evacuation procedures which they practise regularly so that all children know how to protect themselves in an emergency.

Children are offered a choice of healthy cereals, toast with different toppings such as jam or scrambled egg and a selection of fruit. Drinks of water and milk are freely available. Children's individual dietary requirements are recorded and respected. The club policies work in practice in helping children to learn about eating properly and keeping healthy.

Behaviour management procedures ensure that children know and understand the rules and are learning how to respect each other. They play cooperatively together most of the time and respond well to praise and encouragement. They are able to develop good levels of confidence 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>	3
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	3

### 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>	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	3
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding	3
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	3
The effectiveness of partnerships	3
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	3

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

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
--	---

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

<b>Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	3
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	3
The extent to which children feel safe	3
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	3
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	3
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	3

Any complaints about the inspection or report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

## **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