

Head Start Day Nursery

Head Start Nursery School, Hockliffe Road, LEIGHTON BUZZARD, Bedfordshire, LU7 9NX

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| Inspection date | 27/08/2013 |
| Previous inspection date | 22/02/2011 |

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| 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

- Staff are motivated and enthusiastic and work exceptionally well together as a team, creating a stimulating yet nurturing learning environment for children.
- An accurate evaluation of practice takes place. This means that areas to develop further are well targeted, which helps to ensure children's care, learning and development are promoted well.
- Children establish close bonds with their key person. As a result, they are happy and secure in their play and are motivated and confident learners.
- The nursery provides an environment that enables children to play and learn in stimulating and safe surroundings. The indoor and outdoor spaces are accessible for all children and have a positive impact on children's sense of well-being and helps all aspects of their learning and development.

It is not yet outstanding because

- Ways of gathering information from parents, through extending opportunities for them to share children's achievements at home, are not developed to the very optimum to enable staff to enhance children's learning at the nursery.
- Partnership working with other early years providers to support children's learning and development are not fully maximised.

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 children's activities in all rooms and the outside learning environment.
- The inspector held discussions with the registered person, manager and staff.
- The inspector undertook a joint observation of the outdoor learning environment with the manager.
- The inspector looked at children's assessment records, planning documentation, the self-evaluation form and a range of other documentation including a selection of policies and children's records.
- The inspector took account of the views of parents spoken to on the day.

Inspector

Jane Mount

Full Report

Information about the setting

Head Start Day Nursery was registered under the present ownership in 2007 and is one of a small chain of four nurseries which are privately owned. It is on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. The nursery operates from a two storey converted set within the grounds of a garden centre on the outskirts of Leighton Buzzard, Bedfordshire. The nursery is divided up into four age groups with younger children based upstairs and the older children downstairs. All children have shared access to an enclosed outside area available for outdoor play.

Head Start Day Nursery employs 21 members of childcare staff including the manager. Of these, the majority hold early years qualifications at level 3 with the manager holding an early years degree. The nursery opens Monday to Friday, all year round from 8am to 6pm. Children attend for a variety of sessions. There are currently 142 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 children who speak English as an additional language.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- maximise opportunities further for parents to share information about their child's achievements at home to enhance children's learning at the nursery

- continue strengthening the links with schools to maximise and support children's transitions to the very optimum.

Inspection judgements

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

Staff have high expectations for the children in their care and are skilled at providing activities that engage children. For example, babies delight in playing with water, using all of their senses as they explore and investigate bubbles, which have been added to the water. Toddlers display natural inquisitiveness as they use wooden blocks to re-create shapes and patterns. They develop good hand to eye coordination skills as they build towers. Older children happily 'work' together sharing their thoughts and ideas in the role play area which has been made into an office. Both indoor and outdoor activities are planned to take account of children's interests and capabilities and staff are clear what

children should learn from these experiences. Consequently, children have fun and enjoy their surroundings, showing a keen interest in what they do.

Staff have a secure knowledge of how children learn through play and the quality of teaching is good. They are confident in their approach to children's learning and provide interesting play opportunities that meet the development needs of all children. An effective key person system is used and staff work well together to provide a conducive learning environment for children. They ensure there is a good balance of adult-led and child-initiated play experiences, which means children can express themselves and are confident in their play. Activities cover the seven areas of learning with children's progress closely monitored through effective observation and assessment systems. Each child has their own development record called a 'learning adventure folder', which is unique to them as it shows their progress and achievements. Staff then use this information to plan suitably challenging and developmentally appropriate activities and play experiences. Consequently, all children, including those with English as an additional language, have their learning needs supported well. This enables children to develop and learn effectively and to acquire the essential skills required to be ready for their future learning, such as when they start school.

Through the key person system, staff work closely with parents to ensure children's learning is promoted. For example, on entry parents contribute to their child's initial assessments through the completion of an informative 'all about me' booklet. This gives staff invaluable information about children's home backgrounds, routines and interests as well as their developmental abilities. This means staff are well-informed and able to meet children's individual needs effectively. Parents are then kept informed about their children's attainments as they have updates, either through their child's daily communication book or through regular discussions with their child's key person. More formal opportunities, such as parents' evenings, also keep parents informed and provides them with the time to discuss their child's development with staff. Parents are actively encouraged to support and share information about their children's learning, such as sharing what achievements their child has made at home. However, these are not fully embedded to maximise children's learning to the optimum in the nursery.

Children's communication and language skills are promoted well and they are becoming confident communicators. Staff enthusiastically talk through activities, giving clear explanations and instructions. Consequently, children's understanding is very good. For example, younger children follow instructions to put their beaker on the side and this also promotes their self-help skills and develops their independence. Older children follow more detailed instructions, such as successfully helping to find a piece of play equipment stored in another area. This develops their sense of achievement as staff acknowledge the child's helpfulness. Children's language acquisition and understanding of new words is also very good as a result of positive input from staff who give meaning to what they say. For example, staff reinforce words such as 'roll the ball' when playing with a crawling baby who shows an interest in a large ball. They praise the child when they respond by rolling the ball along the playroom floor.

