

# Grasshoppers Day Nursery

20 York Road, ST ALBANS, Hertfordshire, AL1 4PL

## Inspection date

Previous inspection date

30/07/2013

Not Applicable

## The quality and standards of the early years provision

### This inspection:

2

### Previous inspection:

Not Applicable

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

- Younger children make very good progress in their learning because staff provide a broad range of interesting and challenging experiences. For example, they enjoy exploring a wide range of sensory materials.
- Babies are becoming confident and interested in developing their small manipulative skills as they mix cornflour and conditioner in the close proximity of their key worker.
- Babies' and children's well-being and independence is fully promoted because they have formed strong bonds and secure attachments with their key person.
- Staff are motivated and supported in their personal development to ensure that they continue to provide high quality care for all children.

### It is not yet outstanding because

- Pre-school children are not fully engaged in purposeful play. This means that they are not being consistently challenged to make very good progress towards the early learning goals.
- There is scope to expand the good relationships with parents to provide more detailed information about children's progress so that they consistently achieve high standards in all areas of learning and development.

## 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 looked around the premises with the deputy manager and held discussions with some members of staff.
- The inspector made observations and talked to the children during their play.
- The inspector conducted a joint observation with the manager and held discussions with the senior management team.
- The inspector talked to some parents and took into account their views.
- The inspector sampled a selection of the nursery's documents together with some children's learning journals and their personal records.

**Inspector**  
Suman Willis

## Full Report

### Information about the setting

Grasshoppers Day Nursery was registered in 1993 and re-registered under new ownership in 2013 on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. It operates from a house in St Albans, Hertfordshire. The nursery is one of a group owned and managed by Childbase Nurseries. The nursery serves the local area and is accessible to all children. There is an enclosed area available for outdoor play.

The nursery employs 17 members of staff, working directly with children. Of these, one holds a qualified teacher status and 13 hold appropriate early years qualifications to level 3 or above. 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 52 children attending who are aged between six months and four years. The nursery provides funded early years 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 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:

- enhance the planning and organisation of activities so that pre-school children are consistently engaged in purposeful play to ensure that they are fully challenged in all areas of learning at all times
- extend the good relationships with parents to include more detailed information about children's next steps so that they can be fully involved in their child's learning and development at home.

## Inspection judgements

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

All staff have a very good understanding of how children learn. Their knowledge enables them to plan activities effectively to ensure that children continue to achieve a good standard in all areas of learning and development. Staff take into account children's interests to ensure that plans are individually tailored and meet each child's needs very well. The environment also enables children to become independent and active learners. However, planning and organisation of the pre-school room is occasionally not effective in consistently engaging children in purposeful play to fully challenging them in all areas of

learning and development. A home-link book provides parents with information about activities children have been involved in and they are encouraged to feed back information about the child's home life. However, information about how to extend children's learning and development is not always effectively provided by staff. This means that parents are not fully involved in identifying and planning for their child's next steps. Therefore, partnership with parents is inconsistent in ensuring that children consistently achieve very high standards.

Staff have high expectations of children and are very good at joining in and engaging them in their free play by consistently asking open-ended questions which challenge children's critical thinking skills. Children's interest is sustained as they engage in a broad range of both adult-led and child-initiated activities because they are consistently offered praise and encouragement by all staff. Pre-school children are becoming very good communicators as they express how baby dinosaurs hatch from eggs whilst learning about their life cycle. They are very skilled at using their imagination as they pretend to go on a day trip to a knight's castle in Barcelona. Staff support their learning because they are skilled at asking appropriate questions and suggesting ideas to extend children's thinking and develop their imaginations. For example, they encourage children to think about how they will get there and how they will keep themselves safe in the aeroplane. Some children fully understand the alphabet and confidently write their names. During story-telling, their interest is sustained as they are read to in a cosy environment. Children enjoy being creative as they choose their own materials from low-level units. They are extremely confident at using technology as they demonstrate how an interactive computer works. Children are developing a good understanding of numbers and count out the number of plates and cutlery required when setting a table for lunch. They learn about volume whilst playing with water and sand. Children's small manipulative skills are developing well as they use a variety of tools in the mark-making area and as they use scissors, glue sticks and colouring pencils as they create their pictures and collages.

Babies and toddlers are making very good progress in their development because of the strong bond developed between them and their key workers. They are developing their physical skills very well as they learn to pull themselves up using the support of low-level units in the close proximity of the key worker for security. They particularly enjoy playing with cornflour and squirting cream into the flour. Babies and toddlers extend their mark-making skills effectively as they move from the flour play to water and then to hand-printing on glass doors. Staff delight in their creativity as they take photographs of their achievements. Babies and toddlers are delighted as they make music using shakers and other musical instruments and sway to music with enthusiasm. They enjoy developing their communication skills as they freely attempt to sing familiar rhymes. Staff are enthusiastic and consistently praise their achievements by applauding them.

Children are very well prepared for their next stage of learning in another nursery or school because of the good progress they are making in all areas of their learning and development. Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and children for whom English is an additional language are supported well by staff so that they make good progress.

