

# Inspection of High Wych Pre-School Nursery

The Bullfields Centre, Cutforth Road, Sawbridgeworth, Hertfordshire CM21 9EA

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Inspection date: 30 September 2025

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## **Overall effectiveness**

## **Requires improvement**

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The quality of education

**Requires improvement**

Behaviour and attitudes

**Requires improvement**

Personal development

**Requires improvement**

Leadership and management

**Requires improvement**

Overall effectiveness at previous  
inspection

Good

## **What is it like to attend this early years setting?**

### **The provision requires improvement**

The provider plans a variety of experiences based on children's interests and to support all areas of learning. Staff express an understanding of children's learning needs and want them to be ready for school. However, at times, they do not implement the curriculum flexibly enough to consistently support all children to make good progress. For example, they provide exciting sensory play dough and foam experiences but do not have a clear vision for what they want children to learn. They do not interact or communicate enough during activities to ensure all children make the most out of the experience. Staff recognise and praise when children follow instructions and use 'kind hands', but explanations about behaviour are inconsistent, and not all staff remind children of the boundaries in place.

Children enjoy the dedicated area to practise their physical skills and are gaining confidence. Staff are aware of the importance of children developing their gross motor skills. They support children as they learn to balance on textured tiles, stepping stones and more challenging beams. They praise children's skills and encourage their perseverance. Children cannot wait to go to out into the large outdoor space. They are active and full of energy as they run across the field, counting their steps and holding hands. They collect autumn leaves to take back inside. However, staff do always make the most of being outdoors or implement an ambitious outdoor curriculum for children to enjoy.

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

- Children are happy and settled, they have formed good relationships with staff and friends. They enjoy coming to nursery and have plenty of opportunities to explore resources they like. Staff are kind and caring. They give children reassurance and cuddles when they become upset, which helps children to build a trusting relationship with them.
- All children have an allocated key person. Staff get to know children's interests and information about their home lives. However, they do not consistently use this information to plan purposeful activities to engage children in meaningful play. This means that some children become disinterested and wander around aimlessly, which impacts on the progress they can make.
- Children learn to follow simple instructions and routines. For example, they sit in a circle before lunch and learn how to pass the beanbag to their friends and when to stop. This helps them to take turns and listen to each other. However, staff do not always explain behaviour and boundaries in the same way. This makes it harder for children to understand what is expected. At times, this slows their progress and disrupts their learning. As a result, children do not always behave well.
- Children develop an interest in books and stories. Staff plan activities based on

children's favourite books to bring stories to life. Children recall repeated phrases and join in with the storytelling, which helps to develop their vocabulary. Staff are engaging when reading with children. At times, they ask older children questions to promote their thinking skills.

- Staff teach children about good hygiene and healthy habits. Children learn to wash their hands properly and have fun doing this in their conga line. At lunchtime, children are praised for healthy choices and discuss the benefits of healthy foods. When they hear the drinking water song, children go to their water bottles in order to stay hydrated. All of this prepares children well for later life.
- There are suitable arrangements in place to support children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Staff liaise with parents and other professionals to put individual plans in place to meet children's needs and children benefit from this targeted support. These children make suitable progress from their starting points.
- Parents state that their children are happy at the setting. They appreciate staff's flexible approach, when their children are settling in. Staff share information about children's learning and give parents suggestions of things that they can do at home. The provider plans social events, such as a Christmas fair and family picnic, to help build relationships.
- The provider supports staff through regular supervision to discuss their practice. However, these opportunities are not used well, as there are weaknesses in staff's knowledge of how to support children's learning to a consistently good level.

## Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

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

## What does the setting need to do to improve?

**To meet the requirements of the early years foundation stage, the provider must:**

|  | <b>Due date</b> |
|--|-----------------|
| improve the implementation of the curriculum to ensure that it is tailored to meet all children's learning needs, particularly the youngest children | 30/11/2025      |

|  |            |
|--|------------|
| provide training and support for staff to develop their teaching skills and improve their knowledge of how to manage children's behaviour effectively. | 30/11/2025 |
|--|------------|

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

- strengthen the tracking, monitoring and assessments of children, so staff develop a deep understanding of children's needs and use this to support them to make the best possible progress.

## Setting details

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| <b>Unique reference number</b>                     | EY426856                               |
| <b>Local authority</b>                             | Hertfordshire                          |
| <b>Inspection number</b>                           | 10407944                               |
| <b>Type of provision</b>                           | Childcare on non-domestic premises     |
| <b>Registers</b>                                   | Early Years Register                   |
| <b>Day care type</b>                               | Full day care                          |
| <b>Age range of children at time of inspection</b> | 2 to 4                                 |
| <b>Total number of places</b>                      | 28                                     |
| <b>Number of children on roll</b>                  | 53                                     |
| <b>Name of registered person</b>                   | High Wych Pre-School Nursery Committee |
| <b>Registered person unique reference number</b>   | RP523542                               |
| <b>Telephone number</b>                            | 07792612585                            |
| <b>Date of previous inspection</b>                 | 22 January 2020                        |

## Information about this early years setting

High Wych Pre-School Nursery registered at new premises in 2011 but has been in operation for 44 years. The pre-school employs 10 members of childcare staff. Of these, eight hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3 or above, including one with qualified teacher status. The pre-school opens from Monday to Friday during term time. Sessions are from 8.50am until 11.50am and midday until 3pm, with the option for children to attend from 9am until 3pm. The pre-school provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

## Information about this inspection

### Inspector

Sara Vincent

## Inspection activities

- The manager joined the inspector on a learning walk and talked to the inspector about their curriculum and what they want their children to learn.
- The inspector talked to staff at appropriate times during the inspection and took account of their views.
- The inspector spoke with the nominated individual about the leadership and management of the setting.
- The inspector observed the quality of education being provided, indoors and outdoors, and assessed the impact that this was having on children's learning.
- The inspector carried out joint observations of group activities with the manager.
- The inspector spoke to several parents during the inspection and took account of their views.
- The manager showed the inspector documentation to demonstrate the suitability of 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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