

Hobby Horse Children's Centre

Oxford and Cherwell College, (Banbury Campus), Mewburn Road, Banbury, Oxfordshire, OX16 9PA

Inspection date	11/10/2013
Previous inspection date	04/04/2012

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

- Good relationships are evident between staff and children, which promotes children's personal, social and emotional skills well.
- Staff provide a wide range of good quality learning opportunities that reflect children's interests. As a result, children are motivated and keen to learn.
- Staff make effective use of different areas of the premises and share space and resources well. This approach broadens learning experiences for children by providing depth and breadth within the educational programmes.
- There are strong partnerships in place with parents which promotes continuity between the home and the centre.

It is not yet outstanding because

- The outdoor play area for babies is suitable but staff do not use it to its full potential to make the most of learning experiences outside.
- Staff do not always demonstrate letter sounds correctly to promote children's early literacy skills fully.

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 rooms and outdoors.
- The inspector completed a joint observation with the deputy manager in the pre-school room.
- The inspector held meetings with the deputy manager and a representative from the management committee.
- The inspector looked at children's development records and evidence of staff suitability.
- The inspector held discussions with parents on the day.

Inspector

Gill Little

Full Report

Information about the setting

Hobby Horse Children's Centre registered in 1992. It is owned and managed by Oxford and Cherwell Valley College, located in Banbury, Oxfordshire. It operates from five rooms for different age groups in a building within the grounds of the college. Children have access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area. The centre serves students and staff from the college and also takes children from the wider community, including neighbouring counties. The centre is registered on the Early Years Register and is caring for 59 children in the early years age range. It is registered on both the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register and is caring for 14 older children. The centre supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and children learning English as an additional language. It is open each weekday all year round, except Christmas, from 8am until 5.30pm. During term time, a pre-school group operates from 9am until 12 noon and an after school club from 3pm until 5.30pm. A play scheme operates in the school holidays from 8am until 5.30pm. The centre is in receipt of funding for the provision of free early education for children ages two, three and four years. It employs 19 staff, of whom 17 hold relevant qualifications.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- enhance the outdoor play area for babies to provide a richer and more varied learning environment

- promote children's literacy skills further by pronouncing letter sounds correctly.

Inspection judgements

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

Children in the pre-school room enjoy being in a lively and busy environment. Staff support their learning well overall, which helps them to make good progress in preparation for school. Children listen attentively during circle time and demonstrate a developing understanding of sounds and letters, days of the week and numbers. Well-planned activities to promote children's understanding of shape engage their interest well. Children enjoy a shape lotto game or building with bricks, while staff skilfully challenge and extend their understanding of the properties of shapes. Since the last inspection, pre-school staff have made positive responses to recommendations. They now provide a wider variety of writing tools, including clipboards and diaries, to encourage children to write

independently during imaginative play activities. They focus more on developing children's knowledge of sounds and letters, although they do not always pronounce these correctly to support early literacy skills fully. Nevertheless, staff provide stimulating activities to encourage children's communication skills. While playing with diggers and gravel, children become completely absorbed. They talk readily to staff about their play, which promotes their language skills well.

Children in the older babies and toddler age groups enjoy a wide range of activities. Staff work well together to share space and resources in different rooms to provide varied and stimulating learning environments. Children become engrossed exploring technology toys, such as an electric guitar and an electric alphabet game. Staff support them well, talking to them with enthusiasm about their play to promote their language skills effectively. Children enjoy lively singing sessions led by staff, often joining in with the actions showing familiarity with the songs. They develop a range of physical skills as they play outdoors, peddling bikes, pushing wheelbarrows or exploring climbing equipment. Staff frequently respond well to children's emerging interests. As a group of boys play excitedly in a dark tent, staff extend the activity by providing torches, which enhances their imaginative skills and their understanding of technology.

Younger babies enjoy exploring a range of interesting resources indoors, such as a collection of metallic and grey objects including pans, tins and soft toys. Outdoors they snuggle up to staff exploring sand and sharing books. However, the outdoor area for babies is not particularly inspiring and does not provide a wide range of resources. Nevertheless, staff interact readily with babies, drawing their attention to the world around them, such as an aeroplane flying overhead. Staff plan a variety of stimulating activities to promote the development of babies, such as exploring large-scale painting or interesting textures, such as mashed potato.

