

Pooh Corner Pre School & Nursery

Ashlyns School, Chesham Road, BERKHAMSTED, Hertfordshire, HP4 3AH

Inspection date	26/11/2012
Previous inspection date	30/10/2008

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	
	Previous inspection:	
How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend		2
The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children		2
The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision		2

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This provision is good

- Practitioners plan a well-balanced range of activities and play experiences indoors based on each child's precise developmental needs and interests. This means children make good progress in their learning and development.
- Children develop secure emotional attachments with their key person and others in the nursery. This is because arrangements for settling in children and working closely with parents and families are effective.
- Children behave well and understand what is expected because practitioners are positive role models in demonstrating what is acceptable and give clear and consistent messages about behaviour.
- The nursery has a strong capacity to keep improving because there is a constant cycle of reflection and review.

It is not yet outstanding because

- The outdoor provision attached to the pre-school does not offer a wide scope of play and activities because space is restricted and resources are not readily available for children to access and explore independently.
- Children's independence during meal times is not fully promoted because they do not have opportunities to self-serve their meals, pour drinks or clear the table.

Information about this inspection

Inspections of registered early years provision are scheduled:

- at least once in every inspection cycle. The current cycle ends on 31 July 2016
- more frequently where Ofsted identifies a need to do so, for example where provision was previously judged as inadequate
- brought forward in the inspection cycle where Ofsted has received information that suggests the provision may not be meeting the legal requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage; or where assessment of the provision identifies a need for early inspection
- prioritised for inspection where we have received information that the provision is not meeting the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage and which suggests children may not be safe
- at the completion of an investigation into failure to comply with the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage.

The provision is also registered on the voluntary and compulsory parts of the Childcare Register. This report includes a judgment about compliance with the requirements of that register.

Inspection activities

- The inspector observed activities in four play areas and the two outside learning areas.
- The inspector held meetings with the manager and deputy manager of the provision.
- The inspector looked at children's assessment records and planning documentation.
- The inspector checked evidence of suitability of practitioners working with children, read the provider's self-evaluation form and a selection of policies and records.
- The inspector took account of the views of a small number of parents and carers spoken to on the day.

Inspector

Hilary Preece

Full Report

Information about the setting

Pooh Corner Pre School and Nursery first opened in 1991 and was re-registered in 2008 on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. It is located in the grounds of Ashlyn's School in Berkhamsted, Hertfordshire. The setting is privately managed and runs independently from the school. The provision is split over two locations within the site. The pre-school operates from three main rooms on the ground floor and the remainder of the provision is spread over nine rooms on the ground and first floors. There are two fully enclosed areas available for outdoor play.

The nursery employs 17 members of childcare staff. Of these, 15 hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3 or above. Two members of staff hold Early Years Professional Status, one has a foundation degree in early years and one has Qualified Teacher Status. The nursery opens Monday to Friday all year round. Sessions are from 7.30am until 6.30pm. Children attend for a variety of sessions. There are currently 31 children attending who are within the early years age group. The nursery provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-olds. It also provides an after school club and holiday playscheme for children aged up to 11 years. It supports children who speak English as an additional language and children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. The nursery has completed the Hertfordshire Quality Standards quality assurance scheme in 2012.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- review and reflect on the organisation of meal times in order to increase children's independence and self-help skills by, for example, encouraging them to self-serve food, pour drinks and help clear away utensils afterwards
- enrich the outdoor environment attached to the pre-school to make it more exciting and stimulating and with more easily accessed resources so that it further supports children's all-round development.

Inspection judgements

How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend

Practitioners throughout the nursery use an effective system to observe, assess and plan for the needs of each child. Based on their observations, they clearly identify the next steps to support a child's learning and development and make sure this is included in their six-weekly plan. As a result, the activities and play opportunities match the interests and developmental needs of the children. This enables them to make good progress based on their starting points.

