

Holmwood Nursery Ltd

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspection date

24/05/2011

Inspector

Jan Leo

Setting address

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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

Holmwood Nursery registered as a limited company in 2008 though it has been running as a nursery since 1985. This privately owned nursery is located in converted residential accommodation in the Boar's Hill area of Oxford. There are extensive woodland gardens for outdoor play. The intake of children is from a wide catchment area of approximately 20 miles.

The nursery is registered on the Early Years Register and both the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. It operates term time only and opens on weekdays from 8.00am until 3.30pm on Mondays, Wednesdays and Thursdays, and from 8.00am until 1.00pm on Tuesdays and Fridays. A maximum of 26 children from two to under eight years may attend at any one time and all may be in the early years age group. There are currently 37 children on roll in the early years age group and of these, 29 children receive funding for free early education. The nursery offers support to children who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities, and children who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery employs eight members of staff to work directly with the children and of these, seven have appropriate early years qualifications at level 2 or above. Some staff are currently training to increase their level of qualification. The setting welcomes parent helpers and uses occasional support staff for specific tasks.

The nursery receives support from the local authority.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is outstanding.

The nursery is extremely effective, fostering inclusion and individualism while making sure children have fun. Exceptionally robust partnerships are in place with children's parents and other carers to help children reach their full potential. The use of resources is inspiring and consequently the children learn effortlessly, developing a strong sense of community and the skills they need for the future. All aspects of health and safety are addressed thoroughly to protect children from harm without impeding their enjoyment or development. The staff are highly skilled in evaluating the service and implementing changes to ensure they continue to meet the needs of their patrons. All policies and procedures are effective in supporting this excellent facility but some policies are very detailed making them a little unwieldy.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- improving the two-way flow of information with parents by making the policies more succinct and user friendly.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The staff have a very secure understanding of child protection procedures having completed safeguarding training and benefitting from regular reviews of policies to remain familiar with the process. They work exceptionally well as a team and supervise children diligently to allow increased challenges within a safe environment. All know when to offer help and when to hold back in order to avoid hampering enthusiasm and reducing children's confidence. Staff have a well developed system for assessing risks, making good use of daily checklists and safety reviews to identify hazards and monitor progress on any agreed action. Children learn how to play safely throughout the day, developing good habits from an early age. For example, the staff teach the children how to climb trees safely and how to consider others when cycling in the garden. All children know what staff expect and behaviour is exemplary.

The staff form extremely strong relationships with both parents and children's other carers, to get to know the children well. This helps staff create individual development plans based on children's interests and skills to aid their progress. Home visits, the nursery website and consultation opportunities help supplement verbal feedback with parents and the staff actively work on relationships to create a true partnership of care. For example, they make appointments to talk with children's other carers, invite parents in to share their skills and celebrate the diversity within the group to make sure that everyone's feels valued and their feedback counts. Family culture is celebrated by, for example, making an "around the world" book which includes entries from Japan, Germany and Italy in collaboration with parents and staff who have family ties to such places. The staff support children with additional needs very effectively by learning some words in their home language, devising innovative ways of adapting equipment to promote mobility and reinforcing the strong key person system with individual support whenever necessary. As a result, all children are completely integrated and feel very safe.

All children thrive due to the freedom they have to explore both indoor and outdoor learning at their own level. The staff work very closely and form a strong team, keeping all aspects of the setting under constant review to make sure standards remain high. They update supporting documentation on a rolling programme to keep it up to date and continue their own development to raise their skills further. All of the necessary paperwork is in place and policies and procedures are very detailed to clarify why and how things are done. However, this makes some documentation very lengthy and less usable.

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

The children thoroughly enjoy their day, arriving happily and choosing what to do and where to play. Outdoor learning is constantly on offer with stimulating activities to suit all ages. Some cycle round on a tricycle, happy with their own company while others join with friends to build a circuit for the toy cars. The children make very good use of all that is on offer, using some resources for their intended purpose and adapting others to suit their own ideas. For example, one used a fir cone as a telephone, showing a good imagination and adaptability.

The children move around sociably, mixing with different groups of friends and chatting fluently about what they do. Some fill their watering cans and carefully cross the path to water the plants they grow. The children show different levels of control over their movements and some manage without spilling a drop. The staff ask some if they wish to stand on a step in order to reach more easily, letting the children decide for themselves in order to control their own challenges. The children benefit from activities in the garden, the orchard and the nearby "bluebell wood". They learn to recognise different trees and bird calls, make dens out of branches and twigs and play on a rope swing under the shade of a huge tree, developing an appreciation of the natural world and outdoor play.

Some activities are adult led in order to prepare children for the transition into school. The children make their own number line using items from the garden, and create their own books to develop pride in their nursery. As a result learning is meaningful and the children develop a very caring attitude. They are responsible children, eagerly helping to pack away, and they show concern for others by sharing and taking turns fairly. The children know what is expected of them and willingly comply to make best use of their day.

The children are routinely given choices to help them feel respected. For example, one was asked if she wanted to show the guinea pigs to a visitor or continue playing in the sand. She thought for a moment before deciding and confidently giving her answer, speaking clearly to ensure she was easily understood.

All learning is fun to inspire participation. Some thoroughly enjoy searching for toy snakes in a home made landscape while an adult reinforces mathematical terms, such as "behind" and "under" to suggest where to look. The children discuss the colour of the snakes, compare the length and thickness of them and try to work out how many more are still missing in order to provide different levels of challenge to all who join in.

The staff observe what children do and routinely link observations with progress records in order to plan for children's next steps. The aims are clear and all staff help the key person to promote children's development in order to maximise the value of their play and make good use of unexpected learning opportunities.

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

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	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	1
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	1
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	1

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
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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