

# Hickory House Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

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**Unique reference number**

219941

**Inspection date**

11/03/2011

**Inspector**

Hazel White

**Setting address**

5 High Street, High Street, Daventry, Northamptonshire,  
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**Telephone number**

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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**

Hickory House Nursery is a privately-owned setting which opened in 1996. It operates from a three-storey building. There is no lift to the upper floors. The nursery is situated in the Daventry area of Northamptonshire and serves the local community and surrounding areas. There is a fully enclosed outdoor play area.

The setting may care for a maximum of 55 children under eight years at any one time. Not more than 15 may be under the age of two years. They are registered on the Early Years Register and the compulsory part of the Childcare Register. There are currently 55 children on roll, all of whom are within the early years age range.

The setting opens five days a week and sessions are from 8.00am until 6.00pm. The nursery employs 10 staff who work directly with the children. All hold appropriate early years qualifications and two are qualified to degree level. The setting receives support from the local authority.

## **The overall effectiveness of the early years provision**

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children participate in a varied range of experiences that help to promote their all-round learning and development. Staff offer an inclusive and welcoming service, supporting all children to participate actively in activities which meet their individual needs. Their welfare is a key strength which means that children are protected from harm. Relationships with parents are exemplary and the staff team work alongside other professionals to ensure consistency of care. The management team have a clear vision for the setting. All staff are included in the self-evaluation process and demonstrate a positive attitude towards continuous improvement.

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

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

- improve children's access to fresh drinking water
- increase opportunities for all children to have outdoor play and fresh air.

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

The manager and staff are very confident about their responsibilities in relation to safeguarding children. They have an excellent understanding of how to recognise signs and symptoms of abuse and there are clear procedures to follow should they have any concerns. The child protection policy is shared with parents. This helps to

ensure that all adults are aware of their individual and collective roles and responsibilities in protecting children from harm. Staff attend child protection training to keep their knowledge up to date and as a way of improving their practice. For example, every member of staff wears a name badge which has child protection bullet points written on the back as an instant reminder of what to do if they are worried about a child. In addition their criminal record check number is included so parents can see at a glance that all adults working with the children have been through a vetting procedure to check that they are suitable to do so.

Children are well supervised at all times. The good deployment of staff ensures children are effectively supported in their learning as well as remaining safe. Thorough risk assessments are undertaken and regularly reviewed which helps to ensure children's care and safety is given the highest priority. Documentation is well maintained and organised effectively to support children's needs and the efficient running of the setting. Children are cared for in groups according to their age and ability. They use a wide range of resources which cover all areas of learning and have free-flow play when they are indoors. However, the outdoor area is not used effectively to enable children to experience fresh air and physical exercise on a regular basis.

There is a successful partnership with parents. A wide variety of methods are used to maintain the flow of communication. Staff are available on a daily basis to talk to parents about their child's welfare and progress and they receive excellent information about the setting through newsletters and an informative notice board. Parents comment on the professionalism and warm attitude of staff. When children first start, information is obtained about routines and all aspects of their learning and development. Parents are actively invited to participate in activities by taking home books for reading with their children and idea sheets such as messy play and songs and rhymes. In addition they are invited to special events and are encouraged to comment on their children's assessment records.

Staff establish good links with other local early years settings that some children attend to help ensure consistency of care and learning. Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities are well supported. For example, staff utilise available support mechanisms such as speech and language therapists and know where to loan specialist equipment if needed. A culturally diverse group of children have many opportunities to learn about similarities and differences amongst people. Toys and equipment are freely and safely accessible to all and care is taken to ensure that these resources depict a variety of cultures and abilities.

The manager leads by example and is enthusiastic and passionate about her role in raising outcomes for children. As a result, staff work well together as a motivated team and are committed to offering good quality childcare and the best possible start to children and their families. All staff hold an appropriate early years qualification and have completed a range of training to ensure their knowledge and skills are updated. They are fully committed to improving their practice, consistently reflecting and evaluating the quality and standards at the nursery. They have identified a number of areas for further development including the outdoor area. Regular staff meetings and appraisals provide valuable opportunities for staff to share good practice and to identify their training needs, which are

prioritised by the manager.

