

Inspection of Fusion Childcare Services

The Grove Infant & Nursery School, Dark Lane, HARPENDEN, Hertfordshire AL5 1QD

Inspection date:

22 September 2025

The quality and standards of early years provision

This inspection

Met

Previous inspection

Met

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

This provision meets requirements

Children of all ages are excited to arrive at this vibrant club and quickly become deeply absorbed in a wealth of play opportunities. Leaders and staff place children's interests at the heart of their practice. They skilfully plan an environment and activities that support children's varied and ever-changing interests. Children have wonderful opportunities to explore the extensive outdoor areas, including the neighbouring allotment. Together with enthusiastic staff, children organise team sports and set up their own clubs, where they discuss and swap cards of their favourite cartoon characters.

Exceptional processes are in place to support the youngest children who attend. They enjoy exploring their safe and age-appropriate environment, with their nurturing key staff on hand for support. Children in the early years are allocated a named member of staff to act as a point of contact for parents and to provide precise support for their specific needs.

Children behave well, are kind and demonstrate good manners. Staff support this well with daily discussions and clear behaviour management strategies. Positive reinforcement plays a key role in encouraging kind behaviours and a positive attitude. Children regularly receive 'Wow' postcards through the post that highlight their good behaviour and contribution to the club.

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

- Partnerships with parents are exceptional. Parents express immense gratitude for the incredible support staff and leaders provide regarding children's emotional well-being, as well as the guidance and reassurance they offer to families. Parents acknowledge how staff embrace their feedback and act on their recommendations swiftly. For example, leaders have introduced an accessible electronic feedback system that provides ease of use for parents and fits into their busy schedules.
- Relationships with the host school are strong and respectful. Staff collect children from their classrooms and share information with teaching staff about children's time in school. The club and school share the same online parent communication system. This allows staff to communicate exceptionally well with families and provide activities that embed the school's teaching. For example, club staff have introduced fun sensory mark-making opportunities to further develop children's hand muscles. This strong partnership provides a highly collaborative approach to children's development.
- Mealtimes are exceptionally well organised and support children's safety as well as their social development. Children and staff all sit together and enjoy a

healthy, cooked meal in the evening. They chat about their respective days, and staff are on hand to reinforce children's understanding of appropriate behaviours and manners. Leaders and staff have strong processes in place to monitor allergens and ensure that mealtimes, like all activities in the club, are inclusive and consider all children's needs.

- Children develop a deep understanding of different cultures and customs in age-appropriate ways. Young children listen to stories and engage in sensory activities about festivals such as Rosh Hashanah. They explore associated fruits, such as apples and pomegranates, and discuss how they feel, smell and taste. Older children create collages of apples in a craft activity and enthusiastically join in group games, where they delight at identifying cultural objects and discussing their meanings.
- Leaders and staff place exceptionally sharp focus on supporting children's emotional development in age-appropriate and meaningful ways. Discussions throughout the session explore children's emotions and the reasons behind them. Children express their feelings through extensive craft activities. For example, children create emotion watches that they use to help communicate how they are feeling.
- Children engage with their local community in exceptional ways. Along with staff, they go on trips to the local shops to purchase specific resources for their choice of activity. Children get to select their purchases and pay for them, developing vital social skills. Children delight at discussing a recent award they won for the work they do on their allotment. They proudly explain how they attended a ceremony with staff to receive their award from the town mayor.
- Staff are exceptionally well supported by leaders, who are committed to promoting their development and well-being. They have access to extensive online training opportunities to enhance their skills. Daily briefing sessions mean that staff are confident in their roles and provide meaningful input into children's experiences at the club. For example, staff understand the purpose of all activities, how they relate to individual children, and how to further adapt their support to engage all children.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

There is an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts children's interests first.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY440436
Local authority	Hertfordshire
Inspection number	10399503
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register, Voluntary Childcare Register
Day care type	Out-of-school day care
Age range of children at time of inspection	3 to 11
Total number of places	140
Number of children on roll	229
Name of registered person	Fusion Childcare Services
Registered person unique reference number	RP531289
Telephone number	07879811927
Date of previous inspection	4 December 2019

Information about this early years setting

Fusion Childcare Services registered in 2011. Fusion employs 30 members of childcare staff. Of these, 14 hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 2 or above, including the manager and deputy, who both hold early years teacher status. Fusion opens from Monday to Friday during school term time. Sessions are from 7.30am to 8.45am and from 3.15pm to 6.15pm.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Antonia Campbell

Inspection activities

- The inspector and the manager took a tour of the club. They discussed how the club is organised and the play opportunities provided for children.
- The inspector spoke to several parents and took account of their views.
- The inspector held discussions with staff at appropriate times during the inspection.
- The children spoke to the inspector about what they enjoy doing while at the club.
- The inspector observed the interactions between staff and the children.
- The inspector looked at relevant documents, including evidence of the suitability of all staff.

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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