

Home from Home Kindergarten

Northchurch Cricket Pavillion, Dudswell Lane, Northchurch, Hertfordshire, HP4 3TQ

Inspection date	19/02/2013
Previous inspection date	02/10/2008

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	2
	Previous inspection:	3
How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend		2
The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children		2
The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision		2

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This provision is good

- Children develop high levels of independence and self-confidence because they are encouraged from a young age to do things for themselves. They pour drinks, cut up fruit and manage their personal care needs. This equips them well as they move on to school.
- The staff are knowledgeable about how children learn through play. Their support and enthusiasm successfully builds on children's natural curiosity and interests, such as when hunting for bugs. This motivates children and extends their learning.
- Good use is made of the outdoor play area and local environment. It is well equipped with resources that appeal to the children and allow them to explore and investigate. This is particularly valuable to children who prefer to learn actively in the fresh air.

It is not yet outstanding because

- Technological resources are not readily available for children to use in their play. This means opportunities to explore and understand technology are somewhat infrequent and children do not make such good progress in this area.
- The information obtained from parents initially about children's starting points is quite limited and is not included in children's learning records. As a result, it is not clear how staff use this information to plan activities relevant to each child's prior experiences and backgrounds.

Information about this inspection

Inspections of registered early years provision are scheduled:

- at least once in every inspection cycle. The current cycle ends on 31 July 2016
- more frequently where Ofsted identifies a need to do so, for example where provision was previously judged as inadequate
- brought forward in the inspection cycle where Ofsted has received information that suggests the provision may not be meeting the legal requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage; or where assessment of the provision identifies a need for early inspection
- prioritised for inspection where we have received information that the provision is not meeting the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage and which suggests children may not be safe
- at the completion of an investigation into failure to comply with the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage.

The provision is also registered on the compulsory part of the Childcare Register. This report includes a judgment about compliance with the requirements of that register.

Inspection activities

- The inspector observed activities in the main playroom, two smaller rooms and in the outdoor area.
- The inspector held meetings with the manager of the provision and a member of the senior management team.
- The inspector looked at children's assessment records and planning documentation.
- The inspector read the provider's latest self-evaluation form and checked some policies and records, including evidence of suitability and qualifications of staff working with the children.
- The inspector took account of the views of parents recorded in surveys and correspondence, and spoke to parents on the day.

Inspector

Hilary Preece

Full Report

Information about the setting

Home from Home Kindergarten was registered in 1995 and is on the Early Years Register and the compulsory part of the Childcare Register. It is one of three provisions under the same ownership operating in the local area. This provision operates from Northchurch

Cricket Pavilion in the village of Northchurch, near Berkhamsted. There is a fenced outdoor play area and children have supervised access to the cricket ground. The nursery serves the local area and is accessible to all children.

The nursery employs seven members of childcare staff. Of these, five hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3 and one at level 4. The manager holds an early years degree.

The nursery opens Monday to Friday for 50 weeks of the year. Sessions are from 8am until 5.45pm. Children attend for a variety of sessions. There are currently 46 children attending who are in the early years age group. The nursery provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children. It supports a number of children who speak English as an additional language and children with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

To further improve the quality of the early years provision the provider should:

- develop the educational programme for understanding the world, by making sure there are opportunities for children to investigate how things work, by providing more frequent access to technological resources in everyday play, such as telephones, cameras, keyboards and torches
- gather more detailed information about children's prior experience and background and use it more effectively so that key persons can establish clear starting points to help plan motivating and relevant activities based on children's needs.

Inspection judgements

How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend

The staff plan a broad educational programme that successfully meets children's needs and inspires them to learn. The staff team is knowledgeable about how to promote children's learning and practice is consistent across the nursery. This means all children are well supported and, overall, make significant gains in their learning and development. Key persons make regular observations of children which they use to identify and plan their next steps in learning. This includes a progress assessment for two-year-old children. Parents are encouraged to share what they know about their children and to view their children's learning records at any time. They provide the necessary basic information when children start or move up from the nearby provision for babies that is under the

same ownership. However, there is scope to improve the quality of this information and the way in which it is used by key persons when establishing children's starting points. Currently, the learning records do not include everything that is known about children or reflect contributions from parents and carers. This means records do not provide an entirely holistic picture of each child.

