

Mini Monsters

Mini Monsters Day Nursery, 1 Bennetts Gate, HEMEL HEMPSTEAD, Hertfordshire, HP3 8EW

Inspection date	16/08/2013
Previous inspection date	11/01/2011

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

- The nursery plans a broad educational programme, which meets the needs of all the children. The child-centred environment enables children to take part in well-planned activities which supports their learning and progress to a good level.
- Children move freely around their care rooms to extend their own play ideas with a range of resources that meet most of their learning needs. The daily outings provide children with opportunities to explore the community and have space to run and play at the park.
- The leadership and management of the nursery is strong. The well-qualified staff team work well together, they are deployed effectively around the nursery to maintain ratios and to consistently meet the care needs of all children.
- The management team evaluates procedures and routines; this ensures the developing needs of the children are met. Children are cared for in a safe environment, effective safeguarding procedures and risk assessments ensure the welfare requirements are met to a good standard.

It is not yet outstanding because

- There is scope to extend the use of resources to promote children's understanding and use of sounds and letters and to recognise their names through every day activities.
- There is opportunity for the nursery to encourage parents to share up-to-date information about the children's changing needs on a more regular basis.

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.

Inspection activities

- The inspector observed children playing and having lunch in the home rooms. She talked with the pre-school children to find out what they enjoyed doing.
- The inspector joined some of the children and staff on a walk in the community; around the shops and to look for insects on a small grassed area.
- The inspector looked at a selection of documents for the welfare of the children and the management of the nursery.
- The inspector spoke to parents and staff about the children's care, development and daily routines.
- The inspector held the feedback meeting with the nursery manager and the registered provider.

Inspector

Tina Kelly

Full Report

Information about the setting

Mini Monsters Day Nursery opened in July 2010, and is registered on the Early Years Register. The nursery is situated in a shopping precinct in Bennetts End, Hemel Hempstead. Children are accommodated in four care rooms. The nursery does not have an outside play area, however, a large room at the back of the building is set up to provide physical play activities. Children are taken out every day in the community and to use the nearby park. Children come from the immediate and surrounding areas and attend for a variety of sessions.

The nursery is open Monday to Friday, from 7.30am until 6.30pm for 52 weeks of the year, closing for public holidays. There are currently 88 children on roll in the early years. A wrap around service is available with collections from nursery sessions at local schools. The nursery provides funded early years education for two- three- and four- year- old children. They support children who speak English as an additional language and children with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

The nursery manager holds Early Years Professional Status, she is supported by the registered provider who comes to the nursery on a regular basis. The nursery employs 14 members of staff, of these, 12 hold early years qualifications to level three, other staff are working towards early years qualifications. The nursery has a full time cook. The nursery met the criteria for the Herts Quality Standard in 2011, they continue to maintain the accreditation.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- provide children with opportunities to use a wider variety of resources to extend their understanding of sounds and letters

- review how frequently parent's formally update information to enable the nursery to more consistently meet the changing needs of all children.

Inspection judgements

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

Children are happy and settled throughout the nursery as each of the home rooms are thoughtfully laid out. They provide age-appropriate resources and interesting play areas, which meets the developing needs of the children who attend. The nursery provides a broad educational programme; the key person plans effectively for the next steps in the children's learning. Themes within the pre-school room are based on the children's likes and interests. Children are keen and competent learners. Observations show all children take part in a range of play and learning experiences, which are based on the relevant areas of learning depending on ages and stages of development. Regular assessments show that children are making good progress. This information is used as the basis for the progress check at aged two years. Parents are actively involved in their children's learning. Learning journals are readily available. Staff and parents both record 'wow' moments to share special events in the nursery and at home. Parents have regular contact with their children's key persons to share in their progress.

The nursery does not have an outside play area. A large well-resourced room at the back of the nursery is used to ensure that children have regular opportunities for physical play. Children are able to develop their co-ordination, to move freely and to begin to take part in sporting activities, especially in bad weather. An outside provider is brought into the nursery to enable children to take part in action songs and activity sessions with musical instruments and puppets. This promotes children's creative skills, confidence and imagination.

Children are chatty and keen to share their artwork with staff and the inspector. They are confident in asking questions and sharing their own ideas. Children's communication and language skills are developing well. Home languages are respected and, families provide details of important words and phrases to help children understand the daily routines. Therefore, children with English as an additional language are making good progress in their learning. A photographic display of a time line depicting the daily routines is used to support this. The pre-school room is well-resourced, providing interesting activities that promote most areas of learning to a good level. However, opportunities to link sounds and letters, such as setting out games that show how letters can be used, and the use of laminated name cards to enable children to begin to recognise their own names, are not fully exploited.

Children move around the play rooms with confidence, they select toys and resources to plan their own play. Younger children's social skills are supported well by staff who are good role models; they show children how to use the toys to extend their play and learning. Staff sit the children on their laps as they take part in singing songs and nursery rhymes. As they prepare for lunchtime, staff ask the children to choose plates and cutlery, supporting their developing personal skills and language. Staff liaise closely with parents to ensure that children's developing skills are promoted to a high level. Children show great curiosity; they are beginning to explore their environment with excellent support from staff.