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

Children are very happy and settled in a warm and caring environment. They develop a deep sense of belonging because photographs of them busy in play and their art and craft work are attractively displayed around the nursery. Staff give high priority to children's well-being. They are highly skilled and sensitive in helping children form secure emotional attachments. This is due to a well-established key person system which provides a strong base for empowering children to independently explore and learn in a safe environment. Parents provide valuable information about their child and have several meetings with the key staff to ensure that children settle with ease and that their individual needs are met very well.

Staff are very good role models and enable children to feel valued and respected in a warm caring and friendly environment. Children's independence is promoted very well as they learn to serve their own meals while being fully supported by staff. Positive behaviour is consistently promoted by staff who use their observational skills to intervene and distract children from negative behaviour. Children are polite and enjoy helping their younger peers. They learn to share and take turns as they wait patiently for their turn on the computer. Children learn to negotiate and work well together as they construct their models. Babies and toddlers enjoy mimicking staff as they learn to clap. They enjoy the social occasion of sitting at tables during snack and meal times. Babies beam with delight as they are applauded when taking their first steps. Toddlers happily play alongside their peers as they splash water and pour water into the sand tray.

Children develop a very good understanding of their local community as they go for walks to the park. Their knowledge of other cultures and beliefs is fully promoted by staff who organise activities around festivals. Good displays of posters and familiar words in different languages are clearly and attractively displayed around the nursery. Parents are warmly welcomed into the group to share information about their heritage with staff and children. This means that children learn to value and respect the differences in people. Children demonstrate a good understanding of nurturing as they report how they planted carrots, courgettes and tomatoes and what they have to do to help them grow.

High priority is given to children's safety. Children develop a good understanding of how to stay safe as they are reminded about walking safely with cutlery. They are reminded about safe areas as children question staff why they are not allowed to go beyond a fence. Staff give good explanations by first questioning the children about what they think the dangers may be as they point out the ventilator outside the kitchen. Children are developing their understanding of road safety as they go for local walks. Their health needs are very well promoted as children have regular access to healthy meals and snacks. Staff are also very good at joining in children's play to extend their knowledge of individual dietary needs. For example, a child has an allergy to eggs and in the home corner as they pretend to bake cakes a member of staff explains why eggs are not suitable. Children are reminded to help themselves to drinks as staff explain why it is important to drink plenty of fluids. The outdoor area is extremely well organised to enable children to participate in a broad range of activities to develop their physical skills. Babies and toddlers also enjoy indoor obstacle courses using soft play equipment. They

particularly enjoy playing under a canopy in the ball pond in all weather conditions.

Staff are good at enabling children to settle into different groups very well and provide babies and toddlers with a secure base as they move to the next group. Children moving onto another nursery or school are very well supported as staff have developed photographic books about school routine and provide school uniforms for dressing up. Teaching staff from local schools and nurseries are also invited to visit the setting. This means that children understand and feel secure to deal with their next stage of learning and development.

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

Staff are very well supported by the management team as the nursery has changed ownership. They are included in making decisions and their views are implemented into changes to policies and procedures. This ensures that all documents are understood by all staff and are individual to the setting. Performance management is effective in ensuring that all staff have a good understanding of their roles and responsibilities in caring for and educating children. Professional development is strongly encouraged by the senior management team and warmly welcomed by staff. This means that they are constantly improving their knowledge and understanding of childcare and implement effective changes which benefit children's learning and development.

A high level of qualified staff ensures that the educational program is effectively monitored. Their accurate knowledge and understanding of how children learn enable them to quickly identify their skills, abilities and progress. This means that through careful monitoring and good understanding of working with other agencies they are able to provide appropriate interventions. Therefore, children of all abilities are encouraged to reach their full potential.

High priority is given to safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Early Years foundation Stage by all staff and senior management team. Rigorous vetting procedures ensure that all adults are suitable to be around children. Regular training in child protection ensures that staff are qualified and well informed to know what to do should they have any concerns. Robust risk assessments policies and procedures are understood by all staff and regularly reviewed to ensure that they continue to keep children safe.

Self-evaluation takes into account the views of staff, children and their parents. This enables staff to implement changes which benefit all those that use the provision. The drive for providing high quality care is clearly demonstrated by staff and management team. Strengths and weaknesses are effectively identified and action plans for improvements are consistently reviewed to ensure that children continue to receive high quality care and education.

### **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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	EY459397
<b>Local authority</b>	Hertfordshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	907016
<b>Type of provision</b>	Full-time provision
<b>Registration category</b>	Childcare - Non-Domestic
<b>Age range of children</b>	0 - 17
<b>Total number of places</b>	35
<b>Number of children on roll</b>	52
<b>Name of provider</b>	Childbase Partnership Limited
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	not applicable
<b>Telephone number</b>	01727 852097

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance '*Complaints procedure: raising concerns and making complaints about Ofsted*', which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk). If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).

## 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.

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

Piccadilly Gate  
Store St  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234  
Textphone: 0161 618 8524  
E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
W: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

© Crown copyright 2012