Children confidently access all areas of the provision. The free-flow movement between the indoor and outdoor environments works particularly well as it allows children to play in an environment in which they feel comfortable and happy. The garden area is well equipped with exciting open-ended resources, such as lengths of plastic drainpipes, buckets of water, jugs and brushes. This allows children to experiment and explore by using the resources in different ways. Some children make marks on the ground using paintbrushes and water, some pour water down the drainpipes and others stand in the puddles of water to observe the patterns their foot prints make. Members of staff respond well to children's natural curiosity in order to build on their thinking and knowledge. For example, when children see a spider disappear into the brickwork and want to find another one a staff member encourages them to use the magnifying glasses to help them in their search. This sparks plenty of interest and discussion about their size, appearance and where spiders live.

The indoor environment provides areas for children to express their ideas through art, design and imaginative play. They explore with paint, glue and collage materials in ways that appeal. They use construction blocks to build towers and castles. They negotiate with each other in role play when deciding what type of fire fighter they are going to be and who is going to drive the engine. Staff are on hand to help them communicate their ideas effectively and to resolve any differences of opinion whilst allowing the children to play independently.

Some adult-led focused group activities help prepare children for their future learning in school. Older children learn to sit still, listen to others and respond to instructions. All children are included and involved in the activity which helps them develop their self-confidence. Activities are practical and just long enough to provide children with a good understanding of numbers and phonics while not being too long that they lose interest. They enjoy counting, identifying and matching numbers, and they sing songs about the days of the week and the weather. Children have some opportunities to use technology. At times they operate a laptop, a cassette player and remote controlled cars. However, technological resources overall are limited and not freely available for children to use in their play. This restricts their ability to investigate and operate a wider range of technological resources. Their progress in this area is, therefore, a little less well developed.

The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children

Children that are new to the kindergarten settle well. New starters and babies that move up from the provider's other setting are given plenty of opportunity to visit beforehand and get to know their key person. This helps them to make secure emotional attachments to their carers and promotes their emotional well-being. Parents confirm that their children

settle in well, enjoy attending and that they do indeed make good progress in their learning and development. Similarly, there is good support for children moving between the age groups in the kindergarten. This enables all children to feel self-assured and comfortable in their surroundings. Relationships between children and their carers are positive. Members of staff act as good role models for children's behaviour. They set clear expectations, such as expecting children to help with tidying up or lining up before moving downstairs, which help children understand what is acceptable and safe. The staff handle any minor differences of opinion well. They encourage children to talk to each other in order to help them explore their feelings and resolve their problems.

The environment and routines are planned to encourage children to be independent. They decide when they are ready to have a morning or afternoon snack by visiting the snack table independently. This means they can play uninterrupted and do not have to stop what they are doing to all eat together. The staff that supervise the snack table use the time very effectively to introduce learning and to reinforce messages about good hygiene and eating healthily. The children are encouraged to talk about the variety of fruit and vegetables on offer and older ones are keen to cut up a banana or pear. They pour their drinks and dispose of any waste, and thus develop good levels of confidence and control of their hand movements. The staff members encourage children to be independent in managing their personal care routines. They ensure even the youngest children can access tissues when needed and that they use antibacterial hand gel afterwards to prevent cross-contamination of germs. This helps children to become self-sufficient and understand the importance of good hygiene practices.

Children enjoy being physically active and have many different opportunities to use the outdoor facilities. Within the enclosed play area they use bikes and wheeled toys to practice their coordination. A stepped beam allows them to develop confidence in moving, balancing and jumping. Staff provide reassurance and guidance to help children accomplish the task and to make them aware of their safety and the safety of those around them. There are additional opportunities for children to climb and use larger apparatus during outings to the nearby play park. They play ball games on the adjoining cricket field which allows them greater freedom to be physically active and exuberant. Children move confidently on to nursery class or school because there are effective links with all the schools that children attend. The manager is in regular communication with these schools to ensure that children are prepared well for the transition and relevant information is shared to support continuity in learning and development.