The majority of play is guided by children's interests, with practitioners interacting and supporting alongside. Overall, practitioners interact well with children and use techniques, such as open-ended questioning, to stimulate children's ability to think. Babies and toddlers, for example, are asked which rhyme they would like to sing, to which one baby replies 'Ba' meaning 'Ba Ba Black Sheep.' When a group of older boys are engaged in imaginative play in which they pretend there is a fire, the practitioner extends their thinking by encouraging them to recall a favourite story about fire fighters and which character they might pretend to be. This sparks discussion and negotiation within the group as they decide who will make the 999 call and who will put out the fire. Children explore the range of activities available which include messy play, mark making, using computer programmes and stories. In addition to children's free play, some adult-led activities enable more guided learning to take place. An example of this is a weekly cooking activity for pre-school children in which they measure ingredients, count and observe changes before and after cooking. Weekly visits to the nursery by external practitioners provide opportunities for children to dance and to learn Spanish. This means that overall there is a well-balanced educational programme that includes all seven areas of learning and development.

The main outdoor area, used by children across the nursery, provides space and opportunities for children to explore and investigate. Further opportunities to explore the natural environment and local community are planned as regular outings. The pre-school children also use a small outdoor area attached to their unit. Here the practitioners have introduced a number of interesting resources that can be brought out of storage to use when it is wet or windy, for example. However, there is scope to improve the planning and resourcing of this area so that it is more exciting and appealing and resources can be accessed independently by the children. Nevertheless, resources that are available engage and motivate the children. They excitedly splash in puddles, collect rain drops in containers and feel the rain on their faces.

The nursery works hard to involve parents in supporting their children's learning and development at home. They all have access to information about the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage. Practitioners offer consultation sessions to discuss and share children's achievements and are invited to add their own observations. Children's observation records are available for parents to view at any time. The nursery continues to explore ways to engage all parents in their children's learning, such as hosting play dates where parents and grandparents can see first-hand how their children learn at pre-school. Most parents who commented feel the quality of information they receive is sufficient.

The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children

Key persons know their children very well because they are involved from the start in gathering information from parents and helping children to settle in. Detailed information about individual care routines is exchanged so that practitioners understand the needs of the children in their care. A communication book for babies allows parents to document precise and relevant information about areas, such as their weaning preferences or current health conditions. Parents appreciate the verbal and written feedback they receive each day and confirm that their children settle well. The effectiveness of the key person system means that children build secure emotional attachments and are confident in their surroundings. Children across the nursery appear happy and motivated to explore, and are comfortable socialising with their peers.

Children's behaviour is good because practitioners are positive role models and clearly and consistently express what is expected. They frequently praise children and point out what is unacceptable so children learn right from wrong. Their good knowledge about individual children means they consistently reinforce expectations to those that need additional support with sharing or being gentle.

Children are supported to follow a healthy lifestyle through everyday routines and activities. Practitioners instil good hygiene practices in children from a young age and support them with washing their hands and wiping their faces after eating. As children get older practitioners are very careful to remind pre-school children in particular about the reason for washing their hands and the importance of doing this thoroughly. These children are also encouraged to put on their coats and outdoor shoes by themselves and to have a go even when they struggle a little. This not only builds their independence but helps their self-confidence and ability to keep trying. The nursery provides freshly cooked meals and snacks which are well balanced and nutritious. A self-service snack bar for toddlers and pre-school children allows them to eat when they are hungry and to make choices from the healthy options provided. At meal times there is some opportunity for children to manage their needs independently. Babies feed themselves using spoons and older children are supported to use knives and forks to cut their food. However, there is room to improve ways in which the older children learn to do things for themselves by involving them in self-help tasks, such as serving their own food, pouring drinks or helping to clear away their meals.

Children's individual health needs are met well because the nursery practitioners follow well-understood procedures. Accidents and sickness are dealt with appropriately and food allergies or dietary requirements are managed to ensure children's safety. All children have the opportunity to rest or sleep when it is needed and to enjoy daily outdoor play. The nursery has recently installed a large cover over part of the main play area which allows children to enjoy outdoor play while being protected from the sun or rain. They learn to negotiate space and handle equipment as practitioners guide them to safely play with balls and hoops and ride wheeled toys.

Practitioners help children make smooth transitions between the different rooms in the

nursery by offering regular opportunities beforehand to visit the room and meet their new key person. This helps children feel settled and secure as they cope with change. The nursery has developed solid links with other nurseries and schools that older children move on to. Information about the stage children have reached in their learning and development is passed on so that new practitioners can plan to support continuity in children's learning.

