

Lime Grove Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number 129362
Inspection date 21/01/2011
Inspector Sheila Harrison

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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

Lime Grove Day Nursery registered in 1991 and operates from a purpose built building close to the centre of Hemel Hempstead, Hertfordshire. It is one of 39 settings owned by Childbase Ltd. The setting is accessible to all children and there is a fully enclosed area available for outdoor play.

The setting opens Monday to Friday all year round. Sessions are from 8am until 6pm. Children are able to attend for a variety of sessions. A maximum of 73 children may attend the setting at any one time. There are currently 84 children attending who are within the Early Years Foundation Stage. The setting also offers care to children aged over five years to eight years. The setting is registered on the Early Years Register and on both the voluntary and compulsory parts of the Childcare Register. The setting provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-olds. The group supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and children who speak English as an additional language.

The setting employs 26 members of child care staff. Of these, 18 hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 2 and 14 at level 3. Two staff have degrees in Early Childhood Studies. Two members of staff are working towards a Level 3 qualification and one member of staff is working towards an early years degree. The setting receives support from the local authority.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is outstanding.

The setting provides high quality education and care ensuring children thrive and make significant gains in their learning. Children are totally secure and form strong emotional attachments with the staff. The setting has exemplary procedures to promote equality and eliminate discrimination. There are excellent partnerships between the setting, parents and other agencies to ensure children's individual needs are recognised. The clear guidance given by the leaders and the involvement of the whole staff in monitoring and evaluation means that the setting has outstanding capacity to continue to improve. All staff are closely focused on making the provision the best it can be.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To further improve the high quality early years provision the registered person should consider:

- developing further a two-way flow of information with providers who also deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children are safeguarded effectively because the entire staff team have an exceptionally good understanding of child protection procedures and know how to implement them to protect the children in their care. Robust recruitment and vetting procedures ensure that everyone working with the children is suitable to do so. The ongoing suitability of all staff is monitored through regular meetings, training opportunities and appraisals. All new staff are required to complete a thorough induction programme ensuring everyone is fully aware of how the setting works and the high expectations of the management team. Comprehensive policies and procedures are in place including rigorous risk assessments. The risk assessments are reviewed regularly and when the needs of the children, including their health requirements, change. Consistent staff vigilance ensures children are extremely safe and secure at all times. The setting uses close circuit television as one of the security measures and to monitor the welfare of the children. There are robust collection procedures to ensure only specifically designated people collect the children. There are excellent systems to ensure that staff and children with allergies are well protected. Children display an excellent awareness of safety issues and recognise and understand how to keep themselves safe.

The company provides clear, ambitious aims which are shared by the leadership team. Monitoring and evaluation are robust, which contributes to maintaining and improving the setting's effectiveness. Staff have a clear understanding of what the setting does well and are wholly committed to continuous improvement. Staff demonstrate this commitment with a well planned programme of professional training and development. Some of the training is linked to the individual needs of specific children and undertaken before the children start with the setting. Staff use various specialist days to plan interesting ways of engaging children in their learning, for example, world maths day and national science week.

Staff are highly skilled in ensuring that all children are well integrated and they are highly effective in taking steps to close identified gaps in children's achievements. Excellent partnership working takes place to ensure every child receives high levels of support at an early stage. The company health visitor is a regular visitor and valued by parents and staff alike. The setting makes frequent attempts at contacting the children's other providers of the Early Years Foundation Stage by sending them the detailed reports of the children's progress although they find it difficult to develop this into a two-way flow of information.

Children's welfare is significantly enhanced and they clearly benefit from the setting they are in. Staff are effectively deployed so there is a constant focus on the learning and well-being of all children. Staff plan sensitive and positive experiences for children as they move into the next room to ensure they have a smooth and effective transition. The accommodation is well suited to its purpose. The rooms are comfortable and stimulating. Children access well equipped, safe and exciting outside areas. Furniture and equipment is of high quality, it is well maintained and supports all areas of learning. The setting effectively and actively promotes equality and diversity and tackles unfair discrimination. Children

celebrate their festivals and those of their friends and they acknowledge the festivals of others. Parents' contributions to these celebrations are valued. Each child has a wonderful book of family photographs in the base room library and the use of these books contributes to staff having an exceptional knowledge of each child's backgrounds and needs.

