

Inspection of Highbury Lodge Day Nursery

11 Highbury Road, Hitchin, Hertfordshire SG4 9RW

Inspection date: 3 October 2023

Overall effectiveness	Outstanding
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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 thrive at this welcoming nursery. They settle quickly, benefiting from the tailored settling-in process and calm surroundings that staff create for them. They form strong bonds with the whole staff team, demonstrating that they trust all staff who interact with them. For instance, when children transition between indoors and the garden, different staff take them to and from the areas and they eagerly go. Staff know all the children well, speaking to them about what they can look forward to playing with when they reach the garden.

Older children become highly independent through the carefully planned lunch arrangements. They set their own place at the table, serve themselves their meal and pour their own drinks. Staff hold discussions with children about the ingredients in the food they eat, showing them examples of the raw ingredients. This sparks children's interest and promotes discussion. Children confidently share their knowledge and understanding with staff as part of their sociable meal experience.

Children of all ages remain thoroughly engrossed in the motivating and interesting activities on offer for lengthy periods of time. Staff monitor children's learning closely. They choose appropriate moments to build on learning, instinctively presenting new language and information. As a result, children are able to rapidly build on what they already know and can do.

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

- All children confidently lead their own learning, with expert support from the staff in each room. Children actively explore, indoors and outdoors, and curiously visit other rooms that they have recently transitioned from. Staff are fully aware when this happens and welcome them in, engaging with them warmly and allowing them to explore the familiar resources. Staff instinctively follow children's cues. Babies independently crawl towards the dining area when they are hungry, and staff invite them to join the table for lunch. This demonstrates to children that staff value and respect their choices.
- Staff make the most of every learning opportunity, even when these are spontaneous and unplanned. For instance, staff calmly engage young children in problem-solving as the paint they are exploring overflows onto the table and floor. Children keenly collect cloths and help to tidy up. Staff continue to build on children's understanding and language development at this time, explaining to children about how the cloth will 'soak' up the paint.
- Communication is at the heart of everything staff do. Staff speak sensitively to children and provide them with the correct vocabulary, speaking clearly and articulately to them. Discussions between staff and children are natural and

instinctive. Staff interact calmly with children, giving them plenty of time to think and process what is being asked or discussed before expecting a response. As a result, children develop their communication skills rapidly, learning new vocabulary frequently.

- The well-being of staff and the families who attend the setting is paramount to the dedicated leadership team. Leaders recognise the challenges that face both parents and staff and respond to these with immense compassion. Parents benefit from support and guidance and enjoy the wealth of opportunities to build on their children's learning at home. Staff report that they feel exceptionally well supported in their roles. They benefit from regular training opportunities and open and honest discussions with leaders. This hugely benefits everyone who works at or attends the setting.
- Staff assess the needs of children who require additional support before they start at the nursery and engage with parents right from the start. For instance, parents participate in a health and safety inclusion walk around the nursery to identify any potential issues. This enables staff to arrange the environment effectively to support children's individual needs. As a result, they can access all learning opportunities immediately.
- Leaders and managers are passionate about the nursery and have a clear vision for driving the nursery forwards even more. They network with other professionals and volunteer to participate in programmes to lead the way in the early years sector. Leaders are highly reflective and respond promptly to any concerns raised. They revisit organisational policies and procedures to ensure that they are as robust as possible and support the well-being of all children.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

There is a strong ethos of safeguarding throughout the nursery, and all staff have a firm understanding of the process to follow should they have concerns. Staff have their knowledge checked regularly by a variety of people across the leadership team. They have access to online training regularly to ensure that their knowledge is kept up to date. Leaders and managers fully understand the processes to follow should they need to share information with other professionals, and this is done swiftly. Appropriate steps are taken to ensure that staff are suitable for their roles, and this suitability is checked regularly.

Setting details

Unique reference number	146741
Local authority	Hertfordshire
Inspection number	10309658
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register, Voluntary Childcare Register
Day care type	Full day care
Age range of children at time of inspection	0 to 4
Total number of places	83
Number of children on roll	102
Name of registered person	Childbase Partnership Limited
Registered person unique reference number	RP900830
Telephone number	01462 434317
Date of previous inspection	19 December 2017

Information about this early years setting

Highbury Lodge Day Nursery registered in 2000. The nursery employs 42 members of childcare staff. Of these, 22 hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3 or above. The nursery opens Monday to Friday, all year round, from 7.30am to 6.30pm. The nursery provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Jenny Hardy

Inspection activities

- This was the first routine inspection the provider received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the provider and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the provider.
- The manager and deputy manager completed a learning walk with the inspector and explained the early years curriculum on offer.
- The inspector read written feedback from parents and took their views into consideration.
- The manager and inspector jointly observed staff interacting with children. They discussed the impact of these interactions on children's learning and development.
- The inspector viewed a range of documentation, including staff suitability documents.
- The inspector held discussions with leaders, managers, staff and children at appropriate times throughout the inspection.

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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