

Harlequin Childcare

The Old School House, 54 Downham Road, Ely, Cambridgeshire, CB6 2SH



Inspection date	27 May 2016
Previous inspection date	12 May 2011

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	Outstanding	1
	Previous inspection:	Outstanding	1
Effectiveness of the leadership and management		Outstanding	1
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment		Outstanding	1
Personal development, behaviour and welfare		Outstanding	1
Outcomes for children		Outstanding	1

Summary of key findings for parents

This provision is outstanding

- Leadership is inspirational. The proprietors and senior management team have a commitment and enthusiasm for their roles which is second to none. Their drive for improvement influences staff and together they strive to provide the very best care and learning opportunities for all children.
- The standard of teaching is consistently very high, but none more so than for older children, where staff demonstrate superb skills worthy of dissemination. This has an excellent impact on all children who are enthused by the learning opportunities, and subsequently, make rapid progress from their starting points.
- Babies benefit from a wonderful, rich and nurturing environment which has been carefully planned by highly skilled staff. Babies delight in a wide choice of natural toys and confidently practise their developing physical abilities and first words as they play happily with staff.
- An excellent culture of reflective practice is promoted throughout the nursery. The views of staff, parents and children are quickly developed into challenging actions plans for continual improvement to benefit all children attending.
- Parents express the highest of praise for the staff at the nursery. They recognise how they go to extraordinary lengths to meet children's and their family's needs, sometimes at very short notice. Due to this, children's well-being is assured and their learning and care needs surpassed.
- Links with outside professionals are embedded in practice, which contributes to excellent partnership working to benefit all children and families.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

To further improve the quality of the early years provision the provider should:

- continue to strengthen professional development opportunities for all staff to sustain and further develop their already exceptional abilities.

Inspection activities

- The inspector observed the quality of teaching during activities indoors and outdoors, and assessed the impact this has on children's learning.
- The inspector completed a joint observation with the nursery manager.
- The inspector held a meeting with the providers, the nursery manager and senior staff. She looked at relevant documentation, such as the nursery's self-evaluation and evidence of the suitability of staff working in the nursery.
- The inspector spoke to a small selection of parents during the inspection and took account of their views.

Inspector

Jacqueline Baker

Inspection findings

Effectiveness of the leadership and management is outstanding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Staff are knowledgeable about child protection matters and vigilant about children's health and safety as they play. Robust recruitment procedures are in place along with induction and regular supervisions to help maintain the high standards expected of all staff. Staff regularly update their training and even the newest staff members are well informed and confident in their roles. For example, staff working in the baby room talk knowledgeably about babies' care and learning needs, and the importance of stringent hygiene routines. Nevertheless, the management team recognises the need to strengthen staff's professional development even further. Highly effective monitoring procedures are in place to determine children's development. The manager knows children exceptionally well and gaps in children's progress or the educational programmes are swiftly identified and addressed.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is outstanding

Children thrive at the nursery. The learning environment is exceptionally well designed to encourage children to explore and find activities they can become deeply engrossed in. Children particularly appreciate the freedom to play and learn outside. Younger children learn to confidently toddle around independently, practising how to safely travel up and down slopes on the climbing frame and negotiate small steps. Children learn about capacity as they play with sand and readily count the number of spoonfuls needed to fill buckets and make sandcastles. Throughout the nursery children are busy and have a genuine desire to learn. Children eagerly share their ideas as they pretend to travel around the world on a train and make suggestions to solve problems when undertaking measuring activities. Parents are involved in children's learning from the beginning and undertake innovative activities, such as the 'Make a Den' challenge with their children at home. This too has a highly positive impact on children's overall development and attitude to learning.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare are outstanding

Children's well-being has the highest priority for staff. Settling-in procedures are excellent and give children plenty of time to become accustomed to their new environment and friends. Staff form exceptionally strong bonds with their key children which contributes well to all children's sense of security and contentment in the nursery. Equally when the time comes, children's moves from one room to another or ultimately to school, are handled with the utmost sensitivity to support children at a potentially stressful time. Behaviour is excellent. When necessary, staff use consistent reminders to support children's understanding of what is expected of them. As they play, children learn to consider their own and their friends' safety.

Outcomes for children are outstanding

Children progress exceptionally well at nursery. They communicate effectively with staff and friends and demonstrate all the characteristics of effective, independent learners. Children are happy, sociable and even the youngest are able to follow routines and listen carefully. In essence, they have excellent skills needed to support their future learning.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY275444
Local authority	Cambridgeshire
Inspection number	848601
Type of provision	Full-time provision
Day care type	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Registers	Early Years Register
Age range of children	0 - 5
Total number of places	78
Number of children on roll	112
Name of registered person	Harlequin Childcare Limited
Registered person unique reference number	RP521928
Date of previous inspection	12 May 2011
Telephone number	01353 661172

Harlequin Childcare was registered in 2004. The nursery employs 27 members of childcare staff. Of these, 23 hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 5 or level 3. The nursery opens from Monday to Friday all year round. Sessions are from 7.30am until 6.30pm. The nursery provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

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