

# Young Discoverers Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

---

<b>Unique reference number</b>	EY337160
<b>Inspection date</b>	09/02/2011
<b>Inspector</b>	Sheila Harrison

<b>Setting address</b>	South Hill Early Years Centre, Cemetery Hill, HEMEL HEMPSTEAD, Hertfordshire, HP1 1JF
<b>Telephone number</b>	01442 234617
<b>Email</b>	youngdiscoverers@southhillcentre.co.uk
<b>Type of setting</b>	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 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).

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

Young Discoverers Pre-School opened at its present site in 2006, having been situated for the previous 10 years in South Hill Church. It operates from two rooms within South Hill Early Years Centre. This is a purpose-built building situated near the town centre of Hemel Hempstead, Hertfordshire. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area. The pre-school is open each weekday from 9.00am to 12 noon and from 12.50pm to 3pm during school term times. A lunch club is also available each day and runs from 12 noon to 12.40pm.

The setting is registered on the Early Years Register. A maximum of 30 children may attend at any one time. The setting also makes provision for children older than the early years age group, which is registered on the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. There are currently 65 children on roll in the early years age range. The setting supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and children who speak English as an additional language. The setting provides funded early education for three- and four-year-olds and can access two year free place funding.

The pre-school employs 13 staff. Of these, four hold appropriate early years qualifications at Level 2, six at Level 3, one has a Foundation Degree and one has a BA (Hons) Degree. There are three members of staff who are working towards a Level 3 qualification and one who is working towards Early Years Professional Status. The setting receives support from the local authority, the Preschool Learning Alliance and the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership, and has links with Heath Lane Children's Centre.

## The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is outstanding.

Children clearly benefit and thrive as a result of the setting they are in. The setting is consistently well organised and staff provide excellent support for individual children's welfare and development, meaning their protection is assured. Children make excellent progress with their learning. There are outstanding partnerships with parents and others which provide excellent support for the children. The very effective leadership and excellent team work of all the staff ensure that all adults are closely focused on monitoring and evaluation, and that the setting has an outstanding capacity to continue to improve.

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

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

- develop further the use of the play and learning resources in the outdoor play area to encourage children to play creatively, ensuring their safety

without stopping reasonable risk-taking.

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

Children are safeguarded effectively as 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, which are reviewed regularly and include the activities and the health needs of the children. Consistent staff vigilance ensures children are extremely safe and secure at all times. The setting uses close circuit television by the exits and paths as one of the security measures. Children enjoy watching the parents come through the door at the end of the session. There are excellent systems to ensure that staff and children with allergies are well protected but also fully included in all the activities of the setting.

The managers consistently communicate high expectations to staff regarding securing improvement. They stimulate the enthusiasm of staff and channel their efforts to good effect. Morale is very high and belief in the setting's success runs through all levels of staff. They demonstrate this commitment with a well-planned programme of professional training and development. Staff have initiated a 'chatterbox' system following a course and they recognise that, by following the implementation, children have made exceptional progress in their speech and language. Leaders and managers routinely make good use of a range of rigorous monitoring activities relating to provision and outcomes. They are in the progress of completing a quality assurance process for the third time. Staff use the suggestions and comments of the children and the parents to set targets for improvement that are challenging and realistic. Children used the digital camera to photograph the areas they enjoy the most and parents gave some suggestions for improvement which the setting quickly adopted, such as, ensuring a key worker is in place before the child starts.

Children benefit greatly from access to a highly stimulating and well-prepared play environment. The accommodation is well suited to its purpose and conducive to learning. There is a highly qualified and knowledgeable staff team who work within a generous staff-child ratio. This ensures they are very effectively deployed to challenge and support children's welfare and learning. The keyworker keeps careful records of children's development and progress, and responds sensitively to their feelings and behaviour. Children independently access much of the plentiful, high-quality equipment and are confident to ask for any resources in a cupboard. For example, a child requested to take the musical instrument outside.

