

Hobby Horse Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspector

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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

Hobby Horse Pre-school opened in 1984 and now operates from a converted school building in the grounds of the local First School in Stony Stratford, Milton Keynes. The group is open each weekday morning from 9am to 12noon. A lunch club is available from 12noon to 12.30pm. Children have access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area. The pre-school is registered on the Early Years Register and both the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. A maximum of 30 children may attend the pre-school at any one time aged between 2 years and the end of the early years age group, of these no more than 16 may be under 3 years at any one time. There are currently 48 children in the early years age group on roll. Of these, 17 three to four year olds and one two year old child receive funding for nursery education. Children attend from the local and surrounding areas. The setting makes provision for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. The pre-school employs six full-time staff, and three part-time members of staff. Five have an early years' qualification.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

This is a good pre-school setting. It promotes good learning through a good curriculum which challenges children's confidence and independence and promotes good progress. Staff ensure children's well being is of paramount importance and, as a result, children feel happy and safe. The nursery manager's insightful self-evaluation feeds effectively into the nursery action plan. The pre-school has made significant improvements in assessment and challenged children's thinking and learning, issues highlighted in its previous inspection. As a result, there is a good capacity to make further improvements.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- involve all who use the setting in the development and review of the self-evaluation and action plan
- develop opportunities for outdoor play to enhance the curriculum.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The setting has developed exemplary systems to safeguard its children. All policies are rigorous and regularly reviewed. Staff and parents are made aware of the need

for stringent care in applying the policies, for example by thorough recruiting and vetting all staff that are appointed. Staff induction and training is exemplary. As a result, policies and curriculum opportunities give children an excellent awareness of how to keep themselves safe in the setting. Collaboration with the local safeguarding board and other agencies is outstanding.

Managers are clearly focused on maintaining high expectations of staff through a precise performance management process that focuses on driving improvement. Wednesday afternoon's staff meetings and key workers' session are very productive. Staff share information about individual children's progress and ensure their targets are well matched. There has been good progress in assessment procedures and, as a result, they are more accurate and feed effectively into key workers' planning. This has a good impact on outcomes for all children.

Equality and diversity are outstanding and very well managed in the setting. When children join the setting, parents complete an 'All About Me' questionnaire which is used by key workers to ensure that planning meets the needs of individual children. Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities are given well-targeted support ensuring they reach their full potential.

Self-evaluation of the setting is a good document and links well with the settings' action plan. However, this is the work of managers and lacks the wider dimension of input from the staff team and parents and carers to ensure all aspects of the setting's work have been reviewed by all that use and support the setting.

The manager, staff and management committee are highly committed to working in partnership with others. There is a good relationship with the Reception class in the host school. In the summer, as the children prepare for transition into Reception, there is a good two way link with the Reception class. This builds children's confidence about their move. Links with external agencies are productive, especially where additional support is needed.

Engagement with parents and carers is outstanding. They are very involved through the management committee, fund raising and the additional effort that goes into producing the very professional newsletter. Parents and carers are fulsome in their praise about the setting. They highlight the settling-in period when their children first join the setting and appreciate the flexibility on offer to suit the children and their own work pattern. Parents and carers support their children's learning when, during half-termly consultation, meetings they discuss with key workers what they may like to do at home to give additional help.

The setting has had to introduce an afternoon session four days each week to accommodate the increase in interested parents and carers wishing to sign-up to join Hobby Horse Pre School.

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

When children arrive at pre school they cannot wait to get their coats off and start their day. The first ten minutes allows everyone to settle, systems are flexible, so parents and carers who are concerned about leaving their child are able to stay. The first session, 'Circle Time', has an outstanding impact on equality and opportunity. Children collect their mat, introduce themselves and say hello, often with a wave. This is a chance for everyone to be involved and even children who are shy or find communication difficult. 'Circle Time' is also for sharing before the business of the day begins. 'Circle Time' has a good impact on confidence and motivation.

Key workers focus on matching the needs of all children, and also focus on children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. The improved assessment system has a good impact on planning. Staff collect ongoing assessment on post-its. They analyse these small steps of development in individual children's files. This is used to track progress and to show parents and carers the rate of their child's development.

Flexible planning effectively engages children in making choices and decision. For example, children understand about being safe. They choose to use a special knife to cut up their fruit at snack time and know how use the knife safely. Regular daily activities often involve hand washing and repetition of these routines helps memory and recall. However, at times, opportunities for children's outdoor learning are missed and this restricts children's learning.

The enthusiasm seen on arrival is maintained throughout the session for most children. Activities, such as the excitement of working together on building a castle, or making interesting shapes with play dough, or 'reading' a book captures children's imagination and they become very engrossed in their learning. All children understand healthy food and that 'five-a-day fruit and vegetables helps to keep their teeth and bodies healthy'. Snack time is a good example of children developing very effective social skills and making choices about their snack. During the inspection, the theme on the Chinese New Year gave very exciting opportunities to develop a Chinese take away shop, explore noodles and chop sticks, and also enriched the children's experience of another culture. Children's involvement in the setting community is good they enjoy chances to go and explore the falling leaves and watch the wildlife in the orchard. Well-labelled drawers and boxes help them to access resources independently. Community visits are well planned and effectively risk assessed. Children visit the supermarket, the library and learn about the people that help them in the community, such as the police. All topics planned have a strong focus on basic skills. Children develop word recognition, early phonics through rhymes and actions; problem solving in building, sharing and counting collections, such as the buttons two children happily threaded making patterns of colour and shapes. Role-play, using technology is fun. There are many pieces of technology including imitation mobile phones and keyboards to encourage children to experiment. The key to planning in the setting

is active learning which has a good impact on learners.

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	1
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	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
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The provider confirms that the requirements of the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are:	Met
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