

Wainscot House Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspector	Jane Mount
Setting address	5 Harpenden Road, St. Albans, Hertfordshire, AL3 5LW
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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*.

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Description of the setting

Wainscot House Day Nursery registered in 1992 and moved to its current premises in 2002. It is a privately owned nursery and operates from a large converted Victorian house which is situated in St Albans, Hertfordshire. There is a car park, which is easily accessible from the main road and the nursery is situated close to public transport links. Children have access to a secure outside play area and the setting is open Monday to Friday from 8am to 6pm for 51 weeks of the year.

The nursery is registered by Ofsted on the Early Years Register only and does not receive government funding for early years education. It is registered to care for a maximum of 40 children in the early years age group and there are currently 78 children on roll. The setting supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and children who speak English as an additional language. Wainscot House Day Nursery employs 22 members of staff to work with the children. The majority of the staff team hold early years qualifications to level 3 or above and includes two qualified teachers.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is outstanding.

The setting provides a high quality service where children flourish in a child-centred, enabling environment. Highly effective partnerships between the nursery, parents and other agencies significantly contribute to the settings knowledge of individual children to ensure their needs are fully met. A committed and motivated staff team effectively implement the setting's policies and procedures to ensure children's welfare is fully protected. Children are making rapid progress towards the early learning goals as their learning is purposefully promoted. Strong leadership, rigorous monitoring of practice, including self-evaluation, ensure that action plans are well targeted and improvements continue to be made where they have the greatest impact for children.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- continuing to use a quality improvement process, such as self-evaluation, to monitor and extend highly effective practice, to ensure continuous improvement.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Arrangements for safeguarding children are robust with highly effective systems in place to protect children. Rigorous recruitment and vetting procedures ensure

children are cared for by staff who are suitable to work with children. Clear management responsibilities in relation to child protection have been established including a named designated person. They consider the welfare of children to be paramount and staff regularly update their child protection knowledge through attending safeguarding training. A highly informative safeguarding policy along with staff who fully understand their roles and responsibilities if they did have a concern ensures children are protected. Children's safety is of high priority and the security of the premises along with effective staff deployment and close supervision of children keep children safe. Systematic and highly effective risk assessments ensures the environment remains safe at all times with any potential hazards identified and minimised immediately.

Comprehensive policies and procedures are used effectively by staff to protect children, promote their well-being and to support all to develop to their full potential. All required documentation to ensure the safe and efficient management of the setting is in place. The provision is committed to fully implementing the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage and this is reflected in their outstanding practice. Staff are guided by a strong management team who strive to provide a high quality service. High levels of support are in place for staff and this raises the commitment and dedication of the staff team and creates a happy, secure environment for everyone including parents and children. Continuous professional development is positively encouraged and staff undertake extensive and varied training, attending both external and in-house early years courses and workshops to ensure they are well-informed practitioners. All staff are committed to the continuous evaluation and improvement of their practice and the setting closely monitors itself to assess the quality of the provision. They are proactive in seeking feedback from parents through the use of questionnaires and an effective self-evaluation system is used to systematically identify the settings strengths and areas they wish to develop further. The setting aims to continue to actively use this as a way of ensuring continuous improvement in the future.

Exceptional good use of space, resources and highly effective staff deployment ensures an enabling environment that is safe and fully inclusive. All children and their families are valued and included with staff who are approachable and friendly. Excellent partnerships with parents significantly contribute to children's well-being and ensures their care and learning needs are fully supported. Parents receive a wealth of good quality information about the nursery and staff are forthcoming in exchanging information with parents which ensures children settle in quickly and any issues are dealt with swiftly. A key person system is in place and information is verbally exchanged on a daily basis which ensures children receive continuity in their care and learning. Alongside this, for younger children 'day sheets' are used to share information with parents and with older children home/nursery travelling books are used to communicate and share relevant information. Frequent opportunities for parents to get involved with their children's learning strengthens relationships as parents have unlimited access to their children's learning journeys and are encouraged to contribute through using the 'look at what I did at home' forms. The setting actively promotes equality of opportunity and works with parents and others to support and meet the needs of individual children. Rigorous systems for working with parents and other agencies ensure children with special educational needs and/or disabilities are closely

monitored and given valuable support to enable them to participate and achieve. Partnerships with other early years providers delivering the Early Years Foundation Stage are in place with links being forged with local schools thereby supporting children's transition to school and ensuring continuity and the full integration of care and learning.

