

Inspection of Happy Days Pre-School

Lagley Meadow Youth Centre, Douglas Gardens, Berkhamsted, Hertfordshire HP4 3PE

Inspection date: 19 June 2023

Overall effectiveness	Good
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The quality of education	Good
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Behaviour and attitudes	Good
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Personal development	Good
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Leadership and management	Good
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Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good
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What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is good

Children are happy to attend this setting. They are friendly, settled and display a positive attitude to learning. Children form warm and strong relationships with staff, who support their emotional well-being and resilience. For example, when children first start at the setting, they make their own name tag with their favourite drawing on it. This helps to support their emotional well-being, early reading skills and creativity.

Children navigate around the setting with great joy and enthusiasm, choosing activities that spark their curiosity and excitement. Children enjoy pretending to wash cars at the water tray with their peers. They successfully operate spray bottles to squirt water at the small vehicles available, being fascinated by the cause and effect. They enjoy the feel of cool water and foam and engage in discussions about why cars need to be cleaned. This helps to support children's imaginative skills and understanding of the world, and it provides amazing sensory experiences. Furthermore, children develop the social skills needed to interact with their peers effectively.

Children also have great opportunities to explore colourful play dough to build on their fine motor skills and dexterity. They use cutters with good control and learn more about shapes and colours to build on their mathematical skills.

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

- Staff provide a rich environment, with plenty of meaningful learning opportunities. Children choose the activities they would like to explore. They learn to share and take turns with confidence. For example, children have great fun exploring the mud kitchen, mixing natural resources and using utensils with good control. They talk about what they are doing, giggling with excitement. This helps support children's interactions and their imaginative skills.
- Staff model language well and engage in conversations with the children. They use open-ended questions and introduce new vocabulary, such as 'millipede', 'woodlice' and 'earwig'. However, staff do not use all opportunities to encourage younger children, or children requiring further support, to repeat new words to secure their knowledge.
- Children's natural curiosity is fostered through engaging them in stimulating activities outdoors. For example, they are fascinated to look for bugs in the setting's unique bug hotel. They use magnifying glasses to observe the insects' features while counting out loud to build on their numeracy skills. Children concentrate intently, showing high levels of care and affection towards living things.
- Children enjoy books and develop a passion for reading. For example, while

enjoying a healthy snack, they discuss what the hungry caterpillar eats to grow big. They look through the book with curiosity, naming each fruit in turn. Furthermore, children look at watermelon seeds and learn what they need to turn into plants.

- Children have good opportunities to stay active and build on their gross motor skills. For example, in the garden, they explore bikes, cars, scooters, seesaws and climbing equipment with great control and confidence. This helps to build their stamina, balance and coordination. In addition, children enjoy singing and dancing. They follow staff's instructions very well and move around the setting to the sound of the music. This allows the children to enhance their social interactions and express themselves creatively.
- Staff have good knowledge of children's learning. They use their assessments of what children know and can do to plan effective next steps for their learning.
- Leaders' vision and ethos for the setting is ambitious. They continuously strive to improve the quality of care and education to benefit all children. Leaders value their team's career growth and well-being. They organise regular meetings and training to ensure they keep staff knowledge current. Staff report that they are well supported and are very happy to work at this setting.
- Partnerships with parents are effective. They praise the flexibility and inclusiveness of leaders and staff. Parents feel supported and involved in their children's learning and development and appreciate the progress they make. Parents also comment on how warm and nurturing staff and leaders are.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff and leaders have a good knowledge and understanding of safeguarding. This includes wider aspects, such as female genital mutilation and 'Prevent' duty. They have accurate and effective policies and procedures in place to guide them, which they review regularly and share with parents. Staff and leaders understand the importance of following the correct procedures to report any concerns to relevant professionals to protect children from harm. They complete regular training to keep their safeguarding knowledge up to date. Staff carry out regular risk assessments to ensure the setting and garden are safe. Effective staff deployment ensures that all children are well supervised and cared for.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- provide opportunities for children to hear and learn a wider range of new words to extend their vocabulary, particularly for younger children and those who require extra support.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY464800
Local authority	Hertfordshire
Inspection number	10289611
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register, Voluntary Childcare Register
Day care type	Sessional day care
Age range of children at time of inspection	2 to 4
Total number of places	26
Number of children on roll	30
Name of registered person	Happy Days Pre-School Committee
Registered person unique reference number	RP908662
Telephone number	07592730556
Date of previous inspection	30 November 2017

Information about this early years setting

Happy Days Pre-School registered in 2013. The pre-school is situated in Berkhamsted, Hertfordshire. It employs ten members of childcare staff. Of these, seven hold early years qualifications at level 3. The pre-school opens from 9am until 2.45pm, Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday, and from 9am until 12.30pm on a Friday, during term time only. It provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Anca Sandu

Inspection activities

- This was the first routine inspection the pre-school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the manager and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the provision.
- The inspector discussed with the manager how the curriculum is organised and what they want children to learn.
- The inspector observed the quality of teaching and education, indoors and outdoors, and assessed the impact this has on children's learning.
- The inspector spoke with staff at appropriate times throughout the inspection.
- Children spoke with the inspector about the activities they were doing.
- The inspector carried out a joint observation with the manager.
- Parents spoke about the setting to the inspector, who took account of their views.
- The inspector held a meeting with the manager and nominated individual. She looked at relevant documentation and reviewed evidence of the suitability of the staff working at the setting.

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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