

# Saplings Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

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**Unique reference number** EY347502  
**Inspection date** 25/07/2011  
**Inspector** Mrs Clementina Ogunsanwo

**Setting address** Pledgdon Close, Henham, BISHOPS STORTFORD,  
Hertfordshire, CM22 6BJ

**Telephone number** 01279 505244

**Email** [saplingsnursery@aol.com](mailto:saplingsnursery@aol.com)

**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**

Saplings Nursery registered in 2007, having re-located from their previous premises. It operates from a house in the village of Henham, near to Bishops Stortford. A maximum of 54 children may attend the nursery at any one time. The setting is open each weekday from 7.30am until 6.30pm all year round.

There are currently 88 children on roll. Of these, 30 receive early education funding. Children come from the local and wider community. A bus service is provided for those families who require it. The nursery currently supports a small number of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. It also has effective strategies in place to support children who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery employs 23 staff. Nineteen of the staff, including the manager, hold an appropriate early years qualification and one member of staff holds qualified teacher status. There are currently two unqualified members and two support staff.

The nursery is supported by the Local Authority, the Pre-School Learning Alliance and the Area Special Needs Coordinator.

## **The overall effectiveness of the early years provision**

Overall the quality of the provision is outstanding.

Children are safe and are making outstanding progress as a result of the high standards of care and education in the nursery. Staff make effective use of the information of children's starting points to plan the next step for the children's learning, which help them to make rapid progress. Staff keeps parents regularly informed about what their children are learning and their progress.

All the paperwork required for the effective care of the children is regularly updated and used for their daily care. Notably, the systems for conducting risk assessments have improved in response to the recommendations from the previous inspection. Parents feel that their children are well cared for and are helped to make excellent progress. The nursery has completed an accurate self-evaluation of the nursery's practice. The active commitment to improvement is evident in the outstanding quality of provision which has been sustained since the previous inspection.

## **What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?**

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

- extending the range of opportunities children have to develop awareness of cultures other than their own.

## **The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision**

Children are effectively safeguarded because of rigorous systems for active promotion of the welfare and safety of the children. A clear and comprehensive safeguarding policy is implemented well in the day-to-day care of the children. All staff take collective responsibility for keeping the children safe and have a secure knowledge of steps to safeguard the children at all times. They have undertaken the relevant safeguarding training and are fully aware of their responsibilities to refer any concerns they have about children's welfare to the relevant safeguarding authority. Children are cared for in a safe and secure environment. A detailed risk assessment is regularly carried out and daily checks are conducted to ensure that the environment is safe for the children. All policies are well maintained and accessible. The required records of the personal care and health needs of the children, such as personal care routines and administration of medication, when required, are regularly updated. Similarly, an accurate record of children's hours of attendance and departure is maintained.

The resources and activities are clean, well maintained and are used effectively for promoting the care and the learning of the children. For example, the soft, comfortable and attractive toys and resources that are age appropriate enable them to independently explore and learn through play. Staff make good use of the available resources to stimulate the children. Clearly labelled resources in well-arranged low level shelves facilitate the children's informed choice of activities and resources.

Staffs positive action to address identified variations in the achievements of boys and girls assists staff in active promotion of equality of opportunity. Purposeful exploration of different cultural outfits is increasing along with children's awareness of diverse cultures. However, this could be further developed. Parents hold the work of the school in high regard. They share valuable background information on their children when the children start and their views and suggestions are acknowledged and acted upon. They actively take part in the wide range of the settings events and have raised funds for additional resources. Staff regularly inform parents about their children's progress through regular parents meetings. Well-organised transition systems, which include positive links and visits to the local primary schools, enable the children's smooth transition to their next stage of learning. The strong partnerships with external agencies for support and advice ensures that the needs of children with special educational needs and/or disabilities are met. Self-evaluation is accurate. Leaders and managers are actively committed to maintaining the quality of provision through purposeful collaboration with external childcare agencies. A detailed action plan outlines the specific points for sustaining improvement.

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

Children are happy and have fun as a result of the high standards of care and support. All the children, including the babies, toddlers and the preschool age children, enjoy and purposefully engage in the full range of activities provided. Both babies and toddlers are calm and have settled well into the familiar routines. Their close bond with adults is evident from their positive response to staffs reassurance and care. Staff place high priority on promoting the safety and care of the children and supervise them well during activities. The range of activities provided, such as cake making, extensive textural exploration with baked beans, corn flour and jelly, provide exciting sensorial experiences. Children interact well with each other during a range of lively game sessions, such as the outdoor skittle games to explore number operations. They take turns and cooperate well with each other and are developing positive early social skills. Behaviour is outstanding. Children's obvious enjoyment is evident as they observe the settings guinea pig chewing a piece of newspaper. Purposeful visits to the nearby farm for fruit picking sessions and visits from the zoo keeper, which provide opportunities to explore a range of animals, are enabling the children to develop knowledge of plant and animal features. Staff's positive interaction with the children during activities extends their play. For example, staffs active engagement facilitates children's imaginative use of language during role-play sessions, during which they make chocolate cake using wet soil.

Children engage in lively conversations with both adults and children, particularly during enjoyable lunchtimes. Their increasing level of independence is evident at well-organised mealtimes, during which the preschool children eat their meals independently whilst the toddlers require minimal adult support. Excellent hygiene procedures are in place to prevent the risk of infection. Children routinely wash their hands after play sessions and before meal times. Their health and well-being are promoted excellently through the provision of a healthy selection of fruits and vegetables and the consistent access to clean drinking water. Children's awareness of the benefits of an active lifestyle is further enhanced through energetic nature walks during which children safely climb trees. Purposeful opportunities to undertake daily helper roles and plant vegetables facilitate positive contribution opportunities. Valuable information sessions on road safety conducted by the road safety officer further contribute to children's increasing awareness of safety. Regular access to the outdoor environment supports children's active physical play sessions, during which they undertake a range of outdoor games and make imaginative use of a range of climbing and balancing outdoor equipment. Most of the preschool children can count accurately, explore the concept of number operations and write their names. This is developing their skills for the future.

## 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

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

### The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	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

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### Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

<b>Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	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