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

The nursery has a highly welcoming, child-centred environment that enables children to become independent and enthusiastic learners. Staff are successful at motivating children to capture their interest and arouse their curiosity because they are enthusiastic themselves. Children's progress is closely monitored through highly effective observation and assessment systems and the information gained from these is effectively used to plan the next steps in a child's learning. Staff enrich the experiences for all children with well-planned activities and play experiences that take account of individual children's interests and developmental stages. Consequently, all children's learning needs are identified and catered for and they are making excellent progress towards the early learning goals. There is a balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities to cover the six areas of learning within the daily routine. Children quickly become engrossed in a range of purposeful and developmentally appropriate resources and activities which provide high levels of stimulation and challenge. From an early age children's independence is encouraged and they play an active role in the setting which results in them being secure in their surroundings and feeling confident when making choices. They quickly develop a positive sense of themselves and others as they learn and develop self-help skills, such as putting on their shoes when going outside to play or learning to feed themselves at mealtimes.

Children have regular opportunities to express themselves creatively and can access a varied range of art materials. They enjoy investigating the changes to colours when painting or exploring the different textures when making models. Children use their imaginations to express themselves and confidently share ideas and thoughts, such as when building a house together using large cardboard boxes. Staff are skilled at extending children's language through listening and talking with them. Children enjoy selecting and handling books and regular story times supports children's early communication skills. Story sacks and puppets are also used to stimulate communication. Children regularly experience music and listen and respond with great excitement when looking at books and listening to stories. Writing and drawing materials are accessible and children have regular opportunities to become familiar with the written word, such as when they write menus for the dinosaur cafe.

Children confidently match and sort objects, learn about volume through filling containers when playing with sand or water and enjoy singing songs which incorporate the use of numbers. They learn about the wider world and about religions and other cultures and recently enjoyed learning about France including having a French breakfast and learning the names of different foods in French. Children have many opportunities to talk about their families and home life. They

learn about nature and delight in using magnifying glasses to find a variety of insects in the garden when talking about mini beasts. They learn about the environment through activities, such as planting and growing in their allotment area.

Staff are proactive in implementing highly effective strategies to promote and safeguard children's health. Good hygiene procedures are applied at mealtimes, such as staff wearing disposable aprons when serving or handling food and hand washing takes priority before children eat. The routines in each room help promote healthy habits and children from a young age learn to take responsibility for washing their hands, flushing toilets or wiping their noses and disposing of tissues appropriately. Healthy eating is promoted and children are provided with healthy food choices at snack and mealtimes. All food is freshly prepared on the premises and menus are shared with parents. Children are encouraged to try new foods and participate in activities where they learn about the benefits of healthy eating, such as eating some of the fruit and vegetable produce they have grown. Plenty of fresh air and exercise keep children fit. Children develop self-confidence in their physical skills as they participate in a variety of physical play activities on a daily basis. They enjoy music and movement and love to dance and sing. Also, the outdoor environment is used to its full potential to develop children's health and physical development. They confidently run, climb and explore when using the outdoor climbing equipment and move with control and co-ordination as they manoeuvre around obstacles when riding bikes.

Children demonstrate a strong sense of security and are confident and self-assured in the setting. Positive relationships between staff, children and parents enable children to feel secure. Staff help children gain an awareness of keeping themselves safe in the nursery as they explain and practise simple procedures, such as not running when indoors in case they fall and hurt themselves. Children keenly participate in regular fire drills and therefore learn how to stay safe in an emergency. Children's behaviour is exemplary. Staff are excellent role models and empower children to take responsibility for themselves as they learn to listen to others, share and take turns. Staff are skilled at knowing when to intervene and when to stand back and let the play develop. Praise and encouragement ensure children develop high levels of self-esteem. Children are highly valued as individuals and in turn are learning to respect each others differences and feelings and to manage their own behaviour.

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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