Throughout the centre, staff make good use of observation, assessment and planning processes. They are able to explain these clearly and confidently to show that children are making good progress from their starting points. They make effective use of their observations of children's interests and capabilities to plan activities that are stimulating and relevant. A well-established system is in place to provide progress checks for two-year-old children and to share this information with parents. There is good support available for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Staff are familiar with their individual needs; they work well as a team and with outside agencies to follow agreed strategies. As the result, these children settle well and engage readily in learning activities. The centre also provides good support for children learning English as an additional language. Staff plan activities to reflect the cultures of all children and take positive steps to find out about home languages. By valuing home languages and promoting English well, staff support these children to make good progress in their communication skills.

The centre establishes positive partnerships with parents. Parents comment very favourably about the information they receive about their children's progress and on the opportunities they have to contribute their views about the centre. They also state that they receive encouragement from staff to support children's learning at home, such as borrowing books to enjoy with their children. This approach is effective in enhancing

continuity between the centre and the home environment.

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

Children throughout the centre enjoy positive relationships with staff. There is a well-established key person system, which has a positive impact on children's personal and social skills. Key persons work well together when children move rooms. This process means that the new key person becomes familiar with children's individual needs quickly and children settle well during times of change. Parents comment favourably on the consistency of staffing, stating that this has a significant impact on helping children feel secure.

Children show a good understanding of behavioural expectations. Younger children develop good skills for independence as staff encourage them to put away their wellington boots and hang their coats up. Staff explain to children the importance of sharing and intervene effectively when necessary to support this process. Children in the pre-school are thoughtful and respectful towards each other. When one child accidentally spills a drink, another child quickly finds a paper towel without any prompting, showing increasing skills in being kind and helpful. As a group of children crowd around the activity with diggers and gravel, they share resources and space well without disagreement. Staff promote behaviour positively and are proactive in anticipating problems. For example, they have a box of additional diggers close by so that there are enough resources for everyone. Staff are sometimes loud and energetic, contributing to the lively environment, but have a kind and warm approach towards children.

Children benefit from positive messages about healthy lifestyles. They learn to wash and dry their hands carefully with good supervision from staff. They play outdoors on a daily basis and enjoy healthy fruit snacks provided by the centre.

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

The centre staff and management teams demonstrate a good understanding of their responsibility to meet the legal requirements of the Statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage. There are clear procedures in place to assess the suitability of all persons working with children and provide appropriate levels of supervision for new staff and students. Effective induction procedures, such as supporting understanding of policies, help new staff to understand their roles and responsibilities. Ongoing monitoring procedures by the senior staff team promote consistent and effective practice around the centre. The management team quickly tackles any incidence of underperformance, helping staff to improve their practice through discussion and ensuring that improvements are in place. A training development plan helps to ensure that staff are able to develop professionally over time. Policies are easily accessible to parents and staff. There is an expectation that staff familiarise themselves with policies and senior staff ensure this understanding is in place through routine observations and discussions.

Senior staff monitor the consistency of assessments of children's progress and the quality of the educational programmes routinely. They review reports of children's progress and sample development records, challenging and supporting staff where there are gaps. The centre encourages feedback from staff during meetings to take account of their views through the self-evaluation process. Parents are able to contribute their views routinely and staff encourage children to talk about they would like to do as part of their learning experiences. The centre uses this information to consider plans for the future, which includes making improvements to the premises.

Staff demonstrate a clear understanding of safeguarding children procedures, including possible symptoms of children at risk. They know how to respond to concerns and how to refer them to the appropriate agencies where necessary. The environment is safe and secure, and staff supervise children well at all times.

The centre works well with outside agencies, other settings that children attend and schools to which children will transfer. They provide written information about children's progress where appropriate and invite other professionals into the centre to spend time with children in their current environment. This approach helps to promote continuity in children's learning and development.

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	133593
Local authority	Oxfordshire
Inspection number	934552
Type of provision	Full-time provision
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 8
Total number of places	62
Number of children on roll	73
Name of provider	Oxford & Cherwell College Committee
Date of previous inspection	04/04/2012
Telephone number	01295 250687 or 01865 551662

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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.

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.

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