



Office for Standards  
in Education

## COMBINED INSPECTION REPORT

URN 146741

DfES Number: 582289

### INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date 05/01/2004  
Inspector Name Margaret Coyne

### SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type Full Day Care  
Setting Name Highbury Lodge Day Nursery  
Setting Address 11 Highbury Road  
Hitchin  
Hertfordshire  
SG4 9RW

### REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name Child Base Ltd. 2418535

### ORGANISATION DETAILS

Name Child Base Ltd.  
Address Kingston House  
Northampton Road  
Newport Pagnell  
Buckinghamshire  
MK16 8NJ

## ABOUT THE INSPECTION

The purpose of this inspection is to assure government, parents and the public of the quality and standard of day care in accordance with the National Standards for Under Eights Day Care and Childminding; and that the nursery education for funded three and four year old children is of an acceptable quality. Inspection of nursery education also identifies strengths and weaknesses so that providers can improve the quality of educational provision and help children to achieve the early learning goals (elgs) by the end of the Foundation Stage. This inspection report must be made available to all parents.

If the setting has been inspected previously, an action plan will have been drawn up to tackle issues identified. This inspection, therefore, must also assess what progress has been made in the implementation of this plan.

### Information about the setting

Highbury Lodge Day Nursery opened four years ago. The nursery is part of the Child Base national chain of nursery schools and is situated in a quiet residential area close to the town centre in Hitchin. The nursery operates on three floors with different ages of children on each level. There is a separate kitchen and the nursery has a large enclosed outdoor area. The group serves the local community and surrounding areas.

There are currently 74 children from 6 weeks to 5 years on roll. This includes 2 funded three year olds and 1 funded four year old. The group has systems in place to support children with special needs and those who speak English as a second language.

The nursery is open five days a week all year round with the exception of bank holidays, from 8.00 until 18.00. There are plans to place for these hours to be extended to 7.30 until 18.30. Children attend for a variety of sessions.

There are 19 members of staff working in the pre-school, of which 1 is part time. Over half the staff have an early years qualification to NVQ level two or three and NNEB. There is 1 member of staff currently working towards a recognised early years qualification.

The nursery receives support from the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership and teaching support is provided through the Child Base Company educational co-ordinator.

### How good is the Day Care?

Highbury Lodge Day Nursery provides a good standard of care for children.

All aspects of the provision are well organised and staff are deployed effectively throughout the nursery. Staff have high regard to the policies and procedures that they implement consistently. They have introduced the Sound Foundation approach

to learning which has a positive impact in all aspects of the children's learning and play.

High priority is given to children's safety. All records and documentation are well organised and of a high standard.

There are effective key worker systems throughout the nursery these enable staff to establish supportive relationships with children and parents. This is particularly effective in the baby room where there is a consistent staff team working directly with the children. In all areas staff plan a stimulating range of activities which the children happily take part in. They play confidently, independently and with support.

There is a wide range and balance of stimulating and challenging toys and equipment for children to access. The role play areas are changed regularly to provide children with a range of resources to stimulate their imaginations. Good use is made of the garden and the children have a range of outdoor equipment and areas to choose from. However, care must be taken with regard to one area of maintenance in the building. This is an area which has been recognised and is being addressed.

Meals at the nursery are of high quality. The menu is varied and nutritious with a choice for those who require it. Children are well behaved and respond positively to direction from staff.

The nursery has developed a supportive partnership with parents and carers. They are kept informed of their child's progress through daily communication sheets and wipe boards and have access to their child's records at open evenings or by request. Staff are approachable and friendly, sharing information verbally with parents.

#### **What has improved since the last inspection?**

At the last inspection the provider agreed to ensure that staff ratio's are met at lunch times; to ensure a record of visitors and an effective system for managing visitors is in place; to ensure staff are kept up to date with good hygiene practice and children's use of face clothes is addressed, and to ensure parents have information regarding the complaints procedure.

Arrangements to ensure staff ratio's are correct with regard to lunch times have been addressed and the nursery ensures suitable staff are with the children at all times.

A visitors book is in place and all visitors to the nursery must sign in and out and wear a visitors badge.

Staff are kept up to date with health and safety good practice and ensure the children use individual face clothes.

A complaints procedure is included in the prospectus and full details are displayed on the parents notice board.

### **What is being done well?**

- The management of the day nursery, with effective use of the policies and procedures and staff deployment to ensure children have a consistent approach to their care.
- The range of interesting and stimulating activities, particularly in the role play, sensory areas and garden, with the use of treasure baskets and heuristic play for younger children. Children are involved and can access all activities both independently and with a high level of support from staff.
- Children relate well to each other and staff. They play happily alone or in small groups. Most children are confident and their feelings of security are well fostered by staff. Staff respond well to children's interests, give praise and encouragement at all times and are very attentive towards the children.
- The staff display the children's creative work well, through wall displays with good use of labelling and photographs. Some work is displayed at the children's level which gives the children a sense of pride and self-esteem for their achievements.
- The creation of family books for each child which enable them to look at photographs of their family and share these with friends and staff thus developing a sense of identity and security. These are hung at the children's height so they can access them at any time.

