

Highbury Lodge Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspector Lynne Kathleen Talbot

Setting address 11 Highbury Road, Hitchin, Hertfordshire, SG4 9RW

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Type of setting Childcare on non-domestic premises

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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under Sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006 on the quality and standards of the registered early years provision. 'Early years provision' refers to provision regulated by Ofsted for children from birth to 31 August following their fifth birthday (the early years age group). The registered person must ensure that this provision complies with the statutory framework for children's learning, development and welfare, known as the *Early Years Foundation Stage*.

The provider must provide a copy of this report to all parents with children at the setting where reasonably practicable. The provider must provide a copy of the report to any other person who asks for one, but may charge a fee for this service (The Childcare (Inspection) Regulations 2008 regulations 9 and 10).

The setting also makes provision for children older than the early years age group which is registered on the voluntary and/or compulsory part(s) of the Childcare Register. This report does not include an evaluation of that provision, but a comment about compliance with the requirements of the Childcare Register is included in Annex B.

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Description of the setting

Highbury Lodge Day Nursery registered in July 2000. The nursery is part of the Child Base national chain of nurseries and operates from a detached property in a residential area of Hitchin, Hertfordshire. The building is accessed via steps and level grounds and set across three floors linked by stairs. Children have access to a secure outdoor play area.

The provision is open each weekday throughout the year with the exception of bank holidays and sessions are from 8am to 6pm with additional hours available from 7.30am to 6.30pm. A maximum of 74 children may attend the provision at any one time. The setting receives funding for Nursery Education. The setting is registered on the Early Years Register and on both the voluntary and compulsory parts of the Childcare register. The setting is also registered to offer care to children aged over five years. Children occupying these places would share the same facilities as the children in the early years age range.

There are currently 135 children on roll, all of whom are within the early years age range. 20 children attend other settings such as the early years unit of local primary schools or childminders. The setting supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), and children for whom English is an additional language. There are 28 staff members including administration and catering; of these, 20 hold relevant childcare qualifications.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is outstanding.

Planning for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) is fully child-led using creative resources and innovative activities ensuring that children receive experiences that foster excellent progress. Staff create an inspiring environment, using comprehensive safeguarding procedures and welfare routines, ensuring that they have an accurate knowledge of each child's needs and that each child is totally included. Exceptional links with parents and carers are a key strength and fully involve them in the day-to-day well-being of their children and those secure relationships help children to thrive. Effective partnerships with other agencies help to ensure that children's development is consistently supported. Procedures for self evaluation are meticulous resulting in a provision that shows dedicated and continued improvement and outcomes for children.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To further improve the high quality early years provision the registered person should consider:

- continuing to enhance the links with all other settings providing for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS).

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Thorough safeguarding procedures ensure that children are fully protected. Designated staff update their training regularly and cascade information to all staff to fully protect children. Security is given a high priority and is supported by the intercom systems, internal release for doors and closed-circuit coverage for indoor and outdoor areas. Staff are vigilant in ensuring that only fully vetted persons enter the building and that they are fully escorted at all times. Policies and procedures are clearly understood by staff and parents with any review by the Child Base management cascaded to all personnel efficiently. Defined recruitment and vetting procedures ensure that all staff working with children are suitable to do so and hold the required checks. Qualifications audits are used to ensure that qualifications are entirely appropriate and relevant. Staff use comprehensive risk assessments to minimise hazards to children. This includes an annual review, regular discussion within staff meetings as well as any outing receiving a pre-visit to evaluate the potential risks. Managers have consistently high expectations for driving improvement and stimulate the enthusiasm of staff. Throughout the nursery monthly improvement aims are identified by managers and team leaders seeking systematic and continued development in all areas. Training is given an emphasis with mandatory in-house training as well as that supplied through the local authority. The staff group are deployed very well, flexible in their approach and know the children throughout the provision enabling any transition from room-to-room to be beneficial to the children. Parents comment that the staff, 'manage the change of rooms meeting each child's needs', and that they, 'go the extra mile'. The environment is highly conducive to learning, safe and well-cared for receiving ongoing development and constant maintenance. Resources are very well used to achieve the planned goals for learning and development whilst children are clearly thriving as a result. Consequently outcomes for children are exceptional.

The managers and staff work in an exemplary manner with parents to ensure that a forward thinking approach is maintained within the partnership. Cohesive methods of communication such as questionnaires, newsletters, suggestion boxes, play and stay sessions, together with the events planned to share children's learning journals all support the relationship. Parents are heavily involved in evaluating the provision offered. A key strength within the setting is the parent forum within which parent representatives meet with management to review aspects of the provision and offer suggestions or review potential proposed changes. A buddy system for new parents enables them to learn about the provision from established parents and is highly effective in supporting consistent care. Excellent systems are developed to involve parents and children with English as an additional language such as letters and leaflets in a range of languages, key words being learnt, books developed with children showing new words in different languages, and the involvement of parents to help with pronunciation, script and spelling for labelling in the nursery. Staff make the most of the local community and the celebrations enjoyed by their attending families to help children understand the society in which they live. The nursery works closely ensuring inclusion, they follow programmes or medical instruction set for children by other

professionals, incorporate signing into all aspects of care and establish excellent communication to involve all families. There are established channels of communication between the nursery and other providers such as childminders and schools because they provide their learning journals and transfer reports to those settings. However, there is little information received from other settings to enable the nursery to fully complement the care given or ensure they are aware of issues that may affect the children.

