

Harpenden Day Nursery

Peel House, 15 Vaughan Road, HARPENDEN, Hertfordshire, AL5 4EL

Inspection date	18/04/2013
Previous inspection date	14/07/2009

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	2
	Previous inspection:	2
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 really enjoy using the stimulating and well-equipped outdoor play area that offers versatile and challenging opportunities for learning and physical development.
- The nursery provides a high level of support for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and for children who speak English as an additional language. Staff are very effectively deployed, as a result all children make good progress in relation to their starting points.
- Children develop significant confidence by the time they leave the setting. The organisation of routines and activities in the pre-school mean that children develop a range of necessary skills that equip them well for school.
- The nursery has strong leadership and a confident team of practitioners. This leads to an efficiently-run provision where children are safe and happy.

It is not yet outstanding because

- Children in the nursery room do not have consistent opportunities to make the most of using resources freely to enhance their desire to play, explore and actively learn.
- Book corners in some rooms do not allow children to explore props, puppets and story sacks alongside books.

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
- scheduled more frequently where Ofsted identifies a need to do so, for example where provision was previously judged 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 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
- scheduled 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 voluntary and compulsory parts of the Childcare Register. This report includes a judgment about compliance with the requirements of that register.

Inspection activities

- The inspector observed activities in all the main rooms and in the outdoor play area.
- The inspector made a joint observation with the manager of story time in the nursery room.
- The inspector held discussions with the management team.
- The inspector checked a number of records and documents, including evidence of staff suitability and qualifications.
- The inspector viewed children's learning records and planning documents.
- The inspector took account of written views expressed by parents and spoke to some parents during the inspection.

Inspector

Hilary Preece

Full Report

Information about the setting

Harpenden Day Nursery was registered in 1999 and is on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. It is situated in the centre of Harpenden, Hertfordshire, and is managed by Asquith Nurseries Ltd. The nursery serves the local area and is accessible to all children. It operates from converted premises and there is a fully enclosed area available for outdoor play.

The nursery employs 23 members of childcare staff. Of these, 3 hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 4, thirteen at level 3 and three at level 2. Two members of staff hold a Degree in Early Years and another is working towards a degree.

The nursery opens Monday to Friday all year round. Sessions are from 7.30am until 6.30pm. Children attend for a variety of sessions. There are currently 84 children attending who are within the early years age group. The nursery provides funded early education for 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:

- review and reflect on the environment in the nursery room to ensure that it is consistently interesting, attractive and offers a wider range of accessible resources to fully extend children's independent learning
- create more attractive and cosy book areas and consider using story sacks, props and puppets to fully enhance children's engagement in stories.

Inspection judgements

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

The staff team has a well-founded knowledge about the individual needs of children and how to help them learn and develop. Key persons make accurate assessment of children based on observations they make and use this to plan specific activities to extend learning and enable all children to make continuous progress. Staff members who work directly

with children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, skilfully use their own enthusiasm to motivate and engage them, so that children enjoy and are helped significantly to overcome any barriers to their learning. Those children who speak English as an additional language are supported well in their communication and language because staff find out about and use familiar words and phrases in children's home languages, and provide a range of resources like books and songs for children to hear. All parents are encouraged to share what they know about their children's learning and are actively engaged in the whole learning process. They are kept frequently updated about the progress that their children make and how they can help support this at home.

Children are prepared well for their future learning in school. In the pre-school they learn to sit in a group and listen to an adult who challenges them to think of words beginning with the 'letter of the week.' The staff give clues to help children develop their thinking and awareness of letter sounds and they model writing on an interactive white board so children understand that text has meaning. Later during free play, children are keen to experiment with mark making on the white board by using their fingers to write their names. Staff helpfully guide children in their play to support their language, thinking and problem solving. For example, when children show an interest in rolling cars through lengths of wooden tubing, the staff introduce the language of size and shape to encourage the children to think what will fit and what will not. During a painting activity, the staff add oats and rice to the paint to alter its texture and then ask carefully structured open questions to encourage children's descriptions. Children are given plenty of time to freely explore the materials and use them creatively in different ways, as a result, they become deeply involved and motivated in their learning.

