

# Head Start Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

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**Unique reference number** 130587  
**Inspection date** 01/09/2011  
**Inspector** Sheila Harrison

**Setting address** 86 High Street, POTTERS BAR, Hertfordshire, EN6 5AT

**Telephone number** 01707 655122  
**Email** [deborahdavies@head-start.co.uk](mailto:deborahdavies@head-start.co.uk)  
**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

Head Start Day Nursery registered in 2000 and is one of three settings operated by Oaklands Management Services Limited. It operates from five rooms in a renovated building, originally a bank, in Potters Bar, Hertfordshire. Children share access to an outdoor play area.

The setting is open every weekday from 7.30am to 6.30pm all year round. Children are able to attend for a variety of sessions. The setting is registered on the Early Years Register. A maximum of 50 children in the early years age range may attend the setting at any one time. There are currently 78 children attending who are in the Early Years Foundation Stage. The setting is also registered on both the voluntary and compulsory parts of the Childcare Register to care for children aged over five years to eight years. The setting provides funded early education for three- and four-year-olds. The group supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and children who speak English as an additional language.

The setting employs 19 members of childcare staff. Of these, 18 hold appropriate early years qualifications, and one has Early Years Professional Status. 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 enjoy their time in the setting. They are making good progress in their learning and development and are actively engaged in their play. The setting is accessible, welcoming and there a close partnership with parents and professionals. Staff mostly respond to the individual needs and interests of the children. This ensures that the uniqueness of each child is recognised. Children are very effectively safeguarded and protected. Records and procedures support their safety and most health procedures are effective. Staff work together as a strong team and continually strive to improve the provision through careful reflection on their practice. As a result, the setting is well placed to maintain continuous improvement.

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

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

- review the routines and deployment of staff to ensure that every child receives an enjoyable experience with regard to the personal care routines
- help children understand the reasons behind good hygiene practices, such as how they store toothbrushes
- promote children's linguistic diversity by improving opportunities for all children to use their home language in their play and learning.

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

Children are safeguarded effectively because the entire staff team have an excellent understanding of child protection procedures through recent and relevant training. They know how to protect the children in their care through relevant policies and procedures and the high expectations of the management team. Robust recruitment and vetting procedures ensure that everyone working with the children is suitable to do so. The thorough induction procedure is part of this process. Staff are monitored through regular meetings and training opportunities. Comprehensive policies and procedures are in place, including the assessment of risks. Consistent staff vigilance ensures children are extremely safe and secure at all times, and there are strong procedures to protect children with food allergies.

The environment in which children are cared for and educated is supportive. Children's development is promoted by the very good use of the newly extended outdoor area. The premises are safe and well cared for. Information for parents is well displayed, and there are many expressive photographs of the children relishing their time in the setting. Staff are knowledgeable and enthusiastic and generally well deployed, although the lunch-time toileting routine does not fully meet children's needs. The available resources are good quality, plentiful and fit for purpose. The provider is taking appropriate steps to ensure the environment is sustainable. Parents are involved in helping children with a productive vegetable patch, and the children are now harvesting the potatoes, tomatoes and courgettes.

Children are making good progress in their learning as the staff are knowledgeable and enthusiastic. The company has a strong vision for the service, morale is high, and staff are successful in working together as a team. The setting's self-evaluation accurately reflects all aspects of the provision, and previous recommendations have been successfully addressed. The current plan for improvement is well targeted, promoting achievement for all children. Staff strive to improve the provision of high quality care and education through a well-planned programme of professional training and development. Strategies discussed at a recent course on behaviour management have been introduced to help extend children's concentration skills.

Children feel valued because the play materials reflect diversity. They use a useful range of multicultural resources to learn about other cultures, and positive images of ethnicity are displayed around the setting. Some children benefit as staff use their own language skills to enable them to use their home languages in their play and learning, although this does not include the home languages of all children. Staff are taking effective steps to close identified achievement gaps by the support they offer children. Detailed information gathered from parents before a child starts ensures that staff can provide for children's individual likes, dislikes and needs. There are worthwhile monitoring systems, which enable staff to devise well-targeted plans for the future.

The setting has highly positive relationships with parents and carers, ensuring each child's needs are met. There is a well-developed two-way flow of information about

each child's achievement and welfare. Parents know their child's keyworker and can easily talk to the staff about their development at home, and this contributes to the planning. There are parents' evenings twice a year to discuss children's progress. Parents are involved in the running of the setting through parental questionnaires. Staff provided an activity to prepare children for a beach holiday following comment on the form. The website and e-mail address give further ways for parents and staff to communicate efficiently. Children delight in taking home their room's soft toys, Maisy Monkey or Freddy Bear, and parents write his adventures in his diary. Staff make worthwhile attempts to share information with teachers when children start school, ensuring a smooth transition and continuity of learning and care for the children.

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

Children are making secure progress in their learning and development. Staff have a good understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage. They assess children's learning well. Records of their learning journeys are completed for all areas of learning with observations and photographic evidence. They show children's achievements, which staff use to plan their next steps, and are regularly evaluated to ensure children's progress is assured.

Children are happy and settled in the setting. Babies are very sensitively handled. They snuggle into an adult as they are given their bottle in a very close and comfortable position, allowing them to develop confidence and resilience with warm and secure relationships. Sleep patterns and preferences are respected. Each child compiles a book of family photographs, helping staff gain valuable knowledge of each child's background. Children are developing very positive attitudes to learning.

Staff ensure each child is sufficiently stimulated through a wide range of planned and child-initiated play activities. Children use the pictorial timetable to choose the activities they wish to play with indoors and outside. Children use the outdoor area to experience all the areas of learning on a larger, more active scale. Children use magnifying glasses and bug-pots to search through the woodpile for insects. They use puppets in the outdoor puppet theatre to develop their story-telling skills. They count with great excitement when playing 'What's the time, Mr Wolf?'

Children are developing the skills to be creative and think critically. They observe how quickly plastic toys can slide down piece of guttering. They show awe and wonder as they experiment adding vinegar to bicarbonate of soda and see the fluid froth and expand, they watch the effect on raisins when they add them to lemonade. Children have good opportunities to learn about their community and the wider world. Staff take the children to visit the fire station and for a trip on a bus. Young children enjoy a trip to the local park to feed the ducks. Children write for a purpose as they make a shopping list and visit the local supermarket to buy the fruit for snack time. Children behave well and are learning to be kind to their friends. They undertake charity events to raise money for those less fortunate than themselves.

Children show a useful understanding of healthy living. They learn about healthy eating through the wide range of tasty, nutritious meals and snacks. Children enjoy their meals and show high levels of independence as they pour their own drinks and older children serve themselves. Meal times are social events; staff sit with the children, encouraging conversations and social conventions such as good manners and using a knife and fork. Children are learning about the benefits of exercise as by taking part in an organised 'stretch and grow' group every fortnight. Staff generally implement secure hygiene procedures throughout the setting, although they do not always help children understand good hygiene practices, such as storing toothbrushes so they do not touch each other. Children have good opportunities to learn about road safety on their regular trips in the locality. They learn to keep themselves safe without being fearful as they practise jumping from the low balancing beam.

## 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	2

### The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

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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

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