The quality and standards of the early years provision and outcomes for children

Children are consistently offered a stimulating range of activities that help them make excellent progress in their learning and development. Assessment through high quality observations is rigorous and the information gained is used very effectively in planning. Systematic and spontaneous observations track progression closely, next steps are identified to feed the planning for every child on a weekly basis whilst achievements made at home are fed into the learning journals. These methods mean that children are challenged to reach their potential and excellent levels of achievement. Staff are skilled in planning using children's interests and show flexibility to capitalise on learning situations involving experts, other professionals and parent volunteers with special interests. For example, older children explore a 'science fun' area where they have explored making rocket ships and volcanoes and are able to recall and tell new visitors what they did showing an excellent grasp of story-telling and communication. They develop creativity using a sensory and musical area in which they explore costumes of the world, music from around the world and which links into visitors introducing them to instruments such as the violin. Cookery enables children to explore all areas of learning together as they follow recipes, take turns to add ingredients and explore all aspects of the cooking experience. Staff mark these accomplishments taking photographs and observations for their journals and for displays. All children, including babies, show an extremely strong sense of security and belonging within the setting. Children part from parents with ease showing contentment whilst extensive information sharing helps to strengthen the bond between parents and carers and the staff in the nursery. All children develop a sense of self-worth through the methods employed throughout the nursery encompassing their 'golden values'. These are supported by praise books, certificates of achievement and sticker achievement cards in all areas. In addition parents are involved because children receive sheets noting 'what a star you have been today because..' and 'give me a hug today because..' that help them to be fully appreciative of achievements. These are exemplary methods of promoting positive behaviours and sharing with parents the importance of positive reinforcement. Discovery bags, treasure baskets and heuristic play are used beneficially to stimulate babies and toddlers senses encouraging concentration, creativity and learning skills.

Children show an exceptional understanding of the importance of following good personal hygiene routines. They have ownership of their health and well-being and demonstrate that they are well informed about healthy living. For instance, children explain the importance of washing their hands before cooking telling adults that it washes the germs off which would make them poorly. They eagerly

take part in activity sessions including 'Tiny Mites' with a visiting company where they sing and dance, developing confidence and using their bodies with ease. Younger children and babies participate in sessions of 'Tiny Mites' as well as having separate garden areas to explore equipped appropriately. Children benefit from a very well-planned garden experience because the nursery has a garden committee of staff who have been instrumental in developing it to its full potential including areas dedicated for a creative garden, imaginative garden, physical garden, sensory garden, cosy garden and digging garden. Children enjoying hunting for bugs and snails, finding ladybirds and bird spotting which they later draw and create from craft items. They collect rain water comparing how much it has rained with how much they collect and explore sounds using hanging sound-makers in the trees and hanging on fences. Children become aware of the world around them developing excellent personal safety awareness through activities such as the annual 'beep beep' road safety awareness day and activities, and through reviewing trips in the community where they wear high-visibility jackets later discussing what purpose they serve. All children explore a new 'sign' and language game every week which contributes to excellent development of communication skills for the youngest to the oldest children attending. Older children enjoy singing to residents of a nearby residential home which helps them to develop confidence and be aware of the wider society around them. Children take part in raising funds and completing charity works with large displays showing the targets and what they have achieved. Current charities are BLISS (premature babies) and Build a School for Africa, as well as care boxes being compiled for Romania. These actions help children to be aware of the wider world, the needs of others and begin working together to care for other people. This is a highly stimulating environment with exceptional organisation providing rich, varied and imaginative experiences that meet the needs of children exceedingly well resulting in outstanding outcomes.

Annex A: record of inspection judgements

The key inspection judgements and what they mean

Grade 1 is Outstanding: this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality
Grade 2 is Good: this aspect of the provision is strong
Grade 3 is Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound
Grade 4 is Inadequate: this aspect of the provision is not good enough

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

How well does the setting meet the needs of the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?	1
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	1

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

How effectively is the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	1
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	1
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	1
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding	1
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	1
The effectiveness of partnerships	2
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	1

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

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Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	1
The extent to which children feel safe	1
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	1
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	1

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Annex B: the Childcare Register

The provider confirms that the requirements of the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are: Met

The provider confirms that the requirements of the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are: Met