

Harwood Hill Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number

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Inspection date

28/06/2011

Inspector

Fiona Robinson

Setting address

Harwood Close, Welwyn Garden City, HERTS, AL8 7AG

Telephone number

07866129050

Email

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

Harwood Hill Pre-School opened in 2003 and operates from the nursery class of Harwood Hill School, Welwyn Garden City in Hertfordshire and serves the local community. It has the use of one large room and a fully enclosed, outdoor play area. The pre-school supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and those who speak English as an additional language. It is registered by Ofsted on the Early Years Register and the voluntary and compulsory parts of the Childcare Register.

A maximum of 20 children aged from two to under eight years may attend at any one time. There are currently 31 children on roll, all of whom are in the early years age range and, of these, 13 are funded. The pre-school is open each weekday from 12.30pm to 3.30pm during term time. Children come from the local area and attend for a variety of sessions.

There are six members of staff who work with the children, of whom one holds an Early Years Foundation degree, three hold National Vocational Qualifications (NVQs) at level 3 and two hold NVQs at level 2 and are working towards NVQs at level 3. The pre-school receives support from the local authority.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is outstanding.

Children eagerly participate in activities and make excellent progress because they are fully included in the wide range of experiences on offer. Staff have developed outstanding links with parents and carers, the host school and outside agencies, and information is shared very effectively to fully support children's needs. Children are exceptionally well-cared for in a bright, welcoming and stimulating environment. The manager and staff have an outstanding knowledge of the pre-school's strengths and areas for improvement. They demonstrate an excellent capacity for future improvements.

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 problem solving and investigatory experiences in the wider outdoor environment.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Safeguarding is outstanding because comprehensive policies and procedures are fully implemented to ensure children are kept safe. Staff are very knowledgeable about the children in their care and are vigilant and aware of health and safety procedures. Risk assessments are carried out daily and thoroughly reviewed to keep the indoor and outdoor environments safe and secure. Parents are very familiar with the rigorous procedures for the collection of children and there are robust staff recruitment and vetting procedures in place. The security within the pre-school is excellent and staff are deployed very effectively to ensure children are fully supervised at all times. Children have access to an excellent range of well-maintained resources that are safe and suitable for their age. Fire evacuation procedures are practised regularly so that staff and children are very familiar with the routine.

The pre-school is extremely well-led and managed. Staff meet regularly to consider planning and assessment and scrutinise areas for development. There are excellent self-evaluation procedures in place and the views of parents and children are regularly sought and valued during this process. Excellent progress has been made since the last inspection. In particular, key staff make excellent use of assessments to plan the next steps in learning. The layout and organisation of the outdoor area has been developed, however, planning shows that opportunities for children to explore, problem solve and investigate their wider, natural environment are not fully exploited. Staff actively promote equality and diversity to a very high level. They provide outstanding support for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language, so that they make similar progress to their peers. Staff have a very clear idea of what works well and identify areas for improvement. Activities are regularly monitored and children are set challenging targets. Staff regularly access training opportunities to enhance their qualifications and expertise.

Partnerships with parents and carers are outstanding. They consider that staff are very approachable and caring and that the children enjoy a wide range of very interesting and fun-filled activities. They are kept fully informed about their child's day, achievements and progress so they can build on these at home. Parents value the sharing books which are sent home at the end of each week and detail the activities their children have enjoyed. Key staff regularly share the children's learning journeys with their parents and hold termly meetings for them to become familiar with the children's progress over time. They also value the input of parents when setting targets for children. Parents are kept very well-informed of special events and fundraising activities, such as the Easter Egg Hunt and the summer fete. They receive information through comprehensive newsletters, informal discussion, the parents' notice board and the website. The relationship with the nursery and the host school is outstanding and the pre-school benefits from the use of the outdoor area. Staff work very hard to ensure that children experience a very smooth transition into full-time education and have established very strong links with feeder schools. There are excellent links with outside agencies who help the staff to meet the specific requirements of children with special educational

needs and/or disabilities through advice and training opportunities.

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

Children benefit from extremely well-organised, purposeful play and make outstanding progress. Planning is evaluated very carefully and key staff use this information very effectively to help children build on their existing skills and continuously achieve. Staff value the children's ideas and contributions and include these in their planning and organisation of activities. Topics, such as animals, transport and the jungle enhance their experiences further and ensure they feel that learning is fun. Children behave very well because staff have high expectations and a consistent approach to managing behaviour. They show great respect for others and share their toys and resources willingly. They respond very well to staff's constant attention and cooperate maturely with one another. Children are independent in their choice of activity and respect the golden rules and boundaries which they helped staff to compile. They gain an excellent appreciation of the wider world through activities and festivals which look at the importance of Diwali, the Chinese New Year and Easter. Parent visitors also tell them about lifestyles and customs in Canada and Australia, as children and staff celebrate Canada Day and Australia Day.

Children develop an excellent understanding of keeping themselves healthy and safe. They learn about healthy eating and the importance of taking exercise through talks and topic work. Their physical skills are developed very well as they balance on apparatus, such as the climbing frame, ride their pedalled vehicles and dance to music. They independently make healthy choices at snack time and use equipment safely as they make fruit and vegetable kebabs, pizzas with healthy toppings and smoothies. Children benefit greatly from talks on safety from the fire and police services. They learn about the importance of recycling waste materials and enjoy learning about their environment. They relish opportunities to practise their road safety skills in the outdoor area and feel extremely safe and secure at the pre-school because of the care and guidance offered by staff.

Children are very keen to come to pre-school and respond extremely well to the care and support they are given. They make excellent progress in all areas of learning. Their creativity is fostered very well through activities, such as making collages of sunflowers out of materials and printing patterns with fruit and vegetables. Their communication, language and literacy skills are developed very well through their work on letters and sounds. Most are able to write their own names and count to fifteen and beyond by the time they leave pre-school. They use their imaginations very well as they act out the story of 'Jack and the Beanstalk'. Children develop an excellent understanding of animals they are likely to find in the jungle as they have studied a wide range of species and their habitats. Children sing songs tunefully, such as 'Old MacDonald Had a Farm' and are very keen to go on bug hunts and build dens. They skilfully use the computer and interactive whiteboard in their activities. They also use the digital camera to record and share their experiences with one another and show great skill when

operating information and communication technology resources. Children make umbrellas for their bears using waterproof materials and confidently make their own sandwiches for their teddy bears' picnic. They benefit from talks from parents and visitors, such as the doctor, the fireman and the prison officer. They are prepared very well for further learning experiences and full-time education.

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

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| 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

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|--|---|
| 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

| | |
|--|---|
| The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage | 1 |
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Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

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| 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

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| 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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