

Woodlands Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	160975
Inspection date	09/05/2011
Inspector	Jill Nugent

Setting address	1-3 Orchard Road, Barnet, Hertfordshire, EN5 2HL
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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

The nursery registered in 2001. It is one of a collection of nurseries run by the company Child Base and operates from two converted houses in Barnet. Access to the building is at ground level via a sloping footpath from the roadway. Children have the use of playrooms on the ground floor and first floor. Older children are based downstairs and younger children upstairs. Access to the upstairs rooms is via two alternative internal staircases. There is a secure garden for outdoor play. The nursery is open every weekday from 8.00am until 6.00pm all year round.

The provision is registered on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. A maximum of 60 children under eight years may attend the setting at any one time, of these, not more than 40 may be under 2 years at any one time and of these not more than 24 may be under 1 year at any one time. Currently there are 100 children on roll, all of whom are in the early years age group. The nursery supports children with special educational needs and/or difficulties and those who speak English as an additional language. The setting is in receipt of funding for the provision of free early years education. The nursery currently employs 29 staff to work with the children. The majority of staff, including the manager, are suitably qualified and several are working towards a relevant early years qualification.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is outstanding.

The nursery offers an extremely welcoming and inclusive provision for children and their families. Children's well-being is prioritised by staff who ensure that all children keep safe and healthy in their care. Children explore enthusiastically in a stimulating and enabling environment, making significant progress in all learning areas. There is an excellent partnership with parents which actively encourages them to be involved in their children's learning. The manager leads staff in an ongoing process of reflection and evaluation resulting in a strong commitment to continually improving the outcomes for all 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:

- exploring ways to establish working partnerships with other professionals and providers.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The setting's documentation is very well organised and includes effective procedures to promote the safeguarding of all children. Detailed risk assessments of the premises and activities are carried out in order to minimise risks to children. Staff are regularly updated about safety issues and the safety checklists are well-maintained. There are very good procedures in place relating to child protection and all staff are made fully aware of their responsibilities in this area. Parents are asked to provide information about children's health and medical backgrounds so that care plans can be put in place. All staff are trained in first aid so that children are treated appropriately, and in good time, following any accidents. The nursery displays notices around the premises to remind parents about keeping children safe as they come and go.

There is a vibrant atmosphere within the setting and children benefit greatly from opportunities to become involved in a wide range of play situations. The environment is wholly child-centred and encourages children to move around selecting from an array of activities, suitable for children of differing ages and abilities. Staff are deployed very effectively around the rooms, and the outdoor areas, and spend their time with the children, supporting and interacting in their freely chosen play. The physical environment is enriched with pictures, words and numbers which motivate both staff and children to talk and work together. Staff are excellent role models for children, encouraging good relationships through their calm approach. A wide selection of resources reflecting diversity is available to children so that they learn about differing needs in a wider world. Staff make very good use of key worker group times throughout the day to involve children in discussion, mind mapping and focused activities.

Parents receive useful information about the nursery's provision and copies of the key policies, particularly those relating to safeguarding. Staff develop close relationships with parents, making available the daily plans on whiteboards, exchanging information in conversation and encouraging them to contribute their comments to children's observation records. Parents are invited to 'stay and play' sessions and workshops to find out more about how young children learn. They are also encouraged to find out about early years childcare through numerous photographic displays and a lending library. The nursery manager is proactive in encouraging parents to offer their views on any planned changes and taking these into account, for example, in the recent refurbishment of the garden area and restructuring of the downstairs play rooms. Parents are fully involved at transitional times, for instance, when children move from one room to another, so that children are not adversely affected by any changes.

The nursery has exceptional systems in place to encourage self-evaluation. The manager leads her staff team in much discussion, review and planning to promote new ideas and changes which are of benefit to all children. Staff's practice is regularly evaluated, and reviewed, and action plans are drawn up to further develop and improve their practice. Staff are well supported in their professional development through internally organised training events and also access to local

authority training courses. For example, the special needs coordinator has recently attended training in order to develop her role. She works closely with other professionals to ensure children with special needs receive extra support when necessary. The nursery manager meets with other professionals within the company in order to share best practice. She is keen to establish links with other childcare professionals and providers in the local area. Regular audits of the nursery's provision are carried out and these contribute effectively to a successful system of monitoring and evaluation, leading to relevant target setting for the future.

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

Children delight in the wonderful opportunities to explore and discover, both indoors and outdoors. Older children especially enjoy the freedom to move around the playrooms and garden following up their interests, either individually or in groups. Younger children are brought downstairs at intervals throughout the day so that they too can enjoy the facilities in the garden. Staff are sensitive in their interaction with children, knowing when to observe or intervene. They are adept at perceiving children's needs and engaging them in conversation to enhance each learning experience. Children become happily engaged in a variety of activities, for example, mark-making, 'fishing', building and climbing. They enjoy close friendships and often devise imaginary situations with others, developing their communication skills in role play. They gain confidence as they are affirmed in their choices by staff, who are exceptionally good at talking with children to explain, question and challenge. In particular children relish the opportunity to play outdoors. They become involved in physical activity, such as balancing on obstacle courses or making mixes of sand, water and soil. They find out about natural materials, such as leaves and flowers, when collecting bits for their imaginative games.

Children are well aware of their boundaries within the setting and learn to respect others in the group. Staff remind them about the rules when necessary and help children to negotiate if involved in a dispute. Very young children are extremely content in comfortable playrooms. They enjoy the company of staff as they explore toys and materials, for example, having fun mixing colours with their hands in paint. Children feel safe and secure in the setting as they are always well supervised. They learn to risk assess for themselves as they play confidently in a safe environment. For instance, children climb and sit on a tyre stack, reassured that they are able to climb down again when ready or make adjustments to an obstacle course, aware that they are able to experiment without getting hurt. Staff keep a close eye on children, encouraging them to challenge themselves but always ensuring they do so safely. Children feel valued as staff respond quickly to their requests and needs. Very young children are supported in their individual routines so that they develop a sense of belonging. Children have an increasing awareness of the importance of healthy lifestyles as they enjoy nutritious, well-balanced meals and plenty of fresh air. They are encouraged to be independent in making their own choices and accessing drinks and food for themselves.

Children show an excellent attitude towards learning and persist in self-chosen tasks. Staff regularly observe children and use their written observations, and photographs, to create attractive visual records of each child's progress in developmental files. Staff are particularly efficient in charting children's progress, according to the developmental stages of the Early Years Foundation Stage, and working out children's next steps of learning. These are incorporated effectively into the future plans, alongside children's noted interests, so that the planned play environment meets the needs of all children. There is a consistent approach across the whole nursery so that children receive support relevant to their individual needs as they progress through each room. As a result children acquire a range of useful skills for the future, for example, in the areas of literacy, numeracy and IT. Children learn about letters and sounds of the alphabet, they learn to write for a purpose, to compare and solve problems. They enjoy trips to the park, library and shops where they find out more about the local environment and learn about team working. Overall children's care and learning needs are catered for extremely well through the provision of an enriching experience for all children in the nursery.

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	2
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