The setting has a highly positive relationship and actively engages with all parents. They are well informed about the work of the setting and with the progress their children make. They contribute to their child's assessment and have regular meetings and reports on their child's progress. Their views are actively sought and acted on through the online questionnaire and the parents' forum. Parents speak very highly of the partnership with the setting and there are many touching testimonials from parents.

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

Staff have embraced the Early Years Foundation Stage with enthusiasm. They have a very good understanding of the requirements and their planning ensures all aspects of the framework are covered. They carefully track each child's progress through detailed observations and keep comprehensive records, including notes, samples of work and photographs. Parents can see assessment records and are invited to contribute to them. Each child's current interests are used as the basis for the future activity plans and to guide their progression. The work samples and photographs are used to create a carefully annotated ongoing record of each child's learning journey.

Children are happy and very settled in the setting because it is tailored to meet each child's individual needs. Babies are very sensitively handled. They snuggle into an adult as they are given their bottle in a very close and comfortable position allowing them to develop, confidence and resilience with warm and secure relationships. Sleep patterns and preferences are respected.

Staff create an inclusive, rich and stimulating environment for the benefit of all children ensuring they make excellent progress in all aspects of their learning and development. All children have access to a wide range of exciting and interesting indoor and outdoor activities. This stimulates their interest and helps them to develop enquiring minds. Children learn in a large and active way as they play imaginatively in the garden. They find their own hidden route as they retell the story of 'Going on a bear hunt'. Children dig in a muddy area and use a large digger and wheeled toys as they play in the 'hard hat area'. Babies explore using their senses whilst dressed in warm and appropriate clothing as they go out and feel the rain. Staff bring the outdoors inside for young children to explore the mud and sticks in a bowl and a water tray with bubbles and glitter. Older and more able children are effectively challenged with the setting's use of a phonics scheme. Children take the lead in their learning as they confidently express a wish to write their names free hand and with no help from the staff. Children behave very well and respond positively to adults and to each other. Young children's independence is encouraged as they use mini mops to clear up the water spilt from the water

tray.

The setting effectively helps children to learn about and understand the society in which they live. Babies enjoy body painting to celebrate the festival of Holi. Children are learning to help others less fortunate than themselves as they fundraise for children's charities in this country and abroad. They care for living things as they feed the garden birds, observe the pond life in their wildlife pond and discuss the care of their pets at home. Older children, staff and parents greatly enjoyed a trip to London's Natural History Museum. Children are currently discussing their own families. They are bringing photographs of their homes, families and pets. They are making displays noting their parents' birthdays.

Children learn how to keep themselves safe through discussion, activities and routines to promote their own awareness of potential risks, for example, they know how to use scissors safely. They are encouraged to take responsibility for their play and learning environment, often reminding others of the safety rules. They discuss road safety and staff sensitively introduce the topic of stranger danger to give children useful strategies to use when they are outside the setting.

Children show an exceptional understanding of healthy living. They learn about healthy eating and the cook provides an extensive range of tasty nutritious well-balanced meals and snacks. Children eat well and thoroughly enjoy their meals. They show high levels of independence as they pour their own drinks and older children generally serve themselves. Meal times are social events, staff sit with the children and encourage conversations. Children grow and harvest some vegetables from the garden vegetable patch. The cook prepares the children's harvest and this gives valuable opportunities to talk about the health benefits of fruit and vegetables. Children are learning about the benefits of exercise as they set up a mini gym during a project on keeping healthy. Staff implement secure hygiene procedures throughout the setting to prevent the possible spread of infection.

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?	1
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	1

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	1
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	1
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	1
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	1
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	1

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	1
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	1
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	1
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	1

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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