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

Leaders and managers have made good progress to drive improvement since the last inspection. Effective and accurate self-evaluation, which considers the views of all staff, parents and children, demonstrates there is the capacity to identify areas for improvement and put in place plans to address them. The current manager has made improvements to the environment to make it more comfortable and stimulating for young children. She has also reviewed the routines and activities to ensure they meet the needs of all children. There is a strong commitment to developing the provision further. The manager forges

useful partnerships and attends networks with other early years providers in the area in order to share best practice and ideas. This makes an important contribution to reflective practice.

The day-to-day manager is supported well by a senior management team that visit regularly. Their roles and responsibilities are clearly defined and understood by the staff team. Senior management are responsible for recruitment and vetting of staff. They follow rigorous procedures to ensure suitable checks are carried out and potential recruits have the necessary qualifications, experience, skills and temperament to work with children. All members of staff receive induction training and training in first aid and safeguarding children. They demonstrate that they understand the safeguarding children policy and would be able to refer any concerns through the appropriate channels. This means children are protected. Further procedures that protect children, such as regular fire drills and risk assessments, are understood by the staff and carried out effectively.

Staff performance is well managed. The manager carries out careful monitoring by observing her staff as she works alongside them to ensure that assessments of children are consistent and accurate. There are opportunities for regular supervision of staff and a formal appraisal system is carried out by senior management. This allows staff to build confidence, develop their skills and participate in regular training.

All learning and development requirements are met. The manager oversees the planning and delivery of the educational programme to ensure it meets the needs of all the children attending. This includes close monitoring of children with special educational needs and/or disabilities to ensure information is shared with parents and timely support is obtained from the appropriate professionals. This enables all children to make good progress within their capabilities.

The Childcare Register

The requirements for the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are **Met**

What inspection judgements mean

Registered early years provision

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	Outstanding provision is highly effective in meeting the needs of all children exceptionally well. This ensures that children are very well prepared for the next stage of their learning.
Grade 2	Good	Good provision is effective in delivering provision that meets the needs of all children well. This ensures children are ready for the next stage of their learning.

Grade 3	Satisfactory	Satisfactory provision is performing less well than expectations in one or more of the key areas. It requires improvement in order to be good.
Grade 4	Inadequate	Provision that is inadequate requires significant improvement and/or enforcement. The provision is failing to give children an acceptable standard of early years education and/or is not meeting the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. It will be inspected again within 12 months of the date of this inspection.
Met		The provision has no children on roll. The inspection judgement is that the provider continues to meet the requirements for registration.
Not Met		The provision has no children on roll. The inspection judgement is that the provider does not meet the requirements for registration.

Inspection

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under Sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006 on the quality and standards of provision that is registered on the Early Years Register. The registered person must ensure that this provision complies with the statutory framework for children’s learning, development and care, known as the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Setting details

Unique reference number	129350
Local authority	Hertfordshire
Inspection number	876163
Type of provision	
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 8
Total number of places	30
Number of children on roll	46
Name of provider	Elizabeth Mary Curtis
Date of previous inspection	02/10/2008
Telephone number	01442 876759

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Type of provision

For the purposes of this inspection the following definitions apply:

Full-time provision is that which operates for more than three hours. These are usually known as nurseries, nursery schools and pre-schools and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. They are registered on the Early Years Register and pay the higher fee for registration.

Sessional provision operates for more than two hours but does not exceed three hours in any one day. These are usually known as pre-schools, kindergartens or nursery schools and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. They are registered on the Early Years Register and pay the lower fee for registration.

Childminders care for one or more children where individual children attend for a period of more than two hours in any one day. They operate from domestic premises that are usually their own home. They are registered on the Early Years Register and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Out of school provision may be sessional or full-time provision and is delivered before or after school and/or in the summer holidays. They are registered on the Early Years Register and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. Where children receive their Early Years Foundation Stage in school these providers do not have to deliver the learning and development requirements in full but should complement the experiences children receive in school.

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