

Inspection of Highfield Pre-School

YWAM Oval, Ambrose Lane, Harpenden, Hertfordshire AL5 4BX

Inspection date: 28 January 2020

Overall effectiveness	Outstanding
The quality of education	Outstanding
Behaviour and attitudes	Outstanding
Personal development	Outstanding
Leadership and management	Outstanding
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Outstanding

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is outstanding

Children settle very quickly and are exceedingly happy at this outstanding pre-school. They continuously demonstrate that they feel safe and secure. Children have an extremely positive attitude towards learning, they concentrate and engage superbly well. Staff give the highest consideration to children's emotional well-being. Children are encouraged to talk about their feelings, understand empathy for others and express themselves in social situations. Staff use signing and picture clues very effectively. This superbly supports children, who cannot yet communicate verbally, to express their feelings. Staff consistently model respect and develop caring and positive relationships with the children. They successfully help children to understand how their behaviour can affect others. Children behave extremely well.

Children immerse themselves in learning through creative exploration and investigation of highly motivating activities. Staff are highly skilful and use every opportunity to engage enthusiastically with the children. They have an excellent understanding of each child's individual needs and provide activities which consistently challenge and build on previous learning. Children readily demonstrate what they have learned through staff's outstanding teaching. For example, they talk in-depth about how foods from different groups benefit their health. For example, they say that vitamins fight germs and carbohydrates give them energy. Children are superbly prepared for the next stage in their learning and for school.

What does the early years setting do well and what does it need to do better?

- The inspirational provider and dedicated staff team relentlessly strive for excellence. They demonstrate a determined commitment to providing the highest quality provision. The provider is totally committed to ensuring that all staff are fully supported within their role. The excellent arrangements for supervision and expert coaching result in an extremely confident and knowledgeable staff team. Staff observe each other's practice and provide constructive feedback to help each other continuously develop their already outstanding skills. There are also excellent opportunities for staff to pursue continuous professional development opportunities.
- All children make exceptional progress in their learning, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language. Staff make precise and accurate assessments of children's learning and astutely identify any gaps in their development. Staff work very closely with parents and expertly support them to seek further assessments from external professionals.
- The highly qualified staff team creates extremely vibrant and stimulating environments indoors and outdoors. Children explore and investigate a wealth of

natural and real-life materials. For example, children skilfully use real tools and wood to create designs. Staff superbly support and extend their learning and skills. For example, they patiently and thoughtfully ask children questions and offer advice.

- Staff develop children's literacy skills extremely well. Children immensely enjoy sharing books with older members of the community who volunteer at the pre-school. During role play, older children write shopping lists and younger ones show their developing skills as they make marks to represent words.
- Staff encourage children to develop strong imaginative skills. The role-play area is superb and entices children to engage in high-quality play. Staff provide an excellent range of resources that represent diversity. Children from difference cultures are highly delighted when they find dolls that they say look like themselves. They engage in high quality discussions with other children as they use the dolls to compare their own similarities and differences.
- Children develop exceedingly good communication skills. Staff use every opportunity to engage children in conversations to encourage their speech development. Children listen well and follow instructions accurately. Staff question children highly effectively and give them time to think of solutions and voice their ideas.
- Partnerships with parents are superb. Staff foster highly effective and carefully considered strategies to help engage and involve parents in their children's learning. For example, parents are encouraged to complete an activity with children while they wait for the pre-school to open. Parents say the pre-school is a special place where children are cherished and valued as individuals. Parents go out of their way to bring children here as they feel they receive the highest quality early education.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The provider and staff have a robust understanding of their role and responsibility in protecting children from harm. Children's safety and well-being are given the highest priority and are deeply embedded into daily practice. Staff are acutely aware of how to recognise the possible signs and symptoms of abuse. They assuredly describe the procedures to follow should they have concerns about a child's welfare or a colleague's practice. Designated staff with safeguarding responsibilities have attended specialist training, and all staff refresh their understanding regularly. Stringent recruitment and vetting arrangements ensure that all staff and volunteers are suitable to work with children.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY306881
Local authority	Hertfordshire
Inspection number	10127323
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register
Day care type	Sessional day care
Age range of children	2 to 4
Total number of places	40
Number of children on roll	48
Name of registered person	Kingdom Education Limited
Registered person unique reference number	RP525533
Telephone number	01582 320566
Date of previous inspection	8 October 2013

Information about this early years setting

Highfield Pre-School registered in 2001. The pre-school employs nine members of childcare staff. Of these, seven hold early years qualifications at level 3 or above, and the provider holds early years professional status. The pre-school opens from Monday to Friday during school term times. Sessions are from 9am to 3pm. The pre-school provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector
Jill Hardaker

Inspection activities

- The inspector had a tour of the pre-school with the provider. They talked about how the setting is organised and discussed the play and learning opportunities provided for children.
- The inspector observed the quality of education during activities, indoors and outside, and observed an adult-led activity with the provider.
- The inspector spoke with staff and children during the inspection. She held meetings with the provider and some staff members.
- A sample of records were viewed by the inspector, including safeguarding policies and procedures and staff's suitability records.
- The inspector spoke to a sample of parents and took account of their views. She also discussed the ongoing plans for the pre-school with the provider.

We carried out this inspection 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.

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