

Monkey Puzzle Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number

EY434599

Inspection date

08/05/2012

Inspector

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Type of setting

Childcare - Non-Domestic

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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

Monkey Puzzle Day Nursery opened in 2011. It is situated next to the main line station near the centre of St Albans. It is a sister site to a nearby Monkey Puzzle nursery that is also owned and managed by the provider. The nursery is set on three floors of a large house with two separate outside play spaces.

The nursery is registered on the Early Years Register and the compulsory part of the Childcare Register. A maximum of 87 children may attend the nursery at any one time. There are currently 61 children on roll. The provider works as the manager at this site, she has a named deputy and third in charge. There are nine full-time members of staff and two part-time. All nine members of staff hold appropriate early years qualifications, and two members of staff are currently working towards a further qualification.

The nursery is open from 7am until 6.30pm Monday to Friday for 51 weeks of the year. Children may attend on a full-time or part-time basis. The nursery has effective systems in place to support children who speak English as an additional language and children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is outstanding.

The managers and staff team within this day nursery have an excellent knowledge and understanding of each child's individual needs through interaction, observation and excellent links with parents. This is a key strength and is significant in supporting children's outstanding progress in all areas of their learning and development. A detailed and inclusive quality assurance process enables the setting to monitor and evaluate the excellent provision, and to maintain continuous improvements. The excellent organisation of records, documentation and activities enables children of all ages and abilities to make excellent progress whilst having fun. Children's feelings of security and understanding of keeping themselves safe empower their confidence and independence, making them eager learners.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- developing further opportunities for children to experience growing and caring for living things.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Procedures for safeguarding children are excellent as all staff and students fully understand their responsibilities to protect children. They are familiar with the procedure to follow should they have any concerns. The setting has robust recruitment and vetting procedures in place and secure policies and procedures to monitor children's safety at all times. The day nursery is pro-active in seeking the views of all its users. All comments from staff, parents and children are valued and formulated into action plans. Regular reflection of practice, resources and activities enables the staff team to provide tailor made learning experiences for each child. Rigorous monitoring and evaluation of the nursery and rapid response to actions and ideas results in outstanding and sustainable improvements to the early years provision.

The nursery is highly committed to establishing effective working relationships. Parents are consulted regularly through communication books, newsletters, email, and open events. They are fully consulted and included in their child's progress. These close links with each child's home and family promotes a welcoming and fully inclusive environment. Parents are actively involved in their child's care and learning and are fully consulted in all aspects of the nursery. The managers and staff have established effective partnership working with local pre-schools and Children's Centres.

Equality and diversity are at the heart of this nursery. All members of staff know each child well and they bring a wealth of cultural knowledge and assorted languages into the nursery. This enables children and parents who speak English as an additional language, to feel included from the moment they enter this vibrant nursery. Excellent planning and provision of resources and activities ensures that any gaps in children's achievements are narrowing. The well trained and knowledgeable staff team have an exemplary understanding of each child's backgrounds through established close links with home and family. This supports children's understanding and respect for the similarities and differences of their peers and adults within their community.

The excellent organisation of the setting fully supports the children's welfare and the excellent progress they make. The nursery is divided into three areas each on different floors. Each room is creatively equipped with bright and exciting toys and equipment. Children confidently progress from the baby room through to the toddler room and onto the pre-school room. Their progress to the next level is based on their abilities and needs rather than their age. This ensures that children are ready to move onto more challenging experiences. Early in the nursery day and when external resources are brought in, children join together for activities. For example, babies enjoy rattling instruments and bouncing on an adult's knee, alongside older children who dance and sing enthusiastically with 'Music Makers'. Very good use is made of other resources, such the provision of wet weather clothes for the children so they can use one of the two outside play areas in all weathers, if they choose. Activities such as growing cress and having caterpillars to study as they emerge into butterflies provide the children with some knowledge of

nature. Staff plan, deliver and evaluate an excellent balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities, which enable all children to make outstanding progress in all areas of their learning and development.

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

Children thrive in this dynamic nursery. They are happy, confident and independent and display a very strong sense of security and belonging. Links with the children's home through displays of photographs of family enable children to settle very quickly. Every member of staff spends time in each of the rooms. This enables the children to know all the staff well and to form firm bonds. Their individual characters shine through because the staff really get to know the children. Each child is valued for their individuality and they are all fully supported in making excellent progress. Activities and resources are presented in an exciting and creative way which engages children and challenges their thinking. For example, sticky strawberry smelling play dough creates an opportunity to talk about facial expressions as one child comically wrinkles her nose at the smell. Using coloured paint and rice puffs enable children to explore the different textures. They hear the rice puff burst and use their senses and language to describe what they see, hear, smell and feel. Incidental opportunities are rarely missed so that children learn through exciting and challenging play experiences.

Children are eager to attend and make significant gains in their learning because staff play and talk with the children. This enables the adults to really get to know the children and their starting points and to form positive relationships. Children's own ideas and interests are valued which positively supports their excellent attitudes to learning new skills and understanding the world around them. Children and babies are fully engaged in this vibrant day nursery. Staff cheerfully sing to babies their favourite action rhymes which creates a very relaxed and friendly environment. Sleeping babies are regularly monitored and their routines are individualised which shows that that staff very effectively adapt to meet children's changing needs as they grow and develop.

Children and babies display a strong sense of security and feel safe in this nursery. Their behaviour is excellent and they display high levels of confidence in communicating their thoughts and feelings. They show a growing respect and awareness of the needs of their peers. Social skills, such as taking turns and sharing resources are very well supported by staff who take the time to explain to the children what the impact of their behaviour has on others. Enthusiastic praise and patient encouragement from the staff enable the children to develop the skills which will help them in their future. Staff prioritise children's understanding of feeling safe. For example, as children use the stairs, they hold the child height handrail and concentrate on keeping safe. Staff take the time to show children how to move around the nursery and to use tools safely. This results in children demonstrating a mature response to taking responsibility for their own and others safety.

The high quality interaction and excellent organisation of routines help babies and young children feel a strong sense of security. Children show an excellent understanding of the importance of adopting good personal hygiene routines. They are fully supported in mastering their own personal care which enhances their independence and self-esteem. Babies and very young children are extremely content and settled because their individual welfare needs are met by nurturing staff. Snacks and meals are cooked and prepared on the premises. These are nutritious, well balanced and take into account all dietary needs and preferences. Mealtimes are a social event where children enjoy trying new things. The provision of some activities, such as growing cress and then making sandwiches enables the children to develop some understanding of healthy foods.

Children demonstrate very good levels of achievement based on their starting points and abilities. They play a dynamic role in their learning whenever possible and respond to challenge with enthusiasm. They display high levels of curiosity, imagination and concentration which make them outstanding learners and well prepared for their transition into full time school.

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