The setting actively promotes equality and diversity and tackles unfair discrimination. Staff are highly effective in ensuring that all children are well

integrated. Children celebrate their festivals and those of their friends and they acknowledge the festivals of others. Their home language is fully respected and the setting ensures that there is music from other cultures along with examples of different scripts available for the children to examine. They are highly successful in taking steps to close identified gaps in children's achievements as they have an exceptional knowledge of each child's backgrounds and needs. Staff organise regular 'Father's days' when the men can come and see the setting in operation and share in their child's learning. They help children to learn about and understand the society in which they live and are encouraging children to bring photographs of their families in during a project on 'all about me'. Excellent partnership working takes place to ensure every child receives high levels of support at an early stage.

Partnerships with parents are outstanding. The setting actively engages with all parents. They are well informed about the work of the setting and with the progress their children make. A recent parent commented in the leaving card that her child 'is set for success'. Parents contribute to their child's assessment and have free access to their learning journal, which they retain when their child leaves. Staff encourage parents to bring their interests and skills into the setting. Children were entranced listening to a parent playing the flute and were delighted with a visit from some Irish dancers. Staff report that it had the children dancing for weeks.

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

The setting is outstanding as it is tailored to meet each child's individual needs so that they make excellent progress in all aspects of their learning and development. Staff ensure children's favourite toys are easily available for new children to settle quickly. Children respond well to adults and to each other. They are developing a positive sense of themselves and a respect for others. They are forming friendships and a sense of belonging. They greatly enjoy looking at the large books of photographs, recalling their favourite activities with excitement. They freely express their feelings. They use the mirrors and see the photographs of themselves and their friends expressing various emotions. They are developing an independence that will help to prepare them for the future. Children learn how to put on their own coats the 'magic way', allowing them to choose to go outside at a time that suits them. Individual plans are quickly in place linked to children's interests. Keyworkers and senior staff plan together to extend the learning of the 'gifted and talented' children. Staff have embraced the Early Years Foundation Stage with enthusiasm and have a very good understanding of the learning requirements. Their assessments are made through high-quality observations and the information gained is used very effectively to guide planning. They keep comprehensive records, including notes, samples of work and photographs. Parents are engaged in their child's assessment as soon as they join the setting.

All children thrive in the rich learning environment available to them. They have access to a plentiful and varied range of indoor and outdoor activities that stimulate their interest and help to develop enquiring minds. Staff are diligent in

supporting learning through conversation and questioning, which helps to develop and extend communication skills. Children talk confidently to staff and to each other. They greatly enjoy retelling the story of Handa's surprise. They delighted in exploring the smells, shapes and textures of the different fruits in Handa's basket. Staff give valuable support to children to understand being healthy. Children help to cut the fruit and then discuss their likes and dislikes as they taste it. They use challenging equipment outside to develop and practice new skills, such as, balancing using the stepping stones and the more difficult stilt cups. Children have many valuable opportunities to learn how to keep themselves safe through discussion, activities and routines. For example, they know how to use scissors safely. They are encouraged to take responsibility for their play and learning environment by helping to tidy up and sweep up the sand outside. They discuss road safety and practice using large equipment. such as, stop signs and zebra crossing mats. Children actively create their own imaginative games, playing safely and exuberantly inside, although opportunities for them to play imaginatively outside and be boisterous, make mistakes and take reasonable risks are not so well developed.

Children take an active part in the decision-making process at the setting. Staff extend their learning from ideas the children present. All the children have a great deal of fun as they contribute to the making of a large cardboard model of a giraffe after a small model was brought from home. During a project on Chinese New Year, children developed their idea of creating a model dragon. They grew in confidence and moved with imagination as they followed this with a dance with flowing ribbons. They competently use the ICT equipment, taking photographs of themselves and their friends. They independently access the computer and know and use technical terms.

## 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>	1
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	1

### 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>	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

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
--	---

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

<b>Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	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

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
--	-----