### **What needs to be improved?**

- One area of maintenance with regard to a damp patch in the cot room. Staff have identified this problem and it is being addressed by the nursery.

### **Outcome of the inspection**

Good

### **CONDITIONS OF REGISTRATION**

*All registered persons must comply with all conditions of registration included on his/her certificate of registration.*

*As a result of this inspection conditions of registration have been imposed / varied / removed and a new certificate of registration will be issued.*

### **WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE NEXT?**

**The Registered Person should have regard to the following recommendations by the time of the next inspection**

Std	Recommendation
4	Ensure the premises are well maintained with regard to a damp patch in the cot room.

## INSPECTION OF THE NURSERY EDUCATION PROVISION FOR FUNDED THREE AND FOUR YEAR OLDS.

### How effective is the nursery education?

The provision for nursery education at Highbury Lodge Day Nursery is of high quality. Children are making very good progress towards the early learning goals.

Teaching is very good. Staff have a sound knowledge of the Foundation Stage and use effective direction for children to encourage them to think for themselves and be self-motivated. The staff work directly with the children and provide structured learning opportunities and support. There is an excellent range of resources available to provide children with exciting, stimulating and challenging opportunities to learn. Staff should ensure children have opportunity to take part in complete story sessions. Children are well behaved and staff have high expectations for good manners and self control.

A thorough assessment system is used to record children's progress through the stepping-stones. Assessments are used to set future planning and targets for children. Comprehensive plans are in place that cover all areas of the early learning goals. These are evaluated to ensure they meet the educational needs of the children. There are good systems in place to provide support for children with special educational needs and those who speak English as a second language.

Leadership and management is very good. The nursery benefits from a strong and enthusiastic manager who works closely with a dedicated team of staff. Staff are supportive of each other and work very well together in providing a good learning environment for children. Systems are in place to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the practice.

Partnerships with parents and carers are very good. Parents are welcomed into the group and are provided with information both verbal and written. Parents have access to children's development and achievement records and are encouraged to extend learning at home. They attend open evenings and are encouraged to be involved in all aspects of their child's learning.

### What is being done well?

- Children's personal, social and emotional development is given high priority which enables children to gain in confidence and fosters feelings of security. Staff display children's work well and accompany displays with photographs of the children in different stages of their work. This develops their self-esteem and confidence. Staff interact extremely well with children giving them opportunity to become self-motivated, responsible and independent learners.
- Use of resources and space is excellent. High quality equipment and toys are in place to promote learning and challenge the children in all areas. The use of the role play areas is good. Staff adapt these to provide different life

experiences for the children such as restaurants, and home rooms.

- Children are confident speakers and listeners, staff develop children's confidence to speak as part of the group and in smaller peer groups. Children take turns to talk and interact well developing good conversation skills. They listen well to others, concentrate and become involved in story board sessions and when taking part in large group activities.
- Children make good use of labels around the room. They recognise that print carries meaning and can read their own name cards and named place mats.
- Children use mathematical equipment confidently. Staff support children in activities allowing them opportunities to develop and discover some mathematical knowledge for themselves. Staff provide a high level of support and children can confidently use simple calculation and recognise, count and write numbers.

#### **What needs to be improved?**

- Planning for large group story times to ensure children have sufficient opportunity to take part in the entire activity.

#### **What has improved since the last inspection?**

The nursery has made very good progress since the last inspection. Staff ensure children develop their participation and questioning skills. They introduce simple problem solving through everyday activities and provide adequate resources to promote this in structured learning both in large and individual sessions. Children are provided with a range of resources to choose and to develop their own ideas both in free play and structured activities. A selection of natural and man made resources is available at all times for children to select and initiate their own ideas.

## SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

### PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Most children are secure and confident in their surroundings and have formed good relationships with staff and other children. They make independent choices and move freely around the rooms. Their self esteem is well fostered by staff. They are proud of their work and keen to show it and discuss it with visitors. Children's behaviour is good. They have a good understanding of right and wrong and play well together. Staff ensure children have opportunities to think and act for themselves.

### COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement: Very Good

Children's speaking and listening skills are good. They enjoy stories and songs and interact well at these times. Children's reading and writing skills are developing well they recognise words from labels and name cards around the room. Staff support children well, introducing new words that children include in their speech when carrying on conversations in small groups. Children use one handed equipment well and show increasing control when making marks or writing their name on their work.

### MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children use numbers for counting and some children can count to ten and beyond. They access a range of equipment to compare size, shapes and weight and understand simple calculation through structured and everyday activities. Staff introduce children to a wide range of mathematical language both in planned and everyday activities i.e. small, large, heavy, light, longer, shorter. Children have a good understanding of shape and could demonstrate shapes that represent parts of the body.

### KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement: Very Good

Children's understanding about the natural world is well fostered by staff who introduce children to topics about living things. They examine large snails and discuss how they move, grow and eat. This activity is extended with a hunt for insects in the garden. Children use various programmes on the computer and can use the mouse well when creating on screen pictures. Staff successfully introduce children to different cultures and beliefs through a range of interesting topics and festivals.

### **PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT**

Judgement: Very Good

Children use a range of equipment outside which develops their large motor skills. They confidently climb and balance on logs and tyres. Children enthusiastically take part in mini gym sessions. Children's dexterity is developed well. They have good hand and eye coordination and successfully thread cards, nuts and bolts, complete jigsaws and manipulate one handed tools. Children learn about how their bodies change when they are tired and discuss about keeping healthy by washing their hands.

### **CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT**

Judgement: Very Good

Children imitate life experiences in role-play with the use of familiar situations. They use facial and body expressions to indicate feelings. Staff encourage children to develop their own ideas and support their play well. Children respond well to the sensory experiences with touch, smell and listening. They take part in music sessions and use musical instruments. Children use free expression to create using a range of colour, textures and techniques and their work is well displayed.

**Children's spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development is fostered appropriately.**

## **OUTCOME OF THE INSPECTION**

The provision is acceptable and is of high quality. Children are making very good progress towards the early learning goals. The next inspection will take place in three to four years time.

## **WHAT THE SETTING NEEDS TO DO NEXT**

*There are no significant weaknesses to report, but considerations should be given to improving the following:*

- There are no significant weaknesses to report, but consideration should be given to improving the following: Large group story board sessions to ensure children have sufficient opportunity to take part in the entire activity.

*The provider must draw up an action plan within 40 working days of receipt of this report showing how the key issues detailed above will be addressed. The action plan must be made available to all parents and to the Local Authority if required. An evaluation of the action taken will form part of the next inspection of funded nursery education.*

## **SUMMARY OF NATIONAL STANDARDS**

### **STANDARD 1 - SUITABLE PERSON**

*Adults providing day care, looking after children or having unsupervised access to them are suitable to do so.*

### **STANDARD 2 - ORGANISATION**

*The registered person meets required adult: child ratios, ensures that training and qualifications requirements are met and organises space and resources to meet the children's needs effectively.*

### **STANDARD 3 - CARE, LEARNING AND PLAY**

*The registered person meets children's individual needs and promotes their welfare. They plan and provide activities and play opportunities to develop children's emotional, physical, social and intellectual capabilities.*

### **STANDARD 4 - PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT**

*The premises are safe, secure and suitable for their purpose. They provide adequate space in an appropriate location, are welcoming to children and offer access to the necessary facilities for a range of activities which promote their development.*

### **STANDARD 5 - EQUIPMENT**

*Furniture, equipment and toys are provided which are appropriate for their purpose and help to create an accessible and stimulating environment. They are of suitable design and condition, well maintained and conform to safety standards.*

### **STANDARD 6 - SAFETY**

*The registered person takes positive steps to promote safety within the setting and on outings and ensures proper precautions are taken to prevent accidents.*

### **STANDARD 7 - HEALTH**

*The registered person promotes the good health of children and takes positive steps to prevent the spread of infection and appropriate measures when they are ill.*

### **STANDARD 8 - FOOD AND DRINK**

*Children are provided with regular drinks and food in adequate quantities for their needs. Food and drink is properly prepared, nutritious and complies with dietary and religious requirements.*

### **STANDARD 9 - EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES**

*The registered person and staff actively promote equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice for all children.*

### **STANDARD 10 - SPECIAL NEEDS (INCLUDING SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITIES)**

*The registered person is aware that some children may have special needs and is*

*proactive in ensuring that appropriate action can be taken when such a child is identified or admitted to the provision. Steps are taken to promote the welfare and development of the child within the setting in partnership with the parents and other relevant parties.*

#### **STANDARD 11 - BEHAVIOUR**

*Adults caring for children in the provision are able to manage a wide range of children's behaviour in a way which promotes their welfare and development.*

#### **STANDARD 12 - WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS AND CARERS**

*The registered person and staff work in partnership with parents and to meet the needs of the children, both individually and as a group. Information is shared.*

#### **STANDARD 13 - CHILD PROTECTION**

*The registered person complies with local child protection procedures approved by the Area Child Protection Committee and ensures that all adults working and looking after children in the provision are able to put the procedures into practice.*

#### **STANDARD 14 - DOCUMENTATION**

*Records, policies and procedures which are required for the efficient and safe management of the provision, or to promote the welfare, care and learning of children are maintained. Records about individual children are shared with the child's parent.*