

Underhill Infants School and Childrens Centre

Underhill Junior & Infant School, Mays Lane, BARNET, Hertfordshire, EN5 2LZ

Inspection date	14/01/2014
Previous inspection date	09/12/2010

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 provide a wide range of interesting activities, which encourage children to explore and investigate. They benefit from good adult support and enjoy the variety of learning experiences on offer.
- Staff are continually developing their educational provision for children in the key areas of language, literacy and mathematics. This helps children to acquire useful skills for the future.
- Staff are attentive to children's welfare and ensure that children's well-being is safeguarded in the setting. Children settle well and develop good relationships with others in the group.
- There are effective systems in place to evaluate the educational provision and monitor children's progress. This enables staff to close any gaps in achievement thereby meeting children's individual learning needs well.

It is not yet outstanding because

- The educational programme is not yet sufficiently broad to promote an increasing awareness of the wider world, for example, to help children learn more about the natural environment.

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 compulsory part of the Childcare Register. This report includes a judgment about compliance with the requirements of that register.

Inspection activities

- The inspector observed children taking part in a variety of indoor and outdoor activities.
- The inspector talked with staff and parents.
- The inspector sampled documentation, in particular those documents relating to children's progress and safeguarding.
- The inspector interviewed the centre manager and childcare senior officer.
- The inspector carried out a joint observation of an activity with the centre manager.

Inspector

Jill Nugent

Full report

Information about the setting

Underhill Infants School and Children's Centre childcare provision registered in 2009. The provision operates from a purpose built building on the school site in Barnet in the London Borough of Barnet. The provision is registered on the Early Years Register and the compulsory part of the Childcare Register. It is open from 8am until 6pm every weekday during term time. Currently there are 34 children on roll in the early years age group. Children have the use of a large play room and an outdoor play area. There is an additional room which is used for extra activities. The centre employs seven members of staff to work in the childcare provision. All staff are suitably qualified and the senior officer in charge holds Early Years Professional Status. The setting receives funding for the provision of free early education to children aged two and three years. The childcare provision supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and children who are learning 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:

- provide more opportunities for children to find out about the natural environment as part of their learning in the area of understanding the world.

Inspection judgements

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

The childcare provision is effective in meeting the needs of children. Staff have created a stimulating and attractive play environment, which encourages children to explore and investigate. As a result children often become absorbed in their play. For example, children enjoy playing with bubbles in the water tray and gradually extend their exploration by finding extra resources, such as straws and bottles. Staff join with children in their play and support them as they explore, for instance, suggesting different ideas or encouraging children to talk about what they are doing. They motivate children through their enthusiasm and interaction, allowing children to take the lead while enhancing their play. In particular they make sure children always feel well supported when playing independently. Children quickly gain confidence and discover new things as they try out different play situations.

Staff plan activities around a 'story of the week' and this helps to focus and extend children's learning. Children become familiar with each story and are encouraged to join in while listening to it being read each day. Additionally, all children, including those learning English as an additional language, are supported in developing good communication skills; for example, when talking about the animals in a story while painting. Staff also support

the development of children's listening and speaking skills by choosing several 'songs of the week'. In this way children become familiar with the meanings of phrases and the rhythm of language as they join in the songs at circle time. Staff take opportunities to increase children's awareness of mathematical language during activities and group times. For example, children learn to compare and count using objects and pictures. Staff know the importance of these key skills for children's future learning and are actively developing these areas of learning to give children an even wider range of basic skills.

Children are keen to try new activities. They especially enjoy taking part in the various hands-on activities, such as playing imaginatively with dolls, and play food, or exploring a tray of flour. They have good opportunities to investigate different textures and materials creatively. For example, children are able to express their own ideas using paints, brushes and their fingers when asked to paint pictures of animals. They learn about shape when cutting and decorating pieces to make a winter display. Children are encouraged to talk about their pictures and models so that they find different ways of communicating ideas. They have good access to a computer and learn to play games which reinforce their learning in language, literacy and mathematics. Staff promote an awareness of the wider world through activities based on cultural and religious festivals or taking children for walks to look more closely at nature. However, staff have not fully developed the provision in this area, for example, by bringing in items of interest from the natural environment.

Staff have a good system of observational assessment in place and this enables them to make spontaneous observations to add to children's 'learning journeys' as well as doing planned observations. They assess children's learning at regular intervals and work out each child's next steps of learning. Staff get to know their key children well. They are knowledgeable about their children's progress and current stage of development. The weekly planning is flexible in order to take into account children's changing interests as well as their needs. Children enjoy plenty of time during the session to make their own choices of activities. In addition staff organise group times, which work well in reinforcing children's learning and helping them to acquire new skills; for example, children learn more about the shapes and sounds of letters of the alphabet in phonics sessions. Overall children make good progress in their learning given their individual starting points.

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

Staff engage children in relaxed conversation, helping them to settle in and feel welcome. For example, staff talk with children about the clothes they are wearing and what is happening at home. They help children cope with changes at home by providing appropriate resources, for instance, children are encouraged to play with dolls when a new baby is expected in their family. Children show a sense of belonging and keep busy throughout the day. Staff give extra time to children who are new to the setting to help them get used to being in a large group. They make sure they sit at the level of the children so that they feel secure. They talk with them and help them to find resources that may interest them. In this way children are encouraged to become self-confident and to make their own choices of activities.