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

Children's well-being is positively promoted by staff who are friendly and approachable. For example, an effective key person system means that close relationships are established with all children and their families. This helps children to develop secure attachments as their individual needs are met. Children are confident and happy in their play as they have formed strong attachments with their key person, other staff and each other. They are pleased to see each other and enjoy conversations about things that are important to them. As staff know the children they are caring for very well they are able to engage in meaningful conversations with them, showing great interest in what they are saying. For example, at lunch time staff and children sit together to eat their lunch and staff talk knowledgeably with children about family outings and events that have occurred over the weekend. The organisation of the key person system and effective settling-in arrangements help new children to quickly settle in the nursery environment. The key person system also supports children and their parents well when they are moving groups within the nursery to ensure they receive continuity in their care and learning.

Positive relationships between staff, children and parents enable children to feel secure and children demonstrate a strong sense of security as they are self-assured in the nursery environment. Staff help children gain a good awareness of keeping themselves safe with consistent, age appropriate explanations. This helps to raise children's awareness of potential dangers and enables them to understand the consequences of their actions. Children's understanding of keeping safe is evident and staff support children well as they explain and practise simple procedures. For example, younger children learn how to manage the stairs safely while older children learn about safety rules when throwing a ball.

Staff appropriately manage children's behaviour through distraction and simple explanation that helps children understand why certain behaviour is not acceptable. They offer lots of praise and encouragement to children to promote positive behaviour. Staff are good role models and teach children how to behave considerately towards others. For example, children are learning how to play together cooperatively and because relationships are very strong they regularly display kind and caring behaviour towards others. Their independence is promoted with the environment organised to encourage children to make independent choices. The nursery is well-resourced and toys are easily accessible, enabling children to make choices about what they play with. This is also displayed at mealtimes when older children are encouraged to pour their own drinks and help to serve their own food.

High regard is given to promoting children's good health. They are provided with healthy food choices at meal and snack times and children participate in a variety of activities where they learn about what constitutes a healthy diet. For example, they enjoy visits to the local garden centre to buy a selection of herbs and vegetables to grow in the nursery garden. They experience the fulfilment of growing their own food as they take great care of the produce, ensuring it is regularly watered. Mealtimes are a social occasion and children are encouraged to try new foods, which they do willingly, giving their opinions on what they are eating. Children learn and adopt healthy hygiene practices, such as washing their hands prior to eating or discussing why it is important to cover their mouth when they cough. Children develop self-confidence in their physical skills as they participate in a

variety of indoor and outdoor activities with an emphasis on fresh air and the importance of exercise.

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

The management team are highly motivated and strive to deliver a high quality service. They provide clear leadership and work hard to support their staff team. This ensures all have a secure understanding of their responsibilities to meet the requirements of the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage. Comprehensive and highly informative written policies and procedures underpin the good practice within the nursery. This helps to ensure it is run efficiently to safeguard children's welfare and promote their learning and development. The well-established staff team are fully focused on the needs of the children. They work together to successfully provide a stimulating, safe environment where children enjoy learning and make good progress.

Secure recruitment and vetting arrangements are in place to ensure all adults working with children are qualified, experienced and suitable to do so. Thorough induction helps staff to fully understand their roles and responsibilities and regular staff meetings, supervisions and appraisals are effective tools the management team use to support staff and manage their performance. The routine monitoring of staff practice ensures consistency in children's care and learning and is an effective way of identifying any training needs or areas for staff development. Continual professional development is positively encouraged with training and development opportunities actively sought. This good level of support means that staff have a secure knowledge and awareness of how to meet the learning and welfare needs of all children.

Staff have a good knowledge and understanding of safeguarding issues and are able to implement appropriate procedures to protect children from harm. Close supervision of children, effective staff deployment and clear and consistent implementation of policies and procedures contribute to the safety and welfare of the children. Staff are vigilant at all times to ensure the environment remains safe. Comprehensive risk assessments, including daily checks, are completed and effective security systems, such as a coded door with buzzer system, ensures children are protected as no unauthorised persons can gain access.

All staff are committed to driving improvement. They are reflective practitioners and there are effective systems in place to monitor and assess the quality of the provision. For example, the educational programme is closely monitored with effective systems in place to track children's progress across the seven areas of learning. Also, a self-evaluation system is used to systematically identify the settings strengths and areas they wish to develop further. Clear targets are set for continuous improvement. All of the staff team actively contribute their views and opinions to the evaluation process. Feedback is also actively sought from parents and children.

Staff promote effective relationships with parents. Daily communication books, displays, noticeboards, a website and newsletters are just some of the ways used to keep parents

informed. Staff are forthcoming in exchanging information with parents and children quickly settle in the nursery environment as their individual needs are met well. Parents spoken to on the day of inspection speak highly of the nursery and of the staff who care for their children. They say they are confident that staff know their children well and comment positively on a close, staff team who are friendly and approachable. Partnership working with other agencies is well-established and although there are currently no children attending the nursery with special educational needs and/or disabilities there are effective systems in place to identify and support children who may have specific needs. Staff value children's backgrounds and their home languages with effective systems to help children and families with English as an additional language. Links have been forged with some local schools to help support children when moving on to school. The nursery is fully aware of the importance of good communication and partnership working to fully assist children and their families in the transition process. However, there is scope to extend links and liaise more closely to enhance and support children's experience when moving on to school.

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

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| Unique reference number | EY365864 |
| Local authority | Central Bedfordshire |
| Inspection number | 915097 |
| Type of provision | |
| Registration category | Childcare - Non-Domestic |
| Age range of children | 0 - 17 |
| Total number of places | 61 |
| Number of children on roll | 142 |
| Name of provider | Head Start Day Nursery |
| Date of previous inspection | 22/02/2011 |
| Telephone number | 01525 852020 |

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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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