

Mini Monsters

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	EY407318
Inspection date	11/01/2011
Inspector	Lindsay Hare
Setting address	Mini Monsters Day Nursery, 1 Bennetts Gate, HEMEL HEMPSTEAD, Hertfordshire, HP3 8EW
Telephone number	01442 261 651
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.

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
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2011

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).

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

Mini Monsters is a privately owned nursery. It is situated within a shopping precinct in Bennett's End, Hemel Hempstead. Children are accommodated in four rooms: Baby Monsters for children up to one year; Tiny Monsters from one to two years; Mini Monsters from two to three years and Pre-school from three to five years. The nursery does not have an outside play area, however, a large room at the rear of the building is utilised for large physical play and the nearby park is used on a daily basis.

The nursery is open five days a week all year round, except for bank holidays and Christmas Eve. Sessions are from 7:45am to 6:30pm. The nursery has strategies in place to support children with additional learning needs and/or disabilities and for those with English as an additional language. The provision is registered for 41 children on the Early Years Register. It is not registered by Ofsted on the voluntary and compulsory parts of the Childcare Register. There are 29 children on roll, all of whom are in early years age group.

There are eight members of staff, five of whom hold a childcare qualification and three of whom are currently doing child care training. The manager has Early Years Professional Status.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

The nursery provides a safe and welcoming environment for children, ensuring they are all included and supported. Children make good progress in all areas of learning. Most hygiene procedures are implemented well and children's understanding of being healthy and their self-care skills are promoted well. Partnerships with parents are excellent and procedures ensure that they are kept well informed, ensuring that children's needs are met. However, a legal requirement has not been met. The nursery has identified priorities for improvement and has implemented changes in order to improve the quality of the provision and the outcomes for children.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To meet the specific requirements of the EYFS, the registered person must:

- obtain information from parents about who has legal contact with the child; and who has parental responsibility for the child. (Safeguarding and promoting children's welfare) 25/01/2011

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

- ensure that the storage of toothbrushes is hygienic and prevents the spread of infection.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children's welfare, care and safety are promoted well. All staff have a clear knowledge and understanding of safeguarding issues, have attended training and are aware of their role and responsibility in keeping children safe from harm. There are robust recruitment and vetting procedures in place to ensure the suitability of staff and good security measures in place to ensure children are kept safe at all times. Effective risk assessments are carried out, as well as daily safety checks, to ensure all hazards are minimised. The nursery regularly goes on outings locally as there is no provision for outdoor play on site and risk assessments are completed for these. All the required documentation is in place for the safe and efficient running of the nursery. However, a requirement has not been met with regard to obtaining information about who has parental responsibility and who has legal contact with the child.

The nursery's professional and friendly approach to maintaining effective partnerships with parents ensures that children's care is consistently promoted. Staff are proactive in supporting children with additional needs and there are extension/differentiation boxes in each room, containing additional resources to adapt activities for children. Key words are used in promoting communication with families who speak English as an additional language. There are excellent systems in place to share information and keep parents informed about their children's care and progress. For example, detailed discussion with the key person at collection time, daily care sheets, monthly newsletters and sharing of children's records. Detailed information about children's care, routines and preferences and cultural observance is gathered from parents when children start so that the setting can care for them effectively. Home and nursery links are strongly encouraged through the 'buggy buddy' scheme, where children can take home a 'buggy buddy' and record his experiences in a diary. Parents are offered ideas for activities to do at home and are given a feedback sheet and encouraged to complete 'wow' cards if their child attends a special event or they make an observation at home. These are then added to children's learning journals and staff add comments about the learning objectives covered. Therefore, parents can be fully involved in their child's learning and development. Careful consideration is given to the layout and accessibility of play resources for children to ensure it is inclusive for all. Children gain an awareness of the wider world through resources reflecting diversity, a varied and nutritious menu and celebration of other cultural festivals.

The nursery has involved all staff in the self-evaluation, clearly identifying areas for development and implementing actions to improve these. For example, the nursery sends out questionnaires, provides a suggestions box to gain feedback from

parents and is introducing parent open days. Staff attend ongoing training and the nursery is planning to undertake an accreditation programme.

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

Children make progress in their development and learning through a balanced range of adult- and child-led activities. Clear information is obtained from parents, as well as initial observations by the key person, in order to ascertain children's starting points. The planning is in response to children's individual learning needs, their interests and includes how activities may be differentiated according to each child's age and stage of development. For example, it was observed that some children rarely experience problem solving activities but enjoy dressing up. Therefore an activity was devised to talk about and use the different fastenings on the dressing up clothes. Detailed observational assessment of children is linked back to the Early Years Foundation Stage and children's next steps are identified. A pie chart is compiled to illustrate how often the areas of learning are being covered and highlight any gaps in the learning. Children have easy access to age appropriate activities and resources in each room and are able to self-select from the labelled low-level boxes, encouraging them to make choices. Children are familiar with the routine and reminders are given by staff about what is happening next. For example, one of the babies became very excited when staff put the tablecloth on the table as he knew it meant it was snack time. There are lots of opportunities to develop their independence particularly in self-care skills, for example, tissue dispensers are accessible in each room and children are supported in serving their food at lunch time and pouring their own drinks. The layout of the nursery means that children have to be accompanied to the toilets and cannot access these independently.

The nursery provides a suitable environment appropriate to the ages of the children being cared for. For example, in the baby room, the low-level furniture enables babies who are crawling to pull themselves up and walk around, holding onto the chairs. Young children listen to songs and the word for hello in different languages on a CD and they enjoy participating in action rhymes such as 'the wheels on the bus'. Babies investigate how to make sounds by patting the interactive mat and the recordable button toys. They are able to explore items in a treasure basket and use a feather duster they find to tickle staff. When a child is collected, all the other children are encouraged to wave and say goodbye. Staff build warm, trusting relationships with the children, for example, a new child who was upset was cuddled by his key person and she encouraged him to talk about what he could see out of the window. They discussed his home experiences, such as, sleeping in a bed and what he likes to eat. Children's language is promoted as staff are interested in the children, asking lots of open-ended questions and valuing what they say in response.

Children become aware of the world around them as they regularly visit the shops within the local community to buy ingredients or post letters. The children pretend to make dinner in the role-play area where labels depicting pictures and words of familiar objects they might find at home, such as lamp or bed, promote their

understanding of the written word and extends their vocabulary. Children have lots of opportunities to mark make using a variety of mediums, such as, shaving foam, large chinks, paint and magnetic sketchers and they help to make their own play dough. Children visit the park or go on walks daily and are eager to tell the other children and staff about the 'digger' and 'tractor' they have seen whilst out. Staff encourage children to recognise colours and the numbers on the buses they see. These mathematical skills are developed further as they count bears and match and recognise numerals on the puzzle pieces.

Staff develop children's awareness of having a healthy lifestyle, for example, they talk with the children about the food in the casserole and how it helps you to grow. The children are encouraged to brush their teeth at nursery; however, the toothbrushes are stored together, therefore increasing the risk of spreading infection. A well-balanced menu is provided and all staff are aware of any specific dietary requirements children may have. Gentle reminders and positive role models contribute to children's understanding of how to behave well. For example, children are reminded to sit on their chair at mealtimes, use good manners and are praised when they do so. Clear explanations are given about what they will be doing next, for example, 'let's wait for X to finish and then we need to wash our hands and faces'.

Notices displayed around the preschool room remind children to put toys away when they finish playing and to take turns on the laptop. Staff promote children's understanding of how to keep safe as they talk about the bowls being hot at lunch and about road safety when out walking.

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	2
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
--	---

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

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

