

Hickory Dickorys Day Nursery & Nursery School

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspector	Angela Cole
Setting address	19 Cambray Place, Cheltenham, GL50 1JS
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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

Hickory Dickorys Day Nursery and Nursery School opened in 1998. The four-storey, listed premises are located in the town centre of Cheltenham, Gloucestershire within walking distance of shops, parks and public areas. The nursery operates from rooms on the basement, ground, first and second floors. It is open each weekday from 8.15am to 6pm for 51 weeks of the year. Care for five to 11 year olds is offered during the school holidays in a nearby school.

The nursery is registered by Ofsted on the Early Years Register and on the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. A maximum of 40 children in the early years age range may attend the nursery at any one time. There are currently 63 children aged from birth to under eight years on roll, some in part-time places. The nursery currently supports a number of children learning English as an additional language.

There are 11 members of staff, nine of whom hold appropriate early years qualifications and two have gained the Foundation Degree in Early Years. One member of staff is working towards a Level 4 qualification and one is achieving the foundation degree. Three staff are working towards Early Years Professional Status. The nursery provides funded early education for three- and four-year-olds and some free funded places are available during term time.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is outstanding.

The nursery offers a fully inclusive environment where children settle and are extremely happy. Highly developed knowledge of children's individual needs ensures that the caring, enthusiastic staff successfully promote children's welfare and learning. As a result, children make outstanding progress, given their age, ability and starting points. Partnerships with agencies and other providers with whom children have contact are highly developed, and many meaningful links with parents and carers are significant in ensuring the individual needs of the children are consistently met. Excellent reflection and frequent self-evaluation ensure that most documentation is regularly reviewed and that plans for the future are fully focused to bring about further improvement to the provision and outcomes for 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:

- updating the record of risk assessment to include any assessments of risks for specific outings and trips
- enhancing children's progress towards the early learning goals by

maximising information from new and existing parents about the children's learning in all areas.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The nursery is expertly and enthusiastically managed. Excellent use is made of time and accessible resources to fully meet the needs of the children. As key persons, the conscientious staff actively promote equality and diversity. They monitor activities and assessment rigorously to ensure children are fully integrated in the setting and achieve very well. Safeguarding is effective because reviewed policies, procedures and most required documentation are in place to ensure children's welfare is safeguarded and promoted. Risk assessments on the premises are carried out regularly to ensure hazards are reduced. Children enjoy trips out and are kept safe though risk assessment does not include outings. The staff safeguard and promote children's welfare well, because they have a secure understanding of safeguarding procedures in the event of any concern about a child. All adults in the nursery are vetted and secure employment procedures are in place. Children benefit from close supervision during play in and out of doors and the outdoor area is well adapted for children of different ages. There are clear procedures in place for families to follow when children are collected.

Partnerships with parents and carers are outstanding. Settling procedures are robust and much information of a general nature is obtained from new and existing parents. They receive very detailed explanations about the Early Years Foundation Stage and information about the children is shared frequently in conversation, daily diaries, special meetings and termly progress reports. Parents' comments on the children's progress are welcome and they are highly encouraged to become involved and support their child's learning by extending activities at home, including care of 'Hickory mouse'. Parents say that the friendly, caring staff are fully supportive and the environment is bright and positive with attractive, stimulating displays and resources. Families are kept well informed of special events, such as the artist in residence and opportunities to support different charities. The nursery has excellent links with the other providers sharing the care of children and shares information very effectively with them, especially concerning any children who have an additional need.

The nursery makes excellent use of ongoing reflection through in-depth self-evaluation. The senior management is well aware of the nursery's strengths and gives full consideration to the spoken and written views of staff, parents and children to help identify areas for improvement. The nursery has fully addressed all actions and recommendations from previous visits. The management has highlighted further areas for development, including completion of advanced qualification training, review of security of the front boundary, replacing climbing equipment and repeating a quality assurance programme. The nursery demonstrates an excellent capacity for continued improvement in the future.

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

Children have outstanding support to learn because staff have accurate knowledge of the Early Years Foundation Stage and fully use this in observing and planning for their next steps in learning. Adult interaction is highly appropriate at all times, giving children all the time they need to share their ideas and offering open and challenging questions, such as 'How could Goldilocks get out of the house?' As a result, children are always interested, well motivated and fully absorbed in their play. Babies explore a very wide range of resources, including an excellent variety of media and objects in accessible trays and treasure baskets. Young children are fascinated as they excitedly investigate natural materials, including pebbles and shells, and dig in the walk-in garden area to find mini beasts, such as centipedes. The pre-school children also have excellent independence to follow their own interests. For example, following a child's 'bus journey, they spent several days creating a 'bus from painted boxes and then converted it to a sleigh for a 'ride' wearing their sunhats.

The nursery is enhanced by many vibrant displays of children's work that highly support their progress towards each early learning goal. Overall, there is an excellent balance of indoor and outdoor opportunities to encourage purposeful play. Advantages of the town centre setting are effectively utilised to support children's learning as they walk through the shopping precinct to the library and park. Babies relax in the soft play/sensory room and are taken out each day to move freely in the fresh air. Toddlers and older children have daily opportunities to choose whether to play in or out of doors where they are challenged by a wealth of resources that children use for their own ideas, including large and small physical equipment. They have exciting, outdoor opportunities to be creative as they select their own mark-making materials, experiment with water and balls running along guttering and role play in a 'car wash'. Children gain excellent skills for the future in communication and literacy, problem solving and use of technology to support their high level of learning.

The planning cycle is highly effective as key persons closely observe each child's play and use this on a daily and weekly basis to carefully plan to foster their next steps in learning. Excellent use is made of individual and small group support. Consistent monitoring of the assessments clearly shows that children are well challenged to make as much progress as they can, including those learning English as an additional language. This attention to children's needs and interests enables staff to offer a rich and stimulating environment with an excellent, balanced range of adult and child-led activities that encourages children to be active learners. The learning for each age group is enhanced through additional activities with visitors, including a movement specialist and an artist, and staff are eager to introduce resources they have produced that support children's interests. For example, children are keen to try vegetables from the owner's garden and a child's fascination with flowers brought from home led to planting sunflowers and exploring these through art and crafts.

Excellent arrangements are in place to promote children's welfare. Much care is

taken over transitions so that children settle gradually into the next stage with personal support from their key workers. From a young age, children gain an excellent understanding about the importance of a healthy lifestyle and how to keep themselves safe. They enjoy being active and learn about the benefits of physical activity, remarking on body changes, such as becoming hot. Children confidently discuss healthy habits, such as consistent hygiene practices, and make healthy choices about what they eat and drink. Staff give high priority to children learning about how to keep themselves safe to encourage their developing independence. Children are skilfully encouraged to tidy after themselves, to handle a range of equipment safely and to suggest the reasons when care is required. They are well supported to take risks in controlled circumstances, for example, to negotiate the challenging stairs and obstacles in the garden. The staff's positive strategies for managing behaviour are entirely effective and they work closely with parents to ensure a consistent approach. This means that, from an early age, children are polite and develop responsible behaviour that is effective for learning, their own needs and those of others. For example, they learn to organise their own sharing of favourite toys, support one another's activities and make friends. Children gain excellent self-help skills and are confident to make decisions so they are highly prepared for transition from the nursery to 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

How effectively is the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	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	2
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

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