Children are enthusiastic about new experiences. After reading a story about bees the staff introduce a programmable 'bee' robot and clearly explain how it can be moved forwards, backwards, to the right and to the left by pressing the relevant buttons. Children are fascinated by this and keen to learn how to operate it themselves while staff emphasise the meaning of directional language. The activity is managed well to ensure that all children can take part, whether they are eager or more reticent. Children, therefore, develop confidence in learning. Children of all ages enjoy listening to stories because staff read expressively to engage children's interest and participation. However, sometimes there is only a small selection of books available for children to explore independently, and there is infrequent use of resources to help illustrate the meaning of stories, such as puppets, props or story sacks. As a result, children are not fully supported in making the most of their early reading and storytelling experiences.

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

Children make very positive relationships with adults and their peers because settling-in arrangements are well managed. Gradual settling-in visits and effective sharing of information means children settle quickly when they are new, also transitions between rooms are smooth. There is very good communication with parents and other professionals to enable key persons to support those children with additional needs. Children develop self-confidence and behave well. Older children demonstrate in

imaginative role play games that they play well in a group and negotiate among themselves. They say 'I'll be the grandpa' and 'ok, I'll be the daddy' before getting on their pretend bus and going off to a theme park. They show respectful behaviour, as each child's ideas are incorporated into the game. Babies and younger children relate well to their key person. Children show growing confidence to explore their surroundings by crawling or pulling themselves up to stand, but look to a familiar adult for comfort and reassurance when needed.

Children develop a good understanding about healthy living and how to manage their personal care. Throughout daily routines and activities the staff model good hygiene practices and reinforce knowledge about healthy eating. During snack and meal times they talk about the fruits children eat and why they are good for their health. Staff engage well with babies while feeding them. They maintain eye contact, offer lots of encouragement and make easy conversation to help babies feel emotionally secure and develop early independence in feeding. Meal times are, therefore, relaxed and calm.

Children, overall, are independent and self-confident in exploring their environment and making choices about using resources. However, there is scope to take a more creative approach to organising the nursery room so that it fully enhances young children's desire to explore and learn independently. Opportunities for all children to explore and be active outdoors are good. They have large areas in which to run about, balance and climb. Staff help children to learn new physical skills like throwing and catching a ball. They build children's confidence and concentration by explaining how to do it and they give plenty of praise and encouragement so that children achieve what they set out to do. Children use a variety of challenging and exciting climbing equipment in the garden, which helps to develop their physical strength, coordination and self-confidence. They develop their fine motor skills by experimenting with large movements using chalks on the outdoor blackboard and by turning on a tap to fill watering cans. Staff supervise children well in the garden to keep them safe and make them aware of how to use new equipment safely, such as, when introducing skipping ropes.

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

The manager joined in 2010 and continues to develop a strong, stable staff team. There are well-established company procedures for the safe recruitment and professional development of staff. The management team work well to guide and support their staff through training and supervision to ensure all staff have the knowledge and skills to carry out their duties and protect the children. For example, staff securely understand their own roles in the event of any child protection concerns or if they have any issues over managing children's behaviour. They complete appropriate safeguarding training and the manager uses regular staff meetings to refresh their knowledge. Staff confidently follow the appropriate procedures, such as, tending to accidents, during daily routines. They also communicate well with each other at handover times to ensure there is a clear understanding of children's needs at any given time. Staff are monitored closely by the management team through peer-on-peer observations, which encourage them to reflect together and identify where further skills and confidence might be developed.

The self-evaluation process is robust and effective in bringing about improvement. Since the last inspection the nursery has invested in a total refurbishment of the outdoor play area in order to address the recommendation, to provide additional outdoor learning opportunities. While this has already been very successful, the manager continues to encourage her staff to explore further ways of using the garden to plan exciting activities to stimulate children's interest and desire to learn outdoors. The management is open to new ideas and strives to find solutions to problems, which means there is a good capacity for continuous improvement. Careful monitoring and evaluation extends to all areas of the provision, including assessing the effectiveness of the educational programme and the progress in learning that individual children make. This ensures that any gaps in children's learning are swiftly addressed.

Partnership working is strong and well-embedded throughout practice. There are very good relationships with external agencies and professionals and these make a significant contribution to ensuring the specific needs of children are met. Valuable links are made with schools that children move on to. Their new teachers visit children in their final term in pre-school so that information is shared and new relationships are built. This supports a smooth transition to school for children and their new key person.

The Childcare Register

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

The requirements for the voluntary 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 action. 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	EY289502
Local authority	Hertfordshire
Inspection number	908831
Type of provision	
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 17
Total number of places	57
Number of children on roll	84
Name of provider	Asquith Court Nurseries Limited
Date of previous inspection	14/07/2009
Telephone number	01582 762981

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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, which are usually the childminder's 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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