Staff place much emphasis on children becoming independent. In this way they support children in making good use of the resources and activities to learn through their own discoveries. Children develop good concentration skills as they focus on their chosen tasks and often search out extra resources to use in their play. They show respect for others and share fairly, for example, when playing together around the water tray. Staff have effective behaviour management strategies in place. They approach children sensitively, taking account of their level of understanding. As a result children are aware of their boundaries and respond positively to staff when reminded of the rules. They learn to sit and listen when necessary and to take turns in a group. Consequently children are well behaved at all times.

Staff encourage children to use the outdoor play area to engage in a variety of activities. Children especially like to ride around on the wheeled vehicles and to play on the climbing frame. These activities help them to develop better coordination and control. Staff make sure there are opportunities to relax outdoors too. For example, they provide quiet places to look at books, construct models or draw pictures. Children benefit from the opportunity to play in many different ways outdoors. They learn about keeping themselves safe. For instance, when using the slide children ask for help if they feel unsure. When the weather is not ideal staff set up physical activities indoors so that children still have the opportunity to be active and keep fit.

Staff use a set daily routine to help children feel secure as children know exactly what will happen during each session. For example, they happily gather for the 'story of the week' then move away to play again before circle time. Staff offer children plenty of choice to help them learn to make their own decisions. For example, the coat rack is moved outdoors when children are playing outside so that they can use it independently. At snack time children choose from a selection of fruits and at lunch time from different desserts. Snack and lunch times are well organised, giving children the opportunity to develop social skills as they sit together and eat. They are encouraged to adopt healthy eating habits. Lunches are provided by the school and include a wide range of healthy foods.

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

The children's centre manager and the childcare provision's senior officer work together effectively to manage the provision. There are clear policies and procedures in place and these provide a good foundation for staff's practice. The management team are vigilant regarding the safeguarding of children in the setting. All staff have recently updated their training in safeguarding and are fully aware of the procedures to be followed if there are any concerns relating to child protection. The manager liaises with other professionals and shares information, when necessary with staff, to enable them to ensure that children continue to be safeguarded. All visitors to the provision are made aware of the safeguarding policy and what they must do if they have any concerns while in the setting.

All staff working in the childcare provision undergo the necessary checks to ensure that they are suitable to work with children. The manager maintains a high ratio of adults to

children in the setting. All staff are attentive to children's safety, both indoors and outdoors. They keep a good check on the different play areas that are accessible to children. Consequently children are always well supervised, for instance, when taking part in activities or moving around the building. Staff carry out regular safety checks of the premises and equipment. They make sure that information about any new risks is passed on so that action is taken to minimise these risks. In this way they maintain a safe play environment for children. In the event of children having an accident, or receiving an injury, this is recorded in full and the parents are informed as soon as possible.

There are effective monitoring systems in place to assess the overall progress of children in the setting. The manager and senior officer have recently introduced a new system that links closely with that used in the infant school. This enables better liaison between staff in the childcare provision and staff in the school's nursery class and contributes to children receiving continuity of care and learning when moving on. The senior officer is meticulous in her tracking of children's individual progress. She makes good use of the results of her tracking to help staff focus on areas of learning that need more attention. For example, staff have recently received extra training to help them improve the provision for children's learning in the area of mathematics.

There is a good partnership with parents in place and this contributes to children feeling secure and happy in the setting. Staff are welcoming and make themselves available to talk with parents during the day. They make good use of white boards outside the room to update parents on the activities of the day and also to ask for parents' suggestions. Parents meet termly with their children's key persons in order to exchange information about their children's progress. Children's 'learning journey' books are easily accessible to parents so that they can view them at any time. Parents are also encouraged to contribute to these by noting children's interests and learning at home. This helps them to become involved in their children's learning.

The manager is proactive in building good relationships with parents. For example, she has recently introduced coffee mornings and invited parents to celebrate events, such as a harvest festival, with the children. She coordinates the work of the childcare provision within the children's centre so that children are able to receive extra support if necessary to help them achieve. As a result children with special educational needs and/or disabilities are very well supported and make good progress in their development. The manager also liaises closely with the local authority's early years team and this contributes to extra training and support for staff, enabling them to better support children and close any gaps in achievement.

The manager takes the lead in evaluating the quality of the provision and encourages staff to reflect on their own practice. She uses a written self-evaluation to record the perceived strengths of the setting, and the areas needing further improvement, in a concise and evaluative manner. Therefore it is clear exactly where the setting is and what it needs to do next. The manager sets relevant targets for the future and ensures that staff receive the support required to meet these targets. For example, she is pursuing training for staff in ECAT (Every Child A Talker) to help them improve further their interactions with children. She has worked closely with the senior officer to review and develop the systems of observational assessment and planning. Staff are now working on their next target of

improving circle times to vary the learning on offer. Overall the childcare provision maintains a very good capacity for continual improvement.

The Childcare Register

The requirements for the compulsory 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	Requires improvement	The provision is not giving children a good standard of early years education and/or there are minor breaches of the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. It will be monitored and inspected within twelve months of the date of this inspection.
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 monitored and inspected again within six 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	EY390216
Local authority	Barnet
Inspection number	948956
Type of provision	Full-time provision
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 8
Total number of places	18
Number of children on roll	34
Name of provider	Underhill Infants School Governing Body
Date of previous inspection	09/12/2010
Telephone number	02084492962

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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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