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

The leadership team is strong and has high expectations. It continuously seeks ways to maintain and improve the quality of the provision. An example of this is the nursery's participation in the local authority's latest quality improvement scheme. This has enabled the nursery to review and reflect on all areas of the provision and has led to improvement in children's access to toys and resources in some of the rooms. Areas for improvement identified at the previous inspection have been addressed. The nursery fully understands its responsibilities in meeting both the learning and development requirements and the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage. They have conducted a thorough review of the educational programme and put in place a system to monitor the planning to ensure it meets the needs of all the children attending and to ensure that quality is consistent across the provision. Practitioners have begun to carry out the required assessments on children between the ages of two and three years.

All policies and procedures that contribute to safeguarding children and ensuring their welfare have recently been reviewed. Practitioners demonstrate they understand their particular roles and responsibilities in keeping children safe in the event of a fire, if there are any concerns about their well-being or if other practitioners behave inappropriately. There is a robust recruitment procedure and appropriate suitability checks are carried out before employment commences. These include a Criminal Records Bureau check, references and an interview. Leaders make sure that practitioners' knowledge and skills remain fresh and up to date through regular in-house and external training. This includes ensuring that children are effectively safeguarded because all staff have a robust knowledge of child protection. Practitioners are supported through the induction process, through studying for further qualifications and through the appraisal system. There are further opportunities to monitor performance because the management are frequently present within the rooms and attend the room meetings. This encourages a working environment that is open and one where practitioners work as a close team.

The quality of the information shared with parents is good. They have access to all the policies and routines which are sent to them electronically when their children start. There is regular use of emails and texts to maintain close links and keep parents up to date with current news. Parents are encouraged to voice their opinions and make suggestions that lead to improvement, such as suggesting new foods for children's snacks. A parent representative is also invited to attend staff meetings so that parents have an understanding of the matters affecting their children's care and learning.

There are well-established partnerships with other providers and external agencies. The nursery actively seeks guidance from local authority advisors to help with curriculum planning, quality improvement and support for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities so that children receive the specific support to enable them to make good progress.

The Childcare Register

The requirements for the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are **Met**

The requirements for the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are **Met**

What inspection judgements mean

Registered early years provision

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	Outstanding provision is highly effective in meeting the needs of all children exceptionally well. This ensures that children are very well prepared for the next stage of their learning.
Grade 2	Good	Good provision is effective in delivering provision that meets the needs of all children well. This ensures children are ready for the next stage of their learning.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	Satisfactory provision is performing less well than expectations in one or more of the key areas. It requires improvement in order to be good.
Grade 4	Inadequate	Provision that is inadequate requires significant improvement and/or enforcement. The provision is failing to give children an acceptable standard of early years education and/or is not meeting the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. It will be inspected again within 12 months of the date of this inspection.
Met		The provision has no children on roll. The inspection judgement is that the provider continues to meet the requirements for registration.
Not Met		The provision has no children on roll. The inspection judgement is that the provider does not meet the requirements for registration.

Inspection

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under Sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006 on the quality and standards of provision that is registered on the Early Years Register. The registered person must ensure that this provision complies with the statutory framework for children's learning, development and care, known as the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY371775
Local authority	Hertfordshire
Inspection number	821285
Type of provision	
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 17
Total number of places	74
Number of children on roll	31
Name of provider	Pooh Corner Pre School and Nursery Ltd
Date of previous inspection	30/10/2008
Telephone number	01442 863286

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Type of provision

For the purposes of this inspection the following definitions apply:

Full-time provision is that which operates for more than three hours. These are usually known as nurseries, nursery schools and pre-schools and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. They are registered on the Early Years Register and pay the higher fee for registration.

Sessional provision operates for more than two hours but does not exceed three hours in any one day. These are usually known as pre-schools, kindergartens or nursery schools and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. They are registered on the Early Years Register and pay the lower fee for registration.

Childminders care for one or more children where individual children attend for a period of more than two hours in any one day. They operate from domestic premises that are usually their own home. They are registered on the Early Years Register and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Out of school provision may be sessional or full-time provision and is delivered before or after school and/or in the summer holidays. They are registered on the Early Years Register and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. Where children receive their Early Years Foundation Stage in school these providers do not have to deliver the learning and development requirements in full but should complement the experiences children receive in school.

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