

Beech Tree Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	EY264541
Inspection date	15/08/2011
Inspector	Vicky Turner

Setting address	Howlands, Welwyn Garden City, Hertfordshire, AL7 4HH
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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

Beech Tree Day Nursery registered in 2003. It is one of the Child Base Limited chain of nurseries. It operates from a two-storey, purpose-built premises in the grounds of the Queen Elizabeth II Hospital in Welwyn Garden City. The nursery has separate areas for children under one year, children aged one to two years, children aged two to three years and children aged three to five years. There are discovery, sensory and quiet rooms.

A large enclosed garden is available which has an impact-absorbent surface for climbing equipment. A separate area for babies is included. The nursery provides places for children of hospital staff and the local community.

The nursery is open five days a week all year round. Opening times are from 7am to 7pm. The core hours are from 8am to 6pm. Children attend for a variety of sessions. A maximum of 124 children may attend at any one time. There are 108 children on roll aged from six weeks to five years. The nursery supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who are learning English as an additional language.

There are 14 full-time staff and eight part-time staff who work with the children. Fourteen members of staff hold a level 3 qualification in childcare. Three hold a level 2 qualification and six are working towards the NVQ level 2 or 3. Seven bank staff cover holidays and sickness, two of whom hold level 3 qualifications and one holds a level 2. Four are unqualified. The setting is registered on the Early Years Register and both the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children and babies are very well safeguarded in a stimulating, inclusive and caring environment. The setting works particularly well with parents and carers and has good links with external agencies. This means that children receive the support that they need and make good progress. The self-evaluation process at all levels enables the setting to monitor and evaluate its provision and improve outcomes for the children. Information and communication technology resources are not evenly distributed, which means that the under two's have limited opportunities to develop their skills in this area. However, the setting's capacity for continuous improvement is good.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- develop existing information and communication technology resources to enable these to be evenly distributed within the different rooms so that all

- age groups have an equal opportunity to develop their skills in this area
- provide more varied and extended experiences in water play for the under two's.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Excellent systems, policies and procedures are in place to safeguard the children. Staff have a very good understanding of child protection issues and the procedures to follow should they have concerns about a child. Staff are thoroughly checked to ensure that they are suitable to work with the children. Accident books and incident and medication records are very well maintained. Adults undertake thorough risk assessments to cover all aspects of the provision. Fire equipment and exits are checked regularly and regular fire drills ensure children understand the procedures for safe evacuation of the premises. All staff are first aid trained and follow very strict guidelines to prevent the spread of diseases and minimise the risk of infections.

The new manager provides good leadership for an effective and knowledgeable team who share the vision of a stimulating and enabling environment, with rich opportunities and experiences that support and challenge babies and children to successfully achieve their next steps. Staff, parents and children are fully involved in the ongoing self-evaluation process, which enables the setting to evaluate all aspects of the provision and secure improvements. The setting has made a number of improvements which have had a positive impact on outcomes for the children. Recommendations from the last inspection have been fully addressed. A comprehensive induction programme, yearly appraisals and six-monthly reviews support staff in their role. Staff are encouraged to reflect on their practice and update their training to provide better outcomes for the children.

The setting is well resourced with safe, age-appropriate resources which are accessible to all children. Staff are deployed according to their strengths, qualifications and ratios so children are well supervised and supported at all times. Space is well used to provide designated areas of learning in all rooms.

Staff have a good understanding of where children are in their learning and development and know how to support them towards their next steps. Children's and babies' individual learning journals enable staff to monitor their progress so additional needs are promptly identified. Parents, carers, the Special Educational Needs Coordinator and relevant external agencies provide appropriate support to enable children to make progress. Individual place mats ensure that children's dietary and medical needs are observed. A wide range of multicultural and disability resources and the celebration of various festivals help children develop an understanding of differences. A complaints policy is available for parents should they wish to make a complaint.