Most recommendations from the previous inspection have been addressed. Toilet areas are checked more frequently to ensure that toilets are flushed. Children are provided with a good range of resources to encourage their creativity and imagination. Staff have attended additional training which has enhanced their knowledge of how to support more able children in their play. Parents are actively encouraged to comment on their child's assessment records and they receive good information on how to support children's learning in the home. The manager purchased a water dispenser to help ensure that fresh drinking water was available to children at all times. However, it was removed because it was broken and has not been replaced. Children can ask for a drink throughout the day, however they do not have free access. Therefore, the recommendation has been carried forward following this inspection.

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

Children and their families are warmly welcomed to the setting. Art work, pictures and posters are displayed throughout. This helps to develop the children's sense of belonging and raises their self-esteem. A broad variety of resources and activities are on offer to give children choices and to maintain a good level of involvement. Staff engage with children well to support their learning and enjoyment, extending their play. Children are very confident in their interaction with staff and relationships allowing them to feel safe and secure. Children's learning is planned for and promoted effectively. Regular observations made by all staff are collated by the child's key person and these are used to support them in planning activities which will interest them and help to identify their next steps of learning and development. There is a good balance of group- and child- led activities. As a result, all children make significant gains in their learning and make good progress towards the early learning goals in relation to their starting points and capabilities.

Children are learning that print carries meaning because they enjoy listening to stories and looking at books. Older children are starting to recognise and write the initial letters of their names and they attempt to write their names on their artwork and in their fantasy play. For example, making a label for a bed which they decided would be a police car for the day. Children complete puzzles and draw pictures spontaneously. Those who speak English as an additional language settle well and quickly learn new words because staff support them as they learn English. They also value their home language and culture in the nursery. For example, labels in the rooms are in different languages and children celebrate festivals from their home culture. Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities are well supported. Play is adapted according to their ability and this helps to ensure that all children are fully included.

Babies and younger children play with a good range of toys, including treasure baskets with items made from natural materials. They thoroughly enjoy activities such as water play and are supported by staff to explore and see what happens

when they fill and empty receptacles. Babies sleep and feed according to their individual routines and develop close relationships with their main carers. Children are gaining an understanding of reasoning and numeracy through counting at different activities. They use digital cameras, torches and competently use a laptop to extend their learning and this also supports their development of skills for the future.

Children use their imagination very well. They have great fun using tubes and pegs to make rockets which are going to land on the moon. They show good teamwork and problem-solving skills as they place the pegs meticulously in the right place to stop the rocket from landing upside down. They quickly move on to make broom sticks from the tubes and link this activity to the story they listened to the day before about a witch. Older children begin to develop an understanding of the local community as they walk around the local areas and visit the local school. However, the garden is not used effectively to further extend their learning and enable younger children to have fresh air. This is an area that the manager is currently trying to develop.

Children develop a good awareness of their personal safety. Younger children learn simple rules such as not to climb on the furniture. Pre-school children understand the reasons for safety rules. For example, they know that they must hold scissors pointing downwards and they must hold onto the hand rail when using the stairs. Children behave well and regular praise and encouragement is given from all staff. They learn to take turns and share equipment as they play together. Any disputes are used as opportunities for staff to develop children's understanding of fair play. Children know what is expected of them through familiar routines and clear explanations.

Children are carefully supported to learn good basic hygiene skills through the use of good hygiene routines. They have learned all about germs and throughout the setting, there are pictorial reminders regarding good hygiene including pictures of 'hand washing'. Children are offered a good range of healthy and balanced meals and snacks which are freshly prepared on the premises. Staff check any individual dietary requirements when providing food, drink and cooking activities. Meals are nutritious and individual children's dietary needs are met. Children sit at a table to eat and drink, socialising with the other children as they discuss the activities they have enjoyed that morning.

## 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>	2
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	2

### 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>	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	1
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
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### Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

<b>Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	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
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The provider confirms that the requirements of the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are:	Met
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