

Dandelions

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	EY252728
Inspection date	12/04/2011
Inspector	Penny Wood

Setting address	Monxton Road, Andover, Hampshire, SP11 8HT
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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

Dandelions Nursery opened in 2003 and is managed by Bright Horizons Family Solutions Limited. It operates from a self-contained, purpose-built building on the Headquarters Land Forces site in Andover, Hampshire. There are three playrooms and a large, fully enclosed outdoor area. The nursery serves military families and the staff who work at the camp.

The nursery opens five days a week all year round, with the exception of one week at Christmas. Children may attend all day between 8.00am and 6.00pm, or for a variety of shorter sessions. The nursery is registered to care for a maximum of 40 children under eight years old at any one time, all of whom may be in the early years age group. There are currently 64 children on roll aged between 10 months and four years old. The nursery is in receipt of funding for the provision of free early education for three- and four-year-olds. The nursery currently supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and children for whom English is an additional language.

The nursery employs 15 staff to work with the children. Of these, 14 hold a suitable childcare qualification. The nursery is registered on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children enjoy a wide variety of activities in the excellent purpose-built premises. Generally, children are making very good progress within their learning and development. Excellent strategies are in place, such as very strong partnerships with parents and other providers that children attend, which enable staff to meet children's individual needs. Staff adopt a positive attitude towards including all children within the setting. Management have extremely thorough systems to evaluate their provision and are making excellent progress in promoting continuous improvement.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To further improve the early years provision the registered person should:

- extend the learning of all children through the use of questions, discussion and further investigation
- improve the organisation of daily routines by, for example, engaging children in meaningful activities following the lunch period.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children are safeguarded well because there are thorough systems in place to promote their wellbeing. Very good systems ensure staff are suitable to work with children. Staff and management are confident in their knowledge of the child protection policy and procedures. Generally, children are supervised well, although staff do not always engage them in purposeful activities after the lunch period. The premises are thoroughly risk assessed to ensure they remain safe, and prompt action is taken to reduce hazards. Staff undertake monthly practices of the emergency evacuation procedure, to ensure the systems are highly effective and staff are knowledgeable about the action to take.

Excellent systems are in place to promote children's good health. Toys and resources are regularly cleaned and sterilised. Staff adopt very good procedures when changing nappies, and they consistently use anti-bacterial gel on their hands, which reduces the spread of germs and infections. Excellent strategies are in place to support children with allergies and specific dietary needs. Staff are well trained and knowledgeable on how to manage children's individual medical needs. Very good strategies are in place to support children with additional needs, such as working in partnership with external support agencies. Excellent relationships are fostered with other settings that children attend, such as childminders and pre-schools, which enable staff to fully support those children. Regular contact takes place, enabling staff to share vital information about children's development and their achievements. Excellent strategies are in place to aid children's transitions to school.

Staff value the strong partnerships fostered with parents. Exceptional levels of information are displayed throughout the nursery relating to the provision of activities, how children learn and general notices. Excellent provision is made to ensure parents have access to records of children's learning journeys and to encourage them to play an active role in children's learning and development. The nursery promotes an open-door policy and welcomes parents to stay and observe their children at play. Staff recognise that some children have parents on active service and enable children to keep in contact via email and by sending parents copies of their pictures. Parents comment that staff are exceptionally supportive and highly flexible to ensure children's individual needs are met. The nursery has a parent-support group, which plays an active role in the setting.

Children benefit from the excellent premises, and staff use their resources exceptionally well, particularly the outdoor area. The toys and equipment are vibrant and highly accessible to all ages. Staff generally deploy themselves well, particularly in the baby and toddler rooms. Management have in-depth and comprehensive systems in place to evaluate their provision and to embed ambition and to drive improvement. Staff are encouraged to undertake ongoing professional development in order to promote expert practice. Staff are highly valued, with exceptional procedures in place to recognise their strengths and achievements.

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

Children clearly feel confident and at ease in the nursery environment. Staff are reassuring and use gentle voices when speaking to the children. A wide and varied range of activities is provided throughout the nursery. Children in the pre-school and toddler rooms enjoy the freedom to engage in activities both inside and out as they wish, with the outdoor area promoted as an extension to the indoor learning environment. Staff in the baby room ensure the youngest children benefit from the outdoor area on a daily basis. Effective strategies are in place to ensure children make good progress in their learning and development. However, not all staff consistently use discussion and skilled questioning techniques to fully explore activities in order to maximise children's learning. Effective systems are in place to observe and monitor children's progress, and information gained is used to plan for children's next steps. Emphasis is given to following children's interests, which ensures that most of the time children are fully engaged in activities.

Staff in the baby room are highly attentive, and, as a result, children are settled and at ease when exploring the environment and engaging in activities. In the toddler room, staff ensure the environment is highly accessible and encourage children to gain independence. Throughout the nursery, children experience good opportunities to make their own choices from the accessible resources. Pre-school children enjoy very good opportunities to link sounds and letters. For example, staff encourage children to identify names beginning with particular letters. Children's understanding of number is encouraged from an early age. For example, toddlers count how many children are sitting at the table at snack time and how many plates are required. Children enjoy participating in group activities, such as reading stories and taking part in singing. Staff ensure all children are able to participate in activities, and encourage others to make room for more children to join the group. Children play an active role in activities, such as making dough. They measure ingredients, mix them together and enjoy playing with the end result. Children experience good opportunities to make marks, with the older children confident to try to write their names on their pictures. Throughout the nursery, all children benefit from high levels of praise and encouragement, which boosts their confidence and self-esteem.

Children benefit from excellent opportunities to develop an awareness of safety. For example, they enjoy visits from the police and from animal charities, who talk to the children about how to be safe when crossing the road and how to be safe around animals. Toddlers are gently reminded of how to sit properly on their chairs so they do not fall off. While they play, staff talk to children about being careful, particularly when building towers, so they don't knock each other as the magnet tower falls down. Generally, children play well together; they take turns and welcome others to join in with their play and activities. Very good strategies are in place to encourage children to learn about cultures that are different to their own. They celebrate a good range of cultural festivals, many of which are relevant to the children within the nursery. Children access a varied range of resources that depict positive images of race, culture and disability, and which encourage them to gain an awareness of diversity through their play.

Excellent strategies are in place to encourage children to adopt healthy habits. For example, all children are reminded to wear hats when playing outside in order to protect themselves from the sun. Children follow exemplary hygiene routines, which are supported by the excellent hand-washing facilities. Children benefit from excellent opportunities to be physically active. The vast outdoor play area enables children to develop their physical skills. For example, the older children enjoy opportunities to play on the climbing frame and the babies are able to pull themselves up and cruise around the straw bales. Children enjoy an excellent range of healthy and nutritious snacks and meals. They clearly enjoy the food that is provided, with clean plates observed throughout the nursery. Staff encourage children to be independent by serving themselves and pouring their own water or milk to drink.

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?	2
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	2

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
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	2
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	2
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Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	2
The extent to which children feel safe	2
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	2
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	2

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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