The setting liaises well with other Early Years Foundation Stage providers which the children attend to share information and ensure continuity and progression. They have good links with other nurseries in the arena which are owned by the

same provider and share their ideas. The setting also has good links with the care coordinator, the community nurse, children's centres and other external agencies. The setting is supported by the education coordinator, Hertfordshire Local Education Authority and Play Based Limited. The setting has been very accommodating in providing temporary accommodation for children and staff from a local setting due to unforeseen circumstances.

Parents are very happy with the provision and quality of care provided by the setting. They comment that 'it is one of the best nurseries in the area', 'the atmosphere is great', and 'staff are extremely sensitive and empathetic to different needs'. They are very well informed about their children's progress and come into the setting to support children's learning with cooking and creative activities. A forum, surveys and daily conversations with key persons enable parents and carers to make suggestions for improvement. Parents and families are regularly invited to stay and play sessions, they help with the summer fete and help make costumes for the Christmas production.

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

Staff provide a safe, caring and stimulating environment for children and babies to learn, grow and develop. Key persons bond well with their children and have a good knowledge of their needs. They make detailed observations and collect photographic evidence, which informs their planning for children's next steps in learning. As a result, children and babies make good progress in their learning and development towards the early learning goals, particularly in their personal, social and emotional development, communication, language and literacy, and physical development. Good tracking systems enable staff to track children's progress through their learning journals. Free flow of activities enable children to choose whether they play indoors or out. They happily engage in a range of activities, such as, construction, sharing books, making kites, small world play, building sandcastles and filling containers with water. However, water play for the under two's does not fully extend their learning and development.

Very well-established routines help babies and young children gain an exceptionally strong sense of security. They are very happy and content because of the strong bonds they share with their adults. They play safely, use equipment and handle tools safely. Visitors to the setting help children learn about fire safety, stranger awareness and road safety. Children are very much aware of sun safety and ask adults for their sun hats before going outside. Sun cream is provided by the setting.

The new outdoor area provides excellent opportunities for all children to enjoy daily active physical play. They ride their tricycles with good coordination and control, climb, crawl and run around. Music, movement and dance sessions also contribute to a healthy lifestyle. Children and babies enjoy a varied and healthy diet and make healthy choices from different flavoured yoghurts. Fruit is available at breakfast and for snacks. Fresh water is available throughout the day. Older children talk about food textures and their preferences and know that healthy

foods 'give you energy to run around and jump'. They learn about healthy eating and how to care for their teeth. Children have developed good hand washing routines, and visual prompts remind them to wash their hands after using the toilets. Babies and the under two's are offered hand wipes before and after meals.

The setting's 'golden values' help children understand that there are boundaries. Positive behaviour and achievements are praised, and as a result children are particularly well behaved. They are encouraged to take turns, share and be kind. Class helpers set up for lunch and choose toys and activities for the garden. The buddy system allows children to feel safe and secure and the older children feel valued in welcoming and supporting a new child. Children are very independent and serve themselves at lunch time, and the younger children are encouraged to feed themselves. Children look after the fish and hamster. They make Christmas boxes for 'Auntie' to support nurseries in South Africa and also support a local hospice.

Children and babies are well prepared with skills for the future. Family books for the babies, everyday books and textured books provide a focused talking point for the children. Role play activities, circle time and group times offer good opportunities for talk. Children experiment with a wide range of mark making tools and materials. A group of older children enjoy a 'letters and sounds' activity on rhyming words. Children have good opportunities to develop their problem solving and numeracy skills through taking risks, practical counting, adding and subtraction activities, bead threading, puzzles and a counter connection game. Children have access to an interactive white board, two computers, talking tins, programmable toys, CD players, and press and react toys, but this is not evenly distributed between the rooms. Provision in this area for the two to three year olds is less generous. Children develop a good understanding of the world as they fly their kites and balloons in the wind. They hunt for minibeasts and plant cress and tomatoes, which they prepare and eat. Children explore many different materials and objects and gain sensory experiences through different textures and using all their senses.

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?	2
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	2

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	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

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	2
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	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

The provider confirms that the requirements of the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are: Met