Children enjoy regular walks out in the community. These daily excursions support and extend all areas of learning. Children are very familiar with the routine, they are keen to find their coats and shoes, line up, hold hands and tell staff that they are ready. This special time is managed well. Staff select resources the pre-school children have shown an

interest in during the play session, such as, magnifying glasses. Children put them carefully in the back pack ready to go. A short walk past the shops promotes children's language and interest in the community. Children recognise the post office and the bakers as they have previously visited the shops. Staff recap on the experiences, this reinforces children's learning and sense of self-esteem. Staff are fully involved in talking to the children and asking them what they are looking for in the grass, on trees and under the leaves on the small grassed area near the nursery. Children show great delight in finding a ladybird. Staff show the children how to move the magnifying glass to make it appear bigger and smaller, they are expertly used by most of the children. Some children are very confident in letting the ladybird walk on their hands. Staff promote the children's understanding of the natural world and counting skills throughout the walk. They ask the children to count the legs and spots on the ladybird; they prompt questions and discussion about how many leaves, cars and people they can see. Staff extend and promote children's interests and learning to a good level. Children of all ages take part and enjoy many varied learning experiences, these prepare them to move on to new settings, such as, nursery and school with confidence.

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

All children build strong bonds and attachments to their key person, other members of staff and the children in their key groups. Children behave well; they are cooperative and are learning to take turns and to share through well-managed activities and good support from staff. Clear and consistent instructions by staff and good routines ensure that children understand what is expected of them. For example, cloakroom routines, putting on coats and shoes, lining up, waiting to go outside and being considerate to others. Good behaviour is supported by staff who thank the children for their help, they give children responsibility and ask them to help at tidy up time. Children are keen and helpful.

Information gained from parents as the children come into the setting forms the basis for the 'All about me' form. Key staff work with parents in completing this form, to ensure that children's starting points and care needs are recognised and met. However, parents do not have the opportunity to formally update this information as the children move rooms in the nursery. Staff assess and know about the children's skills but the detail about changes at home such as new babies and changes in personal care needs are not consistently updated. However, the good relationships share with parents means that the most significant information is usually shared verbally with the key person so that in general the children's needs are appropriately met.

Children learn about a healthy lifestyle through every day routines. They are learning good personal skills at cloakroom times as they brush their teeth after lunch. They are beginning to understand the importance of physical play by using the playroom, walks in the community and going to the local park and play area. The Monster room provides children with many opportunities to extend and develop their physical skills. The soft play structures, climbing frames and ride on toys provides challenging activities for children of all ages.

Children's safety when leaving the nursery is a high priority. Appropriate information is recorded in the outings book, which ensures that the manager is aware of who has left the nursery and where they intend to go. Information about the children, a first aid box and a charged mobile phone are part of the outings pack. As they leave the nursery staff ask the pre-school children about what they need to remember. Children listen to staff, and they respond by calling out different aspects of the routine. They tell staff they must look for cars, stop at the road and hold hands. Children learn about road safety on the daily walks out in the community. Children are confident in telling staff when to stop at the kerb; they all look along the road to see if any cars are coming, they walk together across the road. Children know about the rules that keep them safe. Children are very familiar with this routine that builds on their common sense and prepares them to go out into the community with confidence.

Mealtimes are calm, social events. Healthy, nutritious meals and snacks are cooked on site. Individual dietary requirements are discussed with parents, children's personal needs are recorded on their placemat to help ensure that they are met. Children's independence is promoted to a good level, they are helped to pour drinks; they are involved in serving themselves and help to clear away at the end of snack and lunch time.

The nursery has strong links with local schools. A transition pack, put together by the children's centre is used by the nursery to show children the uniform, pictures of the school and classrooms. Teachers are invited to the nursery to meet the children and see the learning opportunities they have taken part in. In certain circumstances key persons have visited schools with the children and their families to help children to move on with confidence and to settle quickly.

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

The manager of the nursery is supported well by the registered provider who is always available and often calls into the nursery to assist in day-to-day management issues. They work together very effectively; and have high expectations for the quality and care that is provided for children and families. The nursery regularly reviews documents and policies, such as, the complaints process as part of the accreditation for the Herts Quality Standards scheme. The well-qualified staff team have a good understanding of the requirement of the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage, which are met to a good standard.

Safeguarding is of high priority for the nursery. Effective policies and procedures are based on the Local Safeguarding Children Board code of practice. Senior staff take overall responsibility as designated members of staff for the nursery. There are comprehensive policies in place, including robust checks for all staff. The staff team has a good understanding of how to provide a safe environment and protect children as safeguarding training is mandatory and part of the comprehensive induction process. Staff deployment and ratios in each room are monitored effectively. A staff register shows who is on site at

any one time.

The nursery has strong, well-established links with parents. Key persons are available to speak to parents at any time and at regular parent evenings. A questionnaire is used to seek parents' views. The responses are very positive. Parents are extremely happy with the care and learning experience their children take part in, they feel the staff team are very approachable and that they are well-informed. The nursery website and secure social network site enables parents to be kept fully informed about day to day routines and any changes within the nursery.

The nursery works closely with the children's centre to support children and families. Staff attend cluster meetings for early years professionals, they use this opportunity to share good practice and experiences on a regular basis. A feedback form is used with other early years providers and the children's centre. This shows they appreciate the responses and service they receive from the nursery, strong working relationships ensure that children and families receive appropriate support. The information is used as the basis for the evaluation process. This enables the senior staff team to identify areas of their practice that are to be developed and aspects that work well. Overall they have a very good overview of the curriculum and the progress children make, through effective assessments.

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	EY407318
Local authority	Hertfordshire
Inspection number	915174
Type of provision	
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 5
Total number of places	41
Number of children on roll	88
Name of provider	Babylake Ltd
Date of previous inspection	11/01/2011
Telephone number	01442 261 651

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Type of provision

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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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