

Hermitage Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspection date	31/10/2011
Inspector	Catherine Sharkey

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Type of setting	Childcare - Non-Domestic

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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

Hermitage Day Nursery is one of several settings run by the provider as part of Swingboat Nurseries. It was registered in 1999 and operates from a purposely designed building in the village of Whitwick near Coalville in Leicestershire. The nursery is open each weekday from 7.30am to 6pm for 51 weeks of the year. Children have access to a partly covered outdoor play area.

The nursery is registered on the Early Years Register and both the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. A maximum of 80 children may attend the nursery at any one time. Children attend for various sessions. There are currently 106 children aged under five years on roll. Of these, 36 receive funding for early years education. Children come from the local community and nearby towns and villages. The nursery supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and also supports children who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery employs 40 members of staff who work with the children, all of whom hold appropriate early years qualifications including National Vocational Qualification at levels 2 to 5. Some staff hold degrees in early education and others hold qualified teacher status and one member of the staff team holds Early years Professional Status. The nursery receives support from the local authority and has close links with the local primary school.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is outstanding.

Children are making excellent progress in their learning because staff have a thorough knowledge of the early learning goals. They plan meticulously so that all children's individual needs are met and the detailed observations they make inform these plans. This means that children are able to progress significantly from their starting points. There are excellent partnerships with parents and carers and they are fully involved in their children's learning through contributing to their progress records and working with them at home. There are also very effective links with other professionals. Children are safeguarded extremely well in the nursery as a result of the exemplary policies and practice in place. They settle well and are very happy in the homely and friendly atmosphere of the nursery.

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 develop planned peer observations between staff members in order to ensure improvement in monitoring and practice is ongoing.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children are extremely well safeguarded in the nursery because all staff are appropriately vetted to work with children and there are robust security measures in place. For example, the main door has a fingerprint entry system, there are closed circuit television cameras and adults collecting children use a password. Children's arrivals and departures are recorded. All medical consent forms and accident records are extremely well maintained and are signed by parents and staff. Daily risk assessments and very detailed policies ensure children are safe both in the nursery and on trips. All medical consent forms and information on children are signed by parents and staff, ensuring medicine is administered correctly and children are well protected.

The building is very effectively divided into rooms for each age group. The huge range of exciting and stimulating resources are carefully chosen to suit each room. They are rotated and used for different purposes so that children have varied experiences to enable them to progress in their learning. Each room has a 'cosy corner' with lights and sensory objects, inviting book areas and other separate areas linked to the areas of learning, such as role play, creative, maths, small world and construction areas. The outside enclosed space is exceptionally well organised. It has fixed climbing and balancing apparatus of various sizes, soft play equipment and a large wigwam with seating. A covered area is used very well for role play, mark-making and other activities. There is a comfortable, covered area adjoining the baby room with stimulating resources such as books and sand. In every part of the nursery, children are able to access stimulating resources. This allows them explore and develop their imaginations and skills in all areas of learning to a very high standard.

Staff work very well together as a team and are highly motivated and well-qualified. They are continually striving to improve provision and practice through attending courses and meeting regularly to identify improvements to be made and how they will take action. Regular staff appraisals identify any weaknesses and how to address them. The management would like to further develop peer observations between staff as another way of identifying areas for improvement. Staff are very well supported by management and there is rigorous self-evaluation in the nursery. The nursery belongs to the National Day Nurseries Association, through which they keep up to date with best practice. The previous recommendations have been successfully addressed, especially in enabling parents to be fully involved in their children's learning. Staff reviews are now more frequent and planning is evaluated to ensure learning opportunities are maximised.

There are excellent partnerships with parents and carers. Their suggestions and opinions are valued and they contribute to their children's learning journey record books. They pass on written and verbal observations of their child's progress at home, so these can be added to the books. Detailed information is shared with staff so that the child's starting point can be established and progress measured. Parents are given extremely detailed information on all aspects of provision and their child's daily routines and activities. Excellent displays all around the nursery

inform them of early years practice as well as health and other issues. The nursery has very close links with other settings children may attend and with local schools in order to aid children's transition to school.

The needs of all children in the nursery are met through close cooperation with parents and other professionals. Staff work very effectively with other professionals in order to support children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Labels around the rooms in the home language of some children are used as well as food tasting and dressing up to allow all children to feel included.

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

Children really enjoy their learning in the nursery as there are so many exciting and interesting activities for them to choose from. They take part in stimulating adult-led activities in which their language, vocabulary and knowledge are developed to a consistently high standard. They are asked, 'What's happened to all the leaves?' They then remember their previous work on seasons and discuss why the leaves are falling. Staff maximise every opportunity to enhance children's learning. Children are learning to recognise sounds in their names and other words and to identify rhyming words. They follow an effective phonics scheme and have numerous opportunities for mark-making and writing for a purpose, such as in the many role play areas. Children use mathematical skills extremely well in planned and day-to-day activities. For example, children count the stairs and use simple addition to add one more. They are learning about the local area and the wider world through their trips to the supermarket, the library and many nature walks and outings and through the visitors who come to nursery. They learn to care for living things by looking after some nursery pets, such as fish or stick insects. A vast array of exciting creative activities, small world and construction toys allow children to use their imaginations very well. They are confident in their use of computers and are able to explain what they are doing in a colour matching game. They also learn about technology through the use of an extensive range of push button toys and telephones as well as the rain gauge, thermometer and barometer in the outside area. Staff use regular, detailed observations of all children to plan their next steps, which means all children are making significant progress in their learning. These observations are evaluated and recorded which means the provision is always improving.

Children feel safe, secure and comfortable in the nursery because of the caring, friendly staff and homely atmosphere. Babies smile and laugh and indicate when they want to go outside and settle happily on their key person's lap for a cuddle or story. The pre-school children discuss firework safety and are careful when using the stairs, holding the rail. They are closely supervised and help to devise their own rules for keeping safe so they are aware of potential hazards.

Children are given healthy snacks such as raisins and dried fruit. Healthy meals are cooked on the premises and they clean their teeth with their own brushes and toothpaste afterwards. They have access to their own cups with water, milk or juice throughout the day and learn about tooth care and other healthy practices

through discussion, activities, songs and a visit from the dentist. Children are aware of the importance of washing their hands at certain times and the use of paper towels helps to stop the spread of germs. They have plenty of fresh air and exercise each day and develop their physical skills very well through the use of a wealth of good quality resources.

Children's behaviour is excellent. They are extremely well mannered and helpful, giving each other their cups if they find another child's before their own or thanking staff when they are given something. They are learning to be independent, setting tables at lunch time and pouring their own drinks. Relationships are extremely good. Children share their excitement at seeing Halloween lights on their autumn display and they are given confidence through praise and encouragement. They play and chat happily together and are confident at contributing to small group discussions. They are learning about other countries and cultures very well through the colourful displays around the nursery, dressing up, food tasting and creative activities. They make diva lamps for Diwali and talk about their holidays in other countries. Books and other resources reflect a variety of cultures well. The nursery is involved with the local community in charity fund raising